



Scampton Church of England Primary School

POLICY OF VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE, VOTING AND ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS AT MAINTAINED SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Regulation 14 of The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing bodies of maintained schools in England to: *"approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference"*.
- 1.2 In relation to this, the governing body of Scampton Church of England Primary School has determined the following arrangements will apply to meetings of the Full Governing Body and Committee Meetings.
- 1.3 Governing Bodies should ensure that any alternative arrangements are adequately secure to ensure confidentiality of any discussions.

2. Virtual Attendance at Meetings

- 2.1 A maximum of a third of governors in post may attend a meeting virtually at each meeting.
- 2.2 The Meeting will be chaired by a governor who is present in person.
- 2.3 Where a governor wishes to virtually attend a meeting of the Governing Body by either telephone, video link or other agreed medium, the Chair and Clerk must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made. The governor must provide the reason for wishing to attend remotely and the Chair of Governors will decide on whether to approve the request, though this approval will not be withheld without good reason.
- 2.4 Requests made due to exceptional circumstances that fall outside the timeframe will be considered on an individual basis.
- 2.5 Virtual attendance at the meeting will be recorded as such in the minutes. Where approval has been withheld the reason for this will be minuted.
- 2.6 Governors attending the meeting virtually will be entitled to vote on any item discussed providing that they have participated (i.e. heard/engaged) for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required, this will be facilitated where possible



by the Clerk utilising an agreed method (e.g. by taking the telephone call off speaker phone and the Governor sharing their vote verbally with the Clerk or via agreed online anonymised voting platform).

- 2.7 Governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost, they will **cease** to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless **it has become inquorate**.
- 2.8 The governor/s attending remotely must ensure that they meet the expectations/etiquette around confidentiality and not participate in the meeting in a public place. The Chair will confirm this with the remote attendees at the start of the meeting.
- 2.9 Meetings should not be digitally recorded by any Governor or persons present **by any means** without the express prior approval of the Governing Body and for a specified purpose.

3. Virtual Meetings

- 3.1 Fully virtual meetings will only be held if face to face meetings are not possible.
- 3.2 Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all governors to access the meeting.
- 3.3 Where a meeting is taking place virtually the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the chair has exercised their right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.
- 3.4 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the Clerk or by a Governor/staff member (other than the Headteacher/Chair) who is present virtually taking the minutes, and these will be presented to the next meeting of the full Governing Body.
- 3.5 Virtual meetings should not be digitally recorded by any Governor or persons present **by any means** without the express prior approval of the Governing Body and for a specified purpose.

4. Use of online chat applications

- 4.1 The School recognises the value of short and quick exchanges in between meetings using applications such as whatsapp. In an emergency or when communicating simple messages for example to arrange a meeting or notify Governors of an imminent important event, this is deemed an acceptable and useful use of technology.



4.2 Chat applications should not include confidential information, especially personal information.

4.3 Chat applications should not replace any debate that would otherwise be appropriate for a formal meeting. If seeking agreement electronically for an agreed means that is not urgent, email should be used over chat applications and only with the consent of the Chair of Governors.

5. Review of this Policy

5.1 The policy will be reviewed at least annually, but any governor with any concerns about its operation can request that it is reviewed at any time.

Policy was adopted by the governing board on 16th September 2020