



Governors Virtual Attendance Policy

Please note – **the provisions marked in red** are non-statutory but are included as good practice.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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 Yerbury School has determined the following arrangements will apply.
- 1.3 These arrangements apply to meetings of the full governing body and to committee meetings.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Face to Face Meetings** are meetings where the majority of governors are physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda.
- 2.2 **Virtual Attendance** at a meeting is where a governor is not physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda but participates or votes at a meeting through virtual means including but not limited to telephone or video conference.
- 2.3 **Virtual Meetings** are meetings where the majority of governors are not present at the same physical location and participate or vote at a meeting through *Virtual Attendance*.

3. Scheduling of Face to Face Meetings and Virtual Meetings

- 3.1 The three statutory full governing body meetings and termly scheduled committee meetings will be *Face to Face Meetings*.
- 3.2 Additional or extraordinary **full governing body meetings** and committee meetings can take place as *Virtual Meetings* (as long as the usual quorum of governors are present through *Virtual Attendance*).

4. Virtual Attendance at Face to Face Meetings

Notification

- 4.1 Where a governor wishes to attend a *Face to Face Meeting* of the governing body through *Virtual Attendance*, the Chair and Clerk must be notified when possible **at least 2 working days in advance of the meeting** to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible.

Governing Body Approval of Virtual Attendance at a meeting

- 4.2 **At the start of a Face to Face Meeting**, any governor who is participating by *Virtual Attendance* will be asked their reasons for not physically attending the meeting.
- 4.3 **A governor's Virtual Attendance may** be subject to the approval of the governing body at the beginning of the meeting, however approval **must** not be withheld without good reason.

- 4.4 Where approval is withheld, the reason for this **must** be minuted and the governor informed immediately.

Voting Rights of Governors participating through Virtual Attendance

- 4.5 Governors attending a *Face to Face Meeting* through *Virtual Attendance* will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to.

Secret Ballots

- 4.6 Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (Eg. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the governor sharing their vote verbally with the clerk).
- 4.7 Where facilitation is not possible, the governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.

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- 4.8 Governors attending through *Virtual Attendance* 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.

Technological or other Issues

- 4.9 If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a governor to participate through *Virtual Attendance* the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

Meeting Chair

- 4.10 A *Face to Face Meeting* must be chaired by a governor who is physically present at the physical location listed in the meeting agenda.

5. Virtual Meetings

Reasonable efforts to give all Governors Virtual Access to Virtual Meetings

- 5.1 When a *Virtual Meeting* is taking place, all reasonable efforts must be made to enable all governors to access the meeting through *Virtual Attendance*.

Statutory Notice Arrangements

- 5.2 When a *Virtual Meeting* is taking place, the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered must be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the chair has exercised his/her right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.

Clerking Arrangements

- 5.3 *Virtual Meetings* will be minuted in the same way as other meetings with either the clerk or another governor (other than the headteacher) attending through *Virtual Attendance* taking

the minutes which will be provided for approval at the next meeting of the full governing body.

6. **Review of this Policy**

6.1 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.

Signed by the Chair: _____ Date: _____