

Hartford Church of England High School

Articles of Governance

Version 1

October 2017

Approved by Governors on _____

Next review due _____

Hartford Church of England High School Articles of Governance

Introduction

This document describes the way the Governing Body, (GB), of Hartford Church of England High School operates. Temporary deviations from this document can be agreed by the full GB. Permanent changes should cause a revision of this document which is under change control. The document does not attempt to fully cover aspects of its operation which are mandated externally and beyond its own control.

Approach

The GB believes it should play a key role in the development and success of the school. In addition to its specific statutory responsibilities the GB feels it has a particular role to play in:

- Setting strategy
- Overseeing the operation of the executive
- Acting as the first point of appeal
- Recruiting new staff

The GB recognises the difference between Governance and Management and tries to operate in a way that reflects this. It believes the GB should not be part of the operational management system of the school, but does need to have access to all the information required to ensure that this is being carried out effectively. Getting access to this information often requires active involvement from Governors. The GB recognises the importance of the Clerk to Governors and accepts its responsibility for making this appointment and ensuring that this role is carried out effectively.

Structure of the Governing Body

The number and nature of Governors is defined in our Instrument of Government. The GB expects Parent and Staff Governors to represent their electorate and to seek mechanisms whereby they can be informed of their views. The GB operates with a Chair and 2 Vice Chairs. Although currently the term for a Governor is four years, the GB chooses to elect its Chair and Vice Chairs on an annual basis. Elections usually take place at the first Full Governors meeting of the school year. In addition and at the same time the GB allocates specific responsibilities to individual governors as follows:

Children in Care (Looked after Children)

- Child Protection
- Safe Recruitment
- Health, Safety and Well-being
- Special Educational Needs

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- E Safety
- Equality
- The GB encourages Governors to 'adopt a department'. To avoid confusion these link departments are allocated on an annual basis.

Meetings of the Governing Body

There are four full GB meetings per year. Extraordinary meetings can be scheduled by the Chair or any three Governors in event of exceptional circumstances. The statutory rules on the meeting being quorate are applied. A non-quorate meeting can take place and be minuted but no decisions can be taken.

Structure of Committees

Unless specifically delegated to a committee or the Headteacher the GB retains all its powers. In addition to statutory committees the GB is required to incorporate it operates with three standing committees:

- Finance and Resources
- Curriculum and Standards
- Welfare

Each committee has a term of one year and operates with an elected chair. It is our practise that the Chair of Governors is not the elected chair of any of these standing committees. It is practice that Governors must sit on either the Finance and Resources or Curriculum and Standards committee plus the Welfare committee if they wished to as this committee feeds into the Curriculum and Standards committee. Terms of reference for these committees are included in appendix A.

Effectiveness of the Governing Body

It is the responsibility of the Chair to carry out an annual assessment of the GB and identify areas for focus and improvement for the following year.

Governors' Code of Conduct

There is an agreed code of conduct for Governors, Appendix B. Governors are expected to be familiar with and adhere to it.

Governor Skills

The GB recognises the need for Governors to have and acquire the skills needed to carry out their role. Use of formal training is encouraged and the chairs of all committees are charged with ensuring the development of the committee and the Governors involved. It is the responsibility of the Chair to carry out an annual assessment of Governor Skills and identify any areas where lack of skill could jeopardise the effectiveness of the GB. The Chair is then responsible for ensuring that a plan is put in place to address this shortfall.

Governor Visits to School

Governors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the day to day activities of the school without compromising the operation of the executive. The 'Governors in School' Policy covers how Governors should conduct themselves when visiting school. All visits to school should be reported to the Clerk to Governors.

Governor Recruitment and Succession Planning

Most members of the GB are nominated by the Foundation. The GB believes it has an active role in helping the Foundation identify potential candidates. In particular the GB has a key role in ensuring that a succession plan is in place for any of its key roles.