Viridis Schools Federation

Orchard, Southwold & Hoxton Garden Schools
Governing Body Structure and Subcommittee Terms of Reference

The Full Governing Body

The Governing Body will form key committees to undertake core business for all three schools and receive termly reports from the Executive Headteacher.

Key Responsibilities

- Election of Chair & Vice Chair and agree co-opted members.
- The Chair will also usually act as the named Governor safeguarding lead.
- Plan self-evaluation & role of Governors in it.
- Hear reports from school committees re strategic actions & key decisions.
- Ensure a strategic approach to school development planning and evaluation of school priorities.
- Monitor and evaluate attainment for all pupils using comparative assessment information and ensure the effectiveness of each schools' approach to ensuring that teaching is consistently meeting pupil need including for disadvantaged and SEND pupils and that statutory reporting is undertaken.
- Ensure that statutory target setting and reporting is undertaken at each school
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the schools' curriculum in offering a broad, balanced, relevant and enriched opportunity.
- Visit the school whilst it is in session at least once a year and preferably termly (see below).
- Review and ensure adherence to statutory policies including schools lettings, health & safety and accessibility policies at least annually.
- Approval of new budgets as recommended by Finance committee.
- Hear appeals against head's decision to lift or change National Curriculum for a particular pupil.
- Ensure a robust approach to safeguarding and the well-being of all pupils.
- Undertake performance management of the Executive Headteacher and form a pay committee to support the Executive Headteacher in the function of staff and associate HT/Head of School appraisal.

Panels and Link Governors

The full Governing body will form panels and committees for the following:

- School Sub committees (see below)
- Resources & Pay
- Complaints
- Disciplinary
- Sickness absence panels
- Exclusion panels & appeals

Roles & Responsibilities

Individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the governing body, except where the whole governing body has delegated a specific function to that individual, or where regulations specify that a function is to be exercised in a particular way.

The governing body is legally liable for all actions taken in its name by individuals or committees to which it has delegated functions. The governing body should therefore ensure that decisions to delegate specific responsibilities are properly minuted and recorded.

Individual governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school whenever they wish. However, they need to be able to visit from time to time in order to develop their understanding of the school. These visits enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibility for the conduct of the school. Governors should arrange their visits with the headteacher, who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. The Executive Headteacher will arrange termly structured visits whilst the school is in session to support Governors in this function and it is expected that Governors would attend wherever possible, and at minimum of once a year.

The governing body must exercise its functions with a view to fulfilling a largely strategic role in the running of the school. It should establish the strategic framework by:

- Agreeing the aims and objectives for the school;
- Adopting policies for achieving those aims and objectives;
- Setting targets for achieving those aims and objectives.

The governing body should monitor and evaluate progress of its strategy and regularly review the framework for the school in the light of that progress. When establishing the strategic framework and reviewing progress, the governing body should consider any advice given by the Executive/Headteacher, the School Improvement Partner (SIP) and other professional bodies. The school improvement plan will generally provide the main mechanism for the strategic planning process.

The Executive/Headteacher has responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and for implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body. Governors are not expected to be involved in the detail of the day-to-day management or running of the school.

The Executive/Headteacher will discuss all the main aspects of school life with the governing body and will expect the governing body to both challenge and support the school. Acting as a “critical friend”, the governing body should offer support and constructive advice, but governors should not be deterred from questioning proposals and seeking further information to enable them to make sound decisions. The Executive/Headteacher should give the governing body enough information to enable it to feel confident that both it and the Executive Headteacher are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

A good governing body will delegate enough powers to allow the Executive/Headteacher to perform his or her management duties as effectively as possible. The Executive/Headteacher must report to the governing body regularly on how those delegated powers have been exercised and the governing body should keep the delegation under regular review.

Quorum

One half of the complete membership of the governing body, rounded up to the nearest whole number, including a member of the School Strategic Team and excluding vacancies.

Election of chair

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at the first meeting of each academic year by the committee.

Recording and reporting of meeting

The clerk to the committee, and will produce minutes of all meetings to be circulated before the full governing body meeting

Review of terms of reference

Annually, by the full governing body.

The Instrument of Governance for the Viridis Schools Federation is:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Single Governing Body of 13 Governors with an equal distribution from each site</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">8 x Co-opted Governors

2 x Parent Governors (Elected)

1 x Staff Governor (Elected)

1 x LA Governor

1x Executive Headteacher Governor</td></tr>
<tr><th>Hoxton Garden</th><th>Southwold</th><th>Orchard</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">7 members, 4 voting who are part of the full Governing body.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Four Voting Members*

Up to three Associate Governors:
including the Associate Headteacher</td><td>Four Voting Members*

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including the Associate Headteacher</td></tr>
</table>

***The Executive Headteacher holds voting rights and the entitlement to sit on each of the schools subcommitees. This means the total number of voting members inclusive of the EHT is five.

Terms of Office

With the exception of the Executive Headteacher, full governing body Governors hold an initial four year term of office. After four years these may be renewed for a second term. The renewal process would consist of a delcaration of interest and vote. After serving two terms of office, Governors would typically be asked to stand down and a skills selection or voting process undertaken to find a suitable replacement.

Where there is a lack of a suitably skilled replacement, a waiver may be issued to allow for one final term of office. No Governor, with the exception of the Executive Headteacher, can serve more than three terms of office.

Reviewed: October 2026

Associate Governors who sit on school subcommitees hold a maximum of five year term of office with the exception of Headteacher governors.

The Viridis Governing body was formed in September 2017, to ensure continuity Governors will be subject to a staggered date deemed to be the start of office for the first full 6 years. Governor groups have been assigned to balance to potential loss of skills and experience and phase this over time, with a view that elected positions would be renewed first.

To ensure a balance of skills, school subcommitee members will be considered for deployment on alternative subcommitees annually and on request. Decisions regarding placement of Governors to subcommitees will be made by the Chair of Governors, following dues consideration of representations, and this decision is final and binding.

School Sub Committees

Each school has a subcommittee which reports to the full Governing body. See page 6 for an overview of responsibilities.

Meetings

- The committee will meet at least once a term following dates agreed by the full Governing body to allow for co-ordination of meetings across sites.
- The agenda for each meeting shall be derived from the annual Governing body calendar as agreed by the full Governing body including items of delegated responsibility.
- The committee will receive reports from the school in sufficient detail to enable it to undertake its strategic responsibilities for planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Whenever possible, reports will be shared in a common format across the three schools to support comparative analysis and investigation.
- The Chair from the committee will agree four key outcomes from the meeting to be shared with the full Governing body

Rules for membership

The membership will consist of:

- Four voting members who will additionally be members of, and report to, the full Governing body.
- Up to three associate (co-opted) members who do not hold post on the full Governing body or voting rights except where agreed by the full Governing body. This includes the Headteacher.
- The number of voting governors must exceed the number of associate (non-voting) governors on the committee.
- The Executive Headteacher, as a member of the full Governing body, is also entitled to attend any meeting of the committee and holds voting rights.

Governors will be made up of:

- A staff representative (voted by staff) and or a parent representative (voted by parents) *and/or*
- A local authority representative (proposed by the Local Authority) *and/or*
- A co-opted representative who holds the skills/qualities deemed desirable by the full Governing body (below).

Up to three associate Governors (including the Headteacher) will be co-opted and hold the skills/qualities deemed desirable by the full Governing body. Governors are particularly interested in the following skills or experience:

- Knowledge of the local community
- Proven communication skills
- Knowledge and understanding of the role and responsibilities of Governing Body.
- A proven commitment to school governance (and the time to attend most Governing Body meetings) and be willing to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills by attending training.
- Knowledge of, or experience in, Information Technology.
- Knowledge and understanding of premises/ project management
- Legal skills or experience
- An educational specialism
- Experience of school or corporate finance
- Ability to speak a second language

Quorum

To vote on any delegated responsibilities there must be at least 3 voting Governors and a member of the schools strategic team present.

Purpose of the School Sub Committees

- To oversee the strategic implementation of strategies to build, foster and develop effective parental partnerships with the school
- To monitor the development of a range of community services and extended school activities to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.
- To consider community matters specifically referred to the committee.
- To consider the effectiveness of the schools approach to promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- To monitor and evaluate progress on school development priorities, initiatives & interventions in order to feedback to the full Governing body.
- To ensure that pupil assessment and record keeping systems are in place and working and that assessment data is used effectively.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of provision and the attainment of all pupils including that for SEN and disadvantaged pupils using results and comparative assessment information and ensure that target setting and statutory reporting is undertaken.
- To ensure that school policies on curriculum subject areas and on such matters as safeguarding, sex education, religious education, Special Educational Needs & Ethnic Minority Achievement are implemented and reviewed.
- To ensure that the school has a robust approach to safeguarding and the well-being of all pupils
- To consider the effectiveness of the school's approach to health and safety and disability access and make recommendations to the full Governing body.

Powers of the sub committee

The committee has full decision making powers in regards to the above other than for decisions below which should be referred to the full governing body.

- Additional expenditure in excess of funds delegated to it
- Budget setting and monitoring
- Changes to staffing structures, staff appraisal, employment and recruitment
- Changes to the curriculum outside of those required statutorily
- Communications with parents on behalf of the Governing body
- Changes to the structure or terms of reference for the Governing body or Subcommittees.
- Changes to any of the above related to overall strategic school improvement other than recommendations to the full Governing body.

No vote on any matter may be taken unless the majority of the members present are voting governors. The Chair has a casting vote.

All decisions to be voted on should be first agreed by the full Governing body to ensure that all schools confer the same rights and the outcome reported to the full Governing body.

Election of chair

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at the first meeting of each academic year by the committee.

Recording and reporting of meeting

The clerk to the committee, and will produce minutes of all meetings to be circulated at least one week before the full governing body meeting following the committee meeting.

Review of terms of reference

Annually, by the full governing body.

Resources and Pay Sub Committee

The resources committee is formed from, and reports to, the full Governing body.

Meetings

- The committee will meet at least once a term following dates agreed by the full Governing body to allow for co-ordination of meetings across sites.
- The agenda for each meeting shall be derived from the annual Governing body calendar as agreed by the full Governing body including items of delegated responsibility.
- The committee will receive reports from the school in sufficient detail to enable it to undertake its strategic responsibilities for planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Whenever possible, reports will be shared in a common format across the three schools to support comparative analysis and investigation.
- The Chair from the committee will report back on agreed recommendations to the full Governing body.

Rules for membership

Membership will be made up of Governors who hold the necessary skills and experience as deemed by the Governing body including knowledge of school or corporate finance and project/premises management.

The membership will consist of:

- Four voting members who will additionally be members of, and report to, the full Governing body.
- The Executive Headteacher
- The Schools Business Manager/Bursar is expected to attend meetings in order to report to the committee but has a non-executive role.

Quorum

Four governors including a member of the School Strategic Team.
To vote on any delegated responsibilities there must be at least 3 voting Governors and a member of the schools strategic team present.

Purpose of the Resource and Pay Sub Committee

- To oversee and present to the governing body for approval an annual budget reflecting budget constraints and priorities identified through the School Development Plan
- To approve short, medium and long term financial plans for the school, reflecting school priorities including staffing plans and plans relating to the repair, maintenance and development of premises, and to recommend action on these plans to the governing body or delegate them to the school leadership team as appropriate.
- To prepare and review financial policy statements.
- To ensure school financial management standards are met within the appropriate timescale and documents and standards are maintained between assessment periods.
- To ensure that the governing body agrees financial procedures and controls, including audit, and to monitor implementation in the school.
- To agree effective procedures for monitoring the budget, to consider appropriate reports for the purposes of monitoring, to report the outcomes of monitoring together with an evaluation of the use of resources to the governing body and make any appropriate recommendations.
- To agree the level of delegation to the (Executive) Headteacher and Schools Business Manager for the day to day financial management of the school.
- To keep under review the race equality, disability and gender equality policies, in particular in relation to staff recruitment, retention and development and to report emerging issues to the governing body.
- To prepare and monitor a health and safety policy that complies with legislation and to ensure that appropriate checks and assessments are carried out and prioritised for necessary action.
- To keep under review the procedures for staff recruitment and training for safer recruitment, the policies on staff sickness, discipline and grievances and the criteria and procedures for redundancy, and to ensure that staff are consulted and kept informed as appropriate.
- To regularly review the performance management policy and pay policy for approval by the governing body.
- To fulfil the Full Governing Body's statutory duty to undertake the performance review of the Executive Headteacher, which is conducted by up to 3 members of the committee.
- To draw up for governing body approval and keep under review a policy on staff consultation, and to undertake consultation as and when appropriate.

Powers of the committee

The committee has full decision making powers in regards to the above other than for decisions below which should be referred to the full governing body and/or delegated to the school leadership team.

- Additional expenditure in excess of funds delegated to it
- Budget setting and monitoring
- Changes to staffing structures, staff appraisal, employment and recruitment
- Changes to the curriculum outside of those required statutorily
- Communications with parents on behalf of the Governing body
- Changes to the structure or terms of reference for the Governing body or Subcommittees.
- Changes to any of the above related to overall strategic school improvement other than recommendations to the full Governing body.

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Governing Body
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- Approval of new budgets as recommended by Finance committee.
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Schools Sub Committees

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