



Bloxham C of E Primary School

Inspiring Young Minds

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Governance Policy

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Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Marshall
Chair of Governors: Kevin Moyes

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1. The Role of the Governing Board

Governing boards have three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school making sure its money is well spent.

2. Membership of the Governing Board

DfE's Governance' Handbook says:

The membership of the board should focus on skills, and the primary consideration in the appointment and election of new governors should be acquiring the skills and experience the board needs to be effective.

Meaningful and effective engagement with parents, staff and the wider community is vital, and not achieved by the presence of various categories of governor on the board. Governors must govern in the best interest of pupils; it is not their role to represent a stakeholder group. Stakeholder engagement is an important, but distinct, activity for which boards will need to assure themselves that appropriate structures and arrangements are in place. Governors themselves should seek to assist their school to build relationships with business and other employers, in order to enhance the education and raise the aspirations of pupils.

The current composition of Bloxham Primary School Governing Board (June 2023) is made up of the following members (see the table). The school's Instruments and Articles of Governance give full details of the constitution of the board, the numbers and category of governors. The headteacher chooses whether or not to be a governor; in practice almost, all Heads choose to do so.

Head teacher	Sarah Marshall
Parent Governors	Paul Manders and Ashley Pile (1 Vacancy)
Local Authority Governor	Kevin Moyes
Staff Governor	Louise Thomas
Co-opted Governors	Gillian Barnes, Alex Gray and Joan Thomas
Foundation Governors	Dale Gingrich, Suzette Watson, Steve Craggs
Additional roles	
Clerk	Ruth Morrison
School Bursar	Lucy McKenna

For information on what is expected of Governors see **Code of Conduct for Governors**; also see DfE guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

3. The Need for Change

The Ofsted report from September 2022 rated Bloxham Primary School as ‘in need of improvement’ in the areas of Leadership and Management and Quality of Education. Specifically the report stated that

“Leaders and governors at the school have been out of step with each other for some time. Therefore, the governing body does not fulfil its core functions well enough. For example, governors do not hold leaders to account over the quality of education or have strong oversight of the school’s strategic direction.”

While the FGB has already made progress on improving its effectiveness, it was decided at the May 2023 meeting of the FGB that a proposal be drafted to change the governance structure to the ‘circle’ model, removing delegated committees but instead conducting monthly FGB meetings ensuring that all governors have sight and involvement in all areas of governance activities.

The intent of the following proposed governance structure is to deliver a range of benefits that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the governing body. The new structure :-

- a. Ensures the Headteacher and Governors are more effective by being decisive, strategic, and proactive.
- b. Empowers governors as all are part of the decision-making process and party to full discussions (avoiding the repeating of information in committees and at FGB, which can be inefficient and less focused).
- c. Is more inclusive, utilising the strengths and skills of all governors, including staff governors.
- d. Allows Lead Governors to be proactive and propositional when organising, carrying out and delegating monitoring activities.
- e. Ensures Governor’ Visit Reports are meaningful, as these are discussed sooner.
- f. Supports all governors’ full understanding and involvement and will promote succession planning.

4. New Governance Structure

Governance at Bloxham Primary School will revolve around monthly meetings (both face-to-face and on Teams) of the full governing board together with the appointment of Lead and Deputy Lead governors to be the eyes and ears of the board within specific areas.

The concept of Lead governors (and deputies) is a cornerstone of the proposed structure. Each key area of operational governance at Bloxham Primary School will be assigned a Lead governor (together with Deputy). The Lead governor becomes the Board's 'go-to' person for that area, building as much understanding and awareness as possible of the assigned area and representing it to the FGB. A key point here is the Lead is NOT a decision-maker but rather a resource for the board to facilitate the monitoring of the assigned area and regular reporting back to the FGB.

So, for example, the Lead governor would propose a **monitoring schedule** for their area of responsibility at the beginning of each long term. When the respective area is on the FGB meeting agenda, the Lead will be responsible for providing any required reports and related briefing information to bring the Board up to date on status and inform required decision-making. The role of the Deputy is to work with the Lead as backup and potentially as part of succession planning.

The proposal also makes provision for Link governors in specific areas of board responsibility such as Safeguarding or Whistle-blowing. The difference between Link and Lead governor roles is that the Link governor role is more reactive, being the point of contact/responsibility for specific events that require governing board attention and involvement.

Proposed Roles 2023-24

Roles	Terms of Reference Details	Who
Chair	Terms of Reference as per NGA role description	Kevin Moyes
Vice Chair	Terms of Reference as per NGA role description	Stephen Craggs
Safeguarding & Child Protection Link Governor	Terms of Reference with delegated powers	Gillian Barnes
Whistle Blowing Link Governor	Terms of Reference with delegated powers	Kevin Moyes
HT Performance Management Committee	Terms of Reference with delegated powers	Kevin Moyes (Panel Chair) Stephen Craggs Ashely Pile
Pay Panel Committee	Terms of Reference with delegated powers	Kevin Moyes (Panel Chair) Stephen Craggs Ashely Pile

Lead Governors	<i>See Generic Terms of Reference and Specific Guidance</i>	<i>See Generic -Terms of reference and Specific Guidance</i>
	Lead	Deputy Lead
Finance	Kevin Moyes	TBC once governor vacancies filled
Staffing	Stephen Craggs	TBC once governor vacancies filled
Learning & Teaching Including Attendance	Alex Grey	Ashely Pile
Premises and Health and Safety	Kevin Moyes	TBC once governor vacancies filled
Community Engagement	Dale Gingrich	TBC once governor vacancies filled
Inclusion (SEND, PP, SP & Excluded Pupils)	Gillian Barnes	TBC once governor vacancies filled

Link Governors (Terms of Reference see below): at the end of each academic year under a review of governance a decision will be made whether to appoint the following link governors:

- Safeguarding
- Whistle blowing

Committees: (Terms of Reference see below) schools are required to have the following committees:

- Headteacher Appraisal Committee
- Staff Pay Committee

Working Groups will be formed as needed with no delegated powers. A designated convener will be responsible for reporting to the FGB and writing meeting notes. For example, these could include:

- Explore Academy options
- School expansion
- Setting proposed budget (Spring)
- Health & Safety before audit.

Monthly Full Governing Board Meetings: The Governance Schedule (see below) will inform the agenda for GB meetings.

- **Agendas** will be carefully crafted, timed with a clear focus for each meeting, plus reports and business items. Main items agreed at the previous meeting to ensure important issues are given the time for discussion and agreement. Agenda finalised by Chair, HT and Clerk.
- **Headteacher's Reports:** always on the agenda for any 'information/ briefing/ reports', from the headteacher, alternating between written and verbal reports:

e.g., SDP reviews, Data reports, SEF up-date; safeguarding information; staffing and pupil up-dates.

- **The Clerk to the Governing Body** fulfils an important role to governors advising on legal matters and ensuring a professional level of clerking. Contractual time allows for preparation for the monthly meetings, attendance at meetings, circulating of minutes and associated papers and keeping all governor paper-files and Governor Hub up to date.

This policy is one of five governance documents, the others being:

- The Governance Schedule – for FGB meetings
- For Information on Visits see Governors Visits Policy
- For new governors see Governors Induction Policy
- Governors Expenses Polic

Lead Governors – Terms of reference

Purpose Statement

1. To lead on a designated aspect of the governors' work.

Terms of reference - To 'lead', governors will:

- Undertake to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the aspect they have been assigned (Finance, Staffing, Learning & Teaching, Premises, Community, Inclusion, SIAMS).
- With the Chair and Clerk, ensure Standing Orders within their aspect of responsibility are included on agenda as per the agreed schedule.
- Ensure additional items (SDP related and items from Aspect Guidance) are presented for inclusion at meetings.
- Lead monitoring SDP tasks or delegate to the deputy-lead or other governors.
- Write monitoring reports as per the agreed format and present these for discussion at governing board meetings.
- Ensure they follow agreed Governor Protocols when organising monitoring tasks.
- Be the 'go-to' member of the governing board for Ofsted/county inspection or liaison with external services.

General Terms

- Governors will lead items on the agenda; effectively 'chairing' for that item and will therefore ensure they are prepared fully and allow sufficient discussion but not procrastination.
- In conjunction or as agreed with the Headteacher review polices according to the schedule.
- Governors will consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all functions.

Deputy Lead Governors – Terms of reference

Purpose Statement

1. To assist the Lead Governor on a designated aspect of the governors' work.

Terms of reference - To 'lead', governors will:

- Undertake to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the aspect they have been assigned (Finance, Staffing, Learning & Teaching, Premises, Community, Inclusion, SIAMS).
- Lead monitoring SDP tasks as agreed with the Lead governor.
- Write monitoring reports as per the agreed format and present these for discussion at governing body meetings.
- Ensure they follow agreed Governor Protocols when organising monitoring tasks.
- Support the Lead Governor in being the 'go-to' member of the governing board for Ofsted/county inspection or liaison with external services.

General Terms

- Governors will be prepared to step-in and support, or take over in their absence, the Lead Governor's role in leading items on the agenda. (Effectively 'chairing' for that item and will therefore ensure they are prepared fully and allow sufficient discussion but not procrastination).
- Governors will consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all functions.

Finance – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Draft in conjunction with the Headteacher and the School Bursar/Finance Officer, the school's annual budget that reflects the priorities of the School Vision Map.
2. Prepare a budget statement at least three times a year.
3. Monitor the expenditure of all budget funds against the agreed limits and decide on action to be taken to correct any deviation from plan.
4. Form and keep updated an action plan for carry forward money for both the Capital and Revenue funds.
5. Ensure that the school operates within the Financial Regulations of the County Council.
6. Delegate to the Headteacher permission to make minor deviations from the published budget plan.
7. Delegate to the Finance Officer permission to authorise spending within the agreed departmental and whole school budget limits.
8. Ensure that the school meets the requirements of the SFVS.

Staffing – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Ensure that Governors carry out their responsibilities for staffing as laid out in the Governance Handbook (DfE 2015).
2. Ensure the school provides a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment for staff.
3. Review staff salaries yearly and to issue salary letters.
4. Set the pay range for the headteacher.
5. Ensure three Governors are appointed to plan and review the Headteacher's performance.
6. Review the staffing structure, as necessary.
7. Monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance.
8. Review and monitor the Staff Performance Management policy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Learning and Teaching (including Attendance) – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum: ensuring the school provides a curriculum for the children that is in line with national requirements and draws attention to children's key strengths and weaknesses and differential performance by groups of pupils such as gender, special needs, ethnicity, looked after pupils, and pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding.
2. Review, monitor and evaluate:
 - a. School Development Plan
 - b. Targets for school improvement
 - c. Self-Evaluation Form.
3. Agree any specific involvement by individual governors in curriculum areas/ monitoring of SDP targets.
4. Set priorities for improvement and monitor and evaluate the impact of improvement plans.
5. Consider recommendations from external reviews of the school (e.g., Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), agree actions because of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of plans.
6. Monitor and evaluate rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including vulnerable children and any underachieving groups.
7. Monitor and evaluate the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement.
8. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of assessment procedures.
9. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management.
10. Identify and celebrate pupils' achievements.
11. Advise on Finance and Staffing funding priorities necessary to deliver the curriculum.
12. Ensure ICT supports pupils' learning.
13. Oversee arrangements for educational visits (Oxfordshire County Council guidance) including the appointment of a named co-ordinator.
14. Review attendance and meet with school leaders to discuss approaches to attendance, any issues etc and report to FGB.

Premises – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Ensure Gateway Primary school provides a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment for pupils, staff and visitors.
2. Ensure compliance with relevant statutory policies.
3. Provide support and guidance for the governing board and the head teacher on all matters relating to the maintenance and development of the premises and grounds, including Health and Safety.
4. Ensure that the LA's Health and Safety Policy is complemented by the School's Health and Safety Policy, that these procedures are kept up-to-date and that positive arrangements are in place to ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of and comply with its contents.
5. Ensure rigorous and comprehensive systems for active monitoring (auditing health and safety management systems, inspections, risk assessments) and reactive monitoring (accident/incident investigation) and rectifying identified faults within the school.
6. Ensure there is adequate provision both in staffing, facilities, and resources to allow the school to meet both its legal and moral obligations with respect to all relevant legislation.
7. Ensure that site visits are conducted regularly, and that a thorough annual inspection of the premises and grounds takes place, and a report is received identifying any issues; reporting and recommending priorities for maintenance and development.
8. Oversee premises-related funding bids.
9. Oversee arrangements, including Health and Safety, for the use of school premises by outside users or for extended services, subject to governing body and local authority policy.
10. Ensure the establishment and regular review of an Accessibility Plan that meets the requirements of all relevant legislation.
11. Establish and keep under review a Building Development Plan.
12. Monitor the impact on teaching and learning of the condition of the school site and buildings.
13. Ensure the security of school premises.
14. Monitor energy and utilities bills to support sustainability.
15. Monitor the procedures in place to be followed for carrying out emergency work and to make recommendations about delegation to the Head Teacher for taking appropriate action on behalf of the governing body in the event of an emergency.
16. To assist the head teacher in monitoring the work of any contractors used, in the preparation and implementation of contracts and to monitor and review arrangements for cleaning, grounds maintenance in line with the financial procedures agreed by the governing board.

Community – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Set key actions/targets at the beginning of each academic year in conjunction with the FGB reflecting the current needs of the school and wider community.
2. Draft the end of year Community Report (a summary of the year's highlights, school, successes, and governor activities/monitoring).
3. Be mindful of the needs of the school's diverse catchment as well as the needs of pupils and families from outside the catchment, promoting cohesion and community spirit.
4. Keep informed of developments and plans within the local community(ies), and communicate the school's position on plans, ensuring a consistent message is delivered.
5. Maintain and foster links with Red Dragon Pre-School and its Committee, to enable their permanence within the school grounds, ensuring that pupils have a smooth transition to full-time primary schooling at Gateway Primary School
6. Ensure that the Community Hall is promoted to the community and utilised to its full potential, maximising revenue for the school.
7. Ensure productive relations with parent groups (including fundraising) to maximise the benefit to pupils and the school of their fundraising and activities.
8. Meet regularly with the Pupil Parliament, report and facilitate discussion of their views.
9. Seek opportunities for partnerships with community organisations; including clubs, other primary and secondary schools that will complement the school's mission of 'achieving together'.
10. Seek opportunities for partnerships and sponsorship with local businesses.

Inclusion – Terms of Reference for Lead Governors

Lead governors and their deputies will ensure the following actions are undertaken and where applicable outcomes presented to the Governing Board.

1. Ensure that the requirements of children with special needs are met, as laid out in the Code of Practice, and receive termly reports from the headteacher/SENCO.
2. Ensure the school meets the statutory requirements relating to equality legislation (e.g., race, disability, special needs, gender). Monitor and report on the implementation of the Equality Plan.
3. Monitor provision including allocated funding for SEND, Pupil Premium, EAL, LAC, higher attaining pupils and any other identified minority groups. Monitor and report on the implementation of the SEND and PP strategic plans.
4. Assess the effectiveness of policy and provision by monitoring assessment data to ensure gaps between attainment of identified pupils and cohorts are closed. Where this is recognised to be unattainable due to severe learning difficulties ensuring expectations are appropriate.
5. Ensure the individual needs of SEND pupils are met through targeted support.
6. Ensure equality of opportunity and access to the whole curriculum and extracurricular activities.
7. Monitor pupils' self-esteem and well-being.
8. Support and encourage good relationships between parents and teachers/ SENCO/ support staff.
9. Ensure school policies are parent friendly.
10. Ensure the nominated lead governor has a thorough understanding of the SEN Code of practice.
11. Meet with the SENCO termly.
12. Produce SEND governors' Annual Report to Parents (statutory).
13. Receive Pupil Premium reports termly.
14. Receive annual report on Looked After Children (statutory).

Safeguarding & Child Protection Link Governor - Terms of Reference

Purpose:

1. To monitor all safeguarding and child protection issues
2. To ensure appropriate training is undertaken by governors and staff.
3. To ensure pupils social, emotional & psychological wellbeing
4. To ensure Safeguarding and child protection matters are raised at every Governing Board meeting.

Terms of Reference:

- Be available to support the HT.
- Be involved in checking appointment/applications.
- Be an impartial ear for parents.
- Lead on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection at each full governing board meeting and make regular reports.
- Ensure an annual report is prepared and presented to the governors at the first meeting in the autumn if possible.
- Monitor the arrangements and procedures for pupils' on-line safety.
- Monitor the arrangements and procedures for staff and governor training, ensuring all are up to date.

General Terms

- To act on matters delegated by the full governing board.
- To contribute to the School Vision Map.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all functions.

Whistle Blowing Link Governor - Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. To deal with any staff complaints which may arise, in accordance with the school's published policy, **Grievance Procedure**. These will only be complaints which cannot be dealt with by the Headteacher or have been dealt with by the Headteacher but not to the satisfaction of the complainant.
2. To ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a professional, respectful, and consistent manner and that there is compliance with the published policy, **Grievance Procedure**.

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Terms of Reference

- To deal with any complaints raised with you effectively and in accordance with the published policy, **Grievance Procedure**.
- To fully explore any informal resolutions with the complainant before starting formal proceedings.
- To always remain impartial.
- To ensure that complaints are dealt with in the most appropriate manner.
- To ensure that the Chair of Governors in the first instance and then FGB are notified of any ongoing complaints (without details) and confirmation is later given once the complaint is resolved.
- Provide feedback to FGB on any significant aspects/trends which indicate a general need for improvement in key areas.
- To ensure that details of any complaints are held confidentially, and the governors' confidentiality agreement is strictly adhered to.

General Terms

- To act on matters delegated by the full governing board.
- To contribute to the School Vision Map.
- To consider safeguarding and equalities implications when undertaking all functions.

Head Teacher Performance Management COMMITTEE of the GOVERNING BOARD -Terms of Reference

Membership

- The Membership of the Committee will be determined by the full Governing Board and shall consist of not less than three. Members of staff cannot be appointed to this committee.
- The committee shall appoint a Chairperson.
- The committee shall seek advice from the appointed external adviser when setting objectives and reviewing the performance of the head teacher.
- Where possible the membership of the committee will be representative of the gender make-up of the board and include a committee member with pastoral responsibilities.

Quorum

- Three governors plus the head teacher (and advisor in Autumn term meeting)

Meetings

- The committee shall meet in the Autumn term and midyear.

Terms of Reference

To perform the Head Teacher's performance management:

- Meet with the head teacher and adviser at the start of the performance review cycle to plan and prepare for the performance review and set and record head teacher objectives relating to school leadership and management and pupil progress.
- Agree arrangements for monitoring the progress of the performance objectives during the year.
- Meet with the head teacher at midyear to review progress against the objectives.
- Meet with the head teacher and adviser at the end of the review cycle to review the head's performance and identify achievements, including assessment of achievement against objectives, and to discuss and identify professional development needs/activities.
- Write a performance review statement and give a copy to the head teacher within 10 days of the review meeting and allow 10 days for the head teacher to add written comments.
- Provide the chair of the governing board with a copy of the head teacher's performance review statement.
- Make decisions about any pay increases that will be awarded to the head teacher.

The head teacher's performance management objectives will be kept confidential and will not be communicated beyond the performance management committee and the Chair of Governors unless the Head Teacher chooses to communicate those objectives.

Governor Pay Panel – Terms of Reference

Membership

The Pay Committee shall consist of a maximum of 5 governors (excluding staff and teacher governors). The Governing Board appoints the Governor members of the Committee.

The Head Teacher will be invited to attend the meeting in an advisory capacity or to present their case to the Panel.

Chair

The Pay Committee will elect one of the Governor members as Chair of the Committee at its first meeting of the academic year. In the Chair's absence, the Committee will agree an acting Chair for the meeting.

Quorum

The quorum will be three Governor Members.

Reporting

The Pay Committee will report its decisions to the Governing Board.

Meetings

The Pay Committee will meet in October each year to agree annual pay statements.

Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Pay Committee shall be reviewed annually by the Governing Board as part of the annual review of the School's Pay Policy.

Responsibilities

The Pay Committee will have delegated powers to make all determinations of pay in accordance with the Pay Policy for teaching and support staff: -

- To achieve the aims of the whole school, pay policy in a fair and equal manner.
- To apply the criteria set by the whole school pay policy in determining the pay of each member of staff at the annual review.
- To observe all statutory and regulatory requirements.
- To ensure all contractual obligations are met.
- To clearly minute the reasons for all decisions and report these decisions to the next meeting of the full governing board.
- To work with the head in ensuring that the governing board complies with the Appraisal Policy & Regulations.
- To review and recommend appropriate training and development activities in respect of the above.