

Dr Walker's C of E Primary School



An Exceptional Place to Flourish

Though your beginning was small,
your future will flourish indeed.
Job 8:7

NON-STATUTORY POLICY

Governing Body Succession Plan Policy

Ratified by Governors	27.03.23
Review Cycle	Every 2 years

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Pre-amble: School Vision, Ethos and Values

Dr Walker's is a mixed Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School in Fyfield, Ongar, Essex.

We support all pupils to succeed in reaching their God given potential at Dr Walker's – 'An Exceptional Place to Flourish', by developing

- **Belief** in self and the development of confidence, respect and trust for others and an appreciation of spirituality and an understanding of faith in God;
- **Engagement** in a love for learning by nurturing curiosity and independence; and
- **Excellence** in reaching personal goals by demonstrating resilience and positive behaviour.

Our **CHRISTIAN VALUES** are reflected in:

- Standing with **COURAGE** for what is right.
- Using **CREATIVITY** in problem solving and making life beautiful.
- Treating every person and everything with **RESPECT**.
- Having **COMPASSION** for others.
- Completing every task with **PERSEVERANCE**.
- Taking **RESPONSIBILITY** for ourselves.
- Living with **HOPE** for a better future.

At Dr Walker's we provide every pupil with the care and support they need to develop as individuals and become educated and successful British Citizens who understand the importance of the following British values:

- **Democracy**
- **The rule of law**
- **Individual liberty**
- **Mutual respect and**
- **Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.**

References

- Chelmsford Diocesan Education Board – Governing Boards
- Constitution (England) Regulations 2012
- [Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools: Statutory Guidance](#)
- Essex County Council – Essex Schools Infolink
- Essex Primary Headteacher's Association (EPHA)s' *Model Governing Body Succession Plan Policy* Governors for Schools
- National Governance Association
- Schoolsweb

Aims

- The aim of this policy is to ensure continuity of Governing Body ("Governing Body") effectiveness in response to planned and unplanned changes in membership.
- To comply with the [2012 Constitution Regulations](#). It is good practice for Governing Bodies to regularly review their effectiveness, including the extent to which their size and structure is fit for purpose and their members have the necessary skills.
- [Section 20 of the Education Act 2002](#) requires all maintained schools to have an Instrument of Government. This is a legal document for Local Authority schools that records the constitution of the governing board and the term of office for each category of governor as well as the name of the school.

Principles

- This policy is based on the following principles:
 - The Governing Body composition and roles will be in accordance with statutory requirements, as set out in "A Guide to the Law for School Governors" and our "Instrument of Government".

- This policy covers all Governing Body appointments, except that of the Headteacher which is subject to a separate policy.
- All Governing Body members will be provided with induction and other training relevant to their needs.
- Roles and responsibilities of individual Governors are documented and fully understood by Governors.
- Succession planning should be proactive – preparing the Governing Body for unexpected as well as planned changes – so that a seamless transition is always striven for.

Introduction

- In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, every state school has a governing body, consisting of specified numbers of various categories of governors depending on the type and size of school.
- Governors are unpaid.
- All Governing boards should have re-constituted under the 2012 Constitution Regulations or 2012 Federations Regulations, by 1 September 2015.
- School governors and trustees make a valuable contribution to children’s education, opportunities and futures.
- Being a school governor is a challenging, but hugely rewarding role. It provides the chance to make a real difference to young people, giving something back to the local community and use and develop skills in a board-level environment.
- By joining the Governing Body, you will also be joining the largest volunteer force in the country: there are over a quarter of a million volunteers governing state funded schools in England.
- Schools need Governing Boards that have a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective. Ofsted (the national inspection body for schools) has repeatedly noted that the most effective schools demonstrate effective leadership and management – which includes the governing board.

Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education: Governing Bodies

- The Governing Board is a vital part of the leadership of any school. Serving God and the school community is a privilege and responsibility. It is vital that this is carried out in an increasingly professional and effective way.
- During an Ofsted inspection there is a focus on inspecting the quality of leadership and management including governance, in the school. This not only means governors need to be prepared for ‘the interview’ but also attend to their roles responsibly.
- Their specific role in developing the school as a Church school is also scrutinised during the SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) process. One of the key questions SIAMS inspectors always ask is “How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?”.
- Governors should have a detailed and strategic knowledge of their school and it follows that governors, Head teacher and staff should work as a united team, dedicated to realising a shared Christian vision for the school.
- The Church School of the Future Review 2012 highlighted the need for church schools to:
 - Be central to the Church’s mission;
 - Be championed by the Church at every level;
 - Not dilute or compromise in its strong, distinctive ‘brand’;
 - Ensure faith and spiritual development at the heart of the curriculum; and

- Ensure high quality Religious Education and Collective Worship shapes its Christian ethos.
- It is the role of the governing board and Foundation Governors in particular to ensure this agenda is effectively pursued.

Becoming a Governor

- Anyone aged 18 or over can be a governor or trustee (but there are some exceptions) and you do not need to be a parent.
- There is no requirement to understand the education system, just the necessary skills, character and time to contribute.
- There is plenty of training available to help with learning about education.
- Schools needs and benefit from a range of professional knowledge on their Governing Board including education, finance, human resources, legal, marketing and public relations, property and estates management, and organisational change.
- A governor will be able to:
 - use their own experience of education and life beyond school to inform conversations;
 - develop and utilise their skills in a board-level environment;
 - make a valuable contribution to education and your community;
 - support and challenge the school so that it improves for pupils and staff; and
 - bring their unique experiences, perspectives and insights in to decision-making in the interests of the school community.

Required Governor Commitment

- It is to be expected that Governors will display a significant commitment to the school and the business of the Governing Body generally.
- Governors will be expected to establish an unofficial personal contract, whereby they will make themselves available to attend the School, Governing Body and Committee meetings to which they have membership, on a regular basis.

Elements of Effective Governance

- Governors must be prepared to adopt principles of public life:
 - selflessness,
 - integrity,
 - objectivity,
 - accountability,
 - openness,
 - honesty and
 - leadership.
- Governors should:
 - be committed to their role and to young people;
 - be confident in having courageous conversations;
 - be curious with an enquiring mind;
 - be able to challenge the status quo to improve things;
 - be collaborative to build strong relationships;
 - be critical to improve their own work and that of the board; and
 - be creative in problem solving and being innovative.
- Research and practice from a range of sectors tells us there are eight key ingredients to ensure governing bodies fulfil their role well:
 - 1) The right people around the table.
 - 2) Understanding the role & responsibilities.

- 3) Good chairing.
- 4) Professional clerking.
- 5) Good relationships based on trust.
- 6) Knowing the school – the data, the staff, the parents, the children, the community.
- 7) Committed to asking challenging questions.
- 8) Confident to have courageous conversations in the interests of the children and young people.

Roles and Responsibilities

- It is important to remember that governors are **not** on the governing body to serve as a **delegate** for a particular group of stakeholders.
- It is the job of **every** governor to argue for whatever is best for the children at the school. This is made clear in statutory guidance to the law for maintained schools.

“The governing body must operate, collectively, in the best interest of pupils, not as a collection of individuals lobbying for the interests of the constituency from which they were elected or appointed.” - Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools: Statutory Guidance
- It is also confirmed in the governors’ code of conduct from the National Governance Association, the national support organisation for school governors, which asks new members of any governing body to sign up to the following statement.

*“We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and **not as a representative of any group**, even if elected to the governing board.”* - National Governance Association Code of Conduct
- The Governing Body is to provide strategic leadership and accountability in school, and to act as a "critical friend", supporting the work of the Headteacher and other staff. It has three key functions:
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
 - Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
 - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Governors must appoint the headteacher and may be involved in the appointment of other staff.
- Governors set the aims and objectives for the school or group of schools and set the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives.
- They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher. In action, this means:
 - Appointing and performance reviewing the head teacher and senior leaders, including making decisions about pay;
 - Managing budgets and deciding how money is spent;
 - Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community;
 - Sitting on panels and making decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary;
 - Addressing a range of education issues within the school including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special needs, staff workload and teacher recruitment; and
 - Looking at data and evidence to ask questions and have challenging conversations about the school.
- Governors must review school exclusions in certain circumstances, and have the power to reinstate an excluded pupil or reduce the term of the exclusion (although not to increase it).

Different Types of governors, election of and voting rights

- The NGA encourages all governing boards to regularly review their composition to ensure that it continues to be effective for the size and needs of the school.
- Often, governing boards will start off considering the question ‘What is the optimum size for the governing board to be effective?’
- However, the first things to consider should be ‘What skills do we have and what skills do we need?’

a) Types of Governors

• Co-opted	
• Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) • Parochial Church Council (PCC)
• Local Authority	
• Parent	
• Staff	
• Staff: Headteacher	
• Associate member (have no voting rights on the full Governing Body)	

b) Election of Governors

- Although governors are either elected or appointed in different ways and from different stakeholder groups, they are all equal on the governing body.
- All governors regardless of their constituency are elected or appointed with one common purpose – to govern the school in the best interest of pupils.
- Governors are not elected to represent their stakeholder group but are elected to contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school, contributing to strategic discussion, holding senior leaders to account by monitoring school performance and ensuring money is well spent.

c) Voting rights

- **Every governor** has one vote as they have equal status. This applies whether they are a parent, staff governor, co-opted, headteacher or any other kind of governor.
- However, the Chair has limited special powers, e.g. when a vote is tied, the Chair of the meeting has a casting vote.
- All governors and associate members must leave the room and not vote if they have a conflict of interest, which means they cannot be objective. For example, if the governor runs a building firm and the school is considering taking out a contract with that firm, the governor must withdraw from the meeting.

Type	Information	Election of	Voting rights
Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA governors are not political appointments and are not on the board to take the side of the local authority. This is clearly explained in the DfE Governance Handbook. • <i>“Local authority governors must govern in the interests of the school and not represent or advocate for the political or other interests of the local authority; it is unacceptable practice to link the right to nominate local</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current LA Governor Vacancies are listed on the Essex County Council website. To register an interest in a vacancy, complete the Self-Nomination and Self-Declaration forms, returning them to LAGovernance@essex.gov.uk • Nominated by the Local Educational Authority (LEA) but appointed by the governing body in a vote. • The governing body has a right to set 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has equal voting rights.

	<p><i>authority governors to the local balance of political power.” - Governance Handbook</i></p>	<p>additional eligibility criteria for this role if they wish, with the only restriction in law being that the LA governor cannot be a school employee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can only be removed by the local authority, not governors themselves. • When the term of office ends, LA Governors can either request to continue in post or resign. • To continue, complete complete the three forms below and send them to LAgovernance@essex.gov.uk. • However, to resign, whether this be an early resignation or when the term of office has ended, simply inform the team via the email above. 	
<p>Parent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of pupils at school. • Parent governors are not parents’ representatives – they are representative parents. They are supposed to convey that parents are stakeholders, namely to govern the school in the best interest of pupils, and therefore should be part of its governing body without being the parents’ mouthpiece. They furthermore contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school, contributing to strategic discussion, holding senior leaders to account by monitoring school performance and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone whose child is attending the school can stand for election as a parent governor. • Elected, by the parents of pupils attending the school (or elected unopposed if there is only one volunteer). • If there are no volunteers from parents of registered pupils then parent governors can be appointed by the governing body rather than elected, because at this stage any parent of a former registered pupil or a parent of any child of compulsory school age or below becomes eligible for the role. • You cannot be a parent governor if you work for the school for more than 500 hours “in any 12 consecutive months” or you are an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has equal voting rights.

	ensuring money is well spent.	elected member of the local authority.	
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff governors are staff employed at the school. By virtue of their appointment a headteacher is a voting member of the governing body of their school unless they choose not to be a governor. Headteachers attend all meetings of the full governing body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected by staff as their representative. They do not have to be a teacher (but often are) and are elected by other members of staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has equal voting rights.
Staff: Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteachers attend all meetings of the full governing body. The headteacher of the school is responsible for day-to-day management of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Headteacher automatically qualifies for a place on the governing body. Because their role comes with the job they are known as “<u>ex officio</u>” governors, which means someone who is on the board “by virtue of their office”. They can choose not to be a governor if they wish and lose their governor role when they leave their job. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has equal voting rights unless they choose not to be a governor.
Co-opted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also known as community governors. They are volunteers and don’t have to have a connection to the school, religion or local authority. However, they may live or work in the community of the school area They bring their own skills and expertise to the governing body to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are invited to join the Governing Body by the existing governors. They are appointed by existing governors in a vote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has equal voting rights.
Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are members of faith school boards. . Faith schools require some members of their Governing Body to be of the school religion, but requirements vary by faith and diocese. <p>Responsibilities include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the nomination of Foundation Governors and the appointment process, can be found in the <u>Guidelines for the Nomination of Foundation Governors</u> document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has equal voting rights.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserving the links between Church, School and Diocese • Taking an active role in the SIAMS process • Ensuring that collective worship and religious education at the school are appropriately monitored • Ensuring that collective worship and religious education at the school follow the appropriate guidelines and/or syllabus • Bringing to the attention of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) any matters requiring their attention regarding the school • Ensuring that the Christian ethos of the school is encouraged throughout its community and is reflected in its policies and protocols, the curriculum and activities • Ensuring that their own attitudes and behaviour in relation to the school reflect its Christian ethos. 		
<p>Associate members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate members are not governors and are not included in the school's instrument of government. • They are extra individuals appointed by the Governing Body, who can bring additional skills or knowledge. • They are not governors and are not recorded on the Instrument of Government. • They may attend full governing board meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed when the Governing Body has no vacancies, but in need of someone with specific skills. • They may be appointed by the governing body as members of committees, and may include pupils, school staff, or anyone else who the governing body feel could contribute to its work. • Similarly, if a governor is retiring, the Governing Board may decide to recruit an associate to bridge the gap. • The school will consider associate members first when 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have no voting rights on the full Governing Body. • They may vote on any committee to which they have been appointed. • Their voting rights are decided by the governing body and are also limited by law to exclude matters concerning the budget, admissions, pupil discipline and the election or appointment of governors.

		any vacancies arise on the full Governing Body.	
Clerk to governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clerk is not a member of the governing body but has an important role to play in ensuring that the governing body runs efficiently. They are responsible for the administration of the governing body; they convene meetings, take the minutes etc. In many governing bodies they also provide procedural advice to governors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by the Governing Body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has no voting rights.

Constitution of the Governing Body at Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School

- A **single maintained school** (in other words, a school that is **not** legally joined to other schools in a federation) must have a **minimum of 7 governors**, with no maximum number. These requirements come from the [Constitution \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).
- The term of office for all types of governors is **four years**, but the Governing board can decide a shorter term of office for one or more categories of Governor
- As a **Voluntary Controlled Church of England school**, we are required to have partnership or **Foundation governors** - nominated by the appropriate religious body where the school has a religious character.
- The Governing Body may also appoint **Associate Members**, who are **NOT governors**.
- As a single maintained school, Membership of the Governing Body at Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School, which complies with Statutory Requirements, is as follows:

Headteacher governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unless the headteacher resigns as a governor. 		Dr Llewellen Lawson
Parent governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2. 		VACANCY VACANCY
Staff governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 staff governor in addition to the headteacher. 		VACANCY
Local authority (LA) governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 1 		Mrs Frances Wilson
Co-opted governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition, the Governing Body can appoint as many additional co-opted governors as they consider necessary - as long as staff governors, including the headteacher, do not exceed one-third of the total membership of the governing board. 		Mrs Karen Bush Mrs Paulette Houghton Mrs Julie Cooper
Foundation governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two (but no more than a ¼ of the total) foundation governors. 	Foundation Ex Officio	Rev Sam Brazier-Gibbs
		Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)	Mrs Jill Smylie
		Parochial Church Council (PCC)	Mrs Lesley Wallis
Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 		Mrs Marian Hawkins

- The total number of Governors is **10** except at any time when the Headteacher has given notice under Regulation 5 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 that they choose not to be a Governor, when the total number of Governors shall be reduced by 1.

Link Governors at Dr Walker’s Church of England Primary School

- Dr Walker’s Church of England will have the following Link Governors:

	Karen Bush	Sam Brazier-Gibbs	Julie Cooper	Paulette Houghton	Llewellen Lawson	Lesley Wallis	Frances Wilson	Jill Smylie	VACANCY: Parent Governor	VACANCY: Parent Governor	VACANCY: Staff Governor
Assemblies	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			
Christian ethos		x				x		x			
Curriculum: Art & Design			x								
Curriculum: Computing	x										
Curriculum: Design & Technology			x								
Curriculum: English / Handwriting				x							
Curriculum: EYFS							x				
Curriculum: Geography								x			
Curriculum: History								x			
Curriculum: Maths							x				
Curriculum: MFL: French				x							
Curriculum: Music			x								
Curriculum: Phonics / Early Reading				x							
Curriculum: Physical Education		x									
Curriculum: PSHE / RSHE		x									
Curriculum: Religious Education						x					
Curriculum: Science	x										
Finance	x										
Health & Safety / Maintenance	x										
Looked After Children (LAC/Post-LAC)							x				
Premiums						x					
Safeguarding / SCR / GDPR				x							
SEND			x								
Training for Governors								x			
Website							x				
Well-being (Pastoral)		x									

Periods of Appointment as Governors

- All Governors, except the Headteacher, have a maximum period of office of 4 years before reappointment or an election.
- Parent governors can continue in their role as a governor, until the end of their term of office, even if their child is no longer a pupil at the school.

- Appointments as **Chair of Governors and Vice Chair** are subject to an annual election, normally at the first meeting of the new school year.
- Length of appointment of **Associate Members** will usually follow similar arrangements but can be determined on an individual basis.

End of Appointment as Governors

- It is essential that the Governing Body plans and prepares ahead of the expiry dates of Governors' terms of office.
- Governors who are not looking to renew their commitment or choose to leave earlier are legally obliged to send their written resignation to the Clerk.
- To facilitate succession planning, Governors are also encouraged to provide the Headteacher and Chair of Governors with written notice at the earliest opportunity, ideally at least 3 months before departure.
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors and Chairs of Committees, who wish to stand down from those offices, should also provide the Headteacher (and Chair, if appropriate) with, ideally, at least 6 months' notice so that expressions of interest can be sought from others.
- However, this does not mean that Chairs/Vice chairs will be free of challenge in standing for re-election each Autumn Term, but in the interests of continuity it would be helpful if those wishing to stand for election could declare their candidature to the Clerk and Chair of Governing Body by the end of the Summer Term.
- In a properly planned situation, it could be expected that a Governor who is seeking election as Chair of the Governing Body, would have completed some governance training from Essex Governor Services and either have served as Vice-Chair or as a Chair of a Committee with a period of having shadowed the existing Chair of the Governing Body.
- There may be circumstances, of course, where this is not possible.
- In circumstances where the Chair is unavailable, the Vice-Chair is expected to assume the full role until the Chair returns, or a new Chair is elected.

Preparation for Recruitment and Recruitment and Induction of Governors

- A Governor Handbook is available for those who may be interested in becoming a Governor (of whatever type) and an opportunity to discuss the role of a Governor with the current Chair of Governors and/or Headteacher will be proactively encouraged.
- Activity to recruit all types of Governors should start early, including if appropriate, advertising vacancies and preparation of a short-list of potential candidates for election or appointment.
- Each candidate should be properly briefed on the advertised role (e.g., Parent Governor, Staff Governor, Community, Trust or Authority Governor) before selection / election.
- Once appointed, an existing Governor will be assigned as a Mentor to help the new Governor settle into their new role within the Governing Body and to assist with the induction period.
- Induction training will be offered by the Link Governor and the new Governor will be invited to attend Committee meetings as an observer until a decision has been made as to which committees the new Governor is to join.
- If a Governor is undertaking a new role within the Governing Body, if possible, it is advisable to shadow / liaise with the Governor that they will be replacing before undertaking their new responsibilities.
- In essence this means that recruitment activity should be conducted well in advance of the existing Governor leaving.
- Ideally, appointments / elections are conducted in the Autumn Term (i.e., October).
- To enable proper preparation, it is policy to advertise potential vacancies / initiate other recruitment action by the end of the Spring Term, to permit CRB checks to be completed and selection of a candidate by the Summer half-term.
- This will allow selected candidates to attend at least one Committee meeting (where appropriate), and one full Governing Body meeting, before they assume their position in the Autumn Term.
- The Governing Body would normally expect the departing Governor to leave at the end of the Summer Term.

Desired Competences, Skills and Attitudes of Candidate Governors

- Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School encourages diversity within its Governing Body.
- A variety of skills, experiences and backgrounds is clearly beneficial to the Governing Body and valued by the school.
- The ability to work co-operatively with others is essential.
- Service as a Governor requires significant dedication and commitment to the School, its Vision and its Objectives.
- Governors should be willing to share their own skills and expertise in the conduct of Governing Body business, to the benefit of each other and the Governing Body overall.
- Governors have a responsibility to identify with the school Ethos and Vision and to accept corporate interests and responsibility by putting aside their personal interests and views once a decision has been made.

Continuity of Governing Body Clerk

- Recruitment and selection of a Governing Body Clerk should also be planned early to ensure an appropriate period of induction.
- Suitable clerking qualifications and previous clerking experience will be desirable characteristics and will form part of the candidate comparison process.
- Selection interviews will be conducted by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
- Training opportunities should be offered by the Link Governor and candidates should be offered an information pack produced by the Chair of Governors.