



Ridgeway Education Trust
Excellence through Partnership

Role and Responsibilities of Governors, including Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors

ALL RET TRUSTEES AND GOVERNORS

Trustees and Governors are **strategic** rather than operational in focus and as such their role is largely a thinking and questioning role that demonstrates challenge ('critical friend'), not an operational/'doing' role, as this function will be carried out by school staff.

General

- Contribute to strategic discussions at Governing Board (GB) meetings to ensure high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the Trust by:
 - Setting the Trust's/school's vision, ethos and strategic direction, reflecting clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the Trust/schools
 - Holding the Executive Headteacher/Headteachers to account for the educational performance of the schools and their pupils and ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the Trust/schools and making sure money is well spent, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation

Meetings

- Attend meetings of the GB whenever possible, and provide good reasons for any failure to attend meetings
- Prepare for and contribute to meetings and complete any agreed follow-up work

Teamwork

- Contribute to the GB's operation as an effective team by establishing and maintaining good working relationships with other governors and with staff
- Recognise the power of the GB body is vested in the group and that no governor has individual authority unless it is delegated by the GB
- Recognise the respective roles of the GB and the Headteacher and staff (the GB is a strategic body; the operational management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher)
- Recognise that governors are equal members of the GB and accept collective responsibility
- Speak or act on behalf of the GB when authorised to do so
- Accept a fair share of the GB's work, including through active committee membership

Knowledge of the Trust's schools

- Engage in Quality Assurance days, school events and functions where possible
- Know the school's strengths, its areas for development and improvement plans

Personal interests

- Put responsibilities as a governor before personal interests
- Ensure any business or pecuniary interests are declared as required and withdraw from meetings as appropriate

Other

- Maintain confidentiality
- Act at all times fairly and without prejudice
- Support the school in the community, exercising prudence and tact if contentious issues affecting the school arise outside the GB, and follow procedures agreed by the GB in making or responding to criticism or complaints

Personal development

- Undertake training and take advantage of opportunities to increase understanding and effectiveness as a governor
- Keep up to date with governance through reading and accessing information via National Governance Association and [Learning Link](#), and Trust/school information through newsletters and the websites.

Panels

When required, serve on panels of Trustees/Governors to:

- Hear Governors' Disciplinary Panels/Committees and Permanent Exclusions
- Appoint the Headteacher and other senior leaders
- Appraise the RET Executive Staff
- Set Executive Pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
- Hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- Hear appeals about pupil exclusions

Expenses

- Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as a Trustee/Governor. Further information is available in the Trustee & Governor Expenses Policy.

CHAIR OF TRUSTEE/GOVERNORS

Role and responsibilities in addition to those listed for All Trustees/Governors

The chair, with support from the vice chair, is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the Governing Board and has a vital role in setting the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance.

- Ensure clear leadership and direction
- Maintain a focus on the predominantly strategic role of the GB and establish a clear understanding of the different roles of governors and staff in the school
- Ensure that all Trustees/Governors are clear about their roles, what is expected of them, and receive appropriate induction, training and development
- Encourage and develop the GB's role as critical friend
- Build an effective team by recognising and using people's strengths: delegate effectively, clarify objectives and use the whole GB
- Ensure everyone is actively contributing relevant skills and experience, participating constructively in meetings, and actively involved in the work of committees
- Have honest conversations, as necessary, if anyone appears not to be committed or is ineffective in their role

Meetings

- Work closely with the Headteacher and Clerk to plan effective GB meetings, ensuring relevant and realistic agendas
- Contribute to the plan of the year's cycle of meetings and a timetable for action and reports
- Chair GB meetings effectively and efficiently: ensure meetings start and end on time, that agenda items are properly introduced, and that people are encouraged to contribute
- Ensure all decisions taken at meetings are understood and minuted and that the necessary action is taken
- Ensure, supported by the Clerk, that the GB's meetings and affairs are conducted in accordance with the law
- Ensure, with the Clerk, that Trustees/Governors receive relevant information and materials well in advance of meetings
- Emphasise that all Trustees/Governors must accept collective responsibility for decisions taken at GB meetings
- Use committees and smaller groups to meet statutory requirements, develop new ideas and agree plans of action

Other

- Encourage commitment, loyalty and high standards of behaviour by Trustees/Governors through personal example expectations in the RET Code of Conduct
- Take the lead in managing the GB's accountability to parents

- Act on behalf of the GB in emergencies and report any urgent action taken on behalf of the GB, ensuring it is fully explained and supported
- Co-ordinate the GB's response to new legislation and emerging priorities

Planning

- Work with the GB to provide strategic direction: implement, plan and monitor progress
- Co-ordinate the formulation of an annual GB development plan in sympathy with the Trust/school development plan, and ensure that all Trustees/Governors have an opportunity to contribute to Trust/school development and target setting
- Work with the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher and Trustees/Governors on effective Trust/school policies
- Take the lead in co-ordinating the work of the GB in relation to Ofsted/SIAMS inspections
- Ensure that the processes of Trustee/Governor recruitment, induction and development are effective
- Take the lead on succession planning by Identifying and developing individuals in order to equip them to step in to the chairing role or vice chair.

Supporting

- Be seen regularly in the Trust schools and attend school functions
- Develop and maintain effective teamwork by the GB
- Be accessible to Trustees/Governors, staff and parents
- Develop working relationships with all Trustees/Governors, including particularly the Vice Chair and chairs of committees, and ensure that individual Trustees/Governors' strengths are known and used and their efforts recognised
- Ensure that the efforts of staff are recognised by the GB
- Develop an honest, open and supportive partnership with the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher, making time to listen to concerns and give constructive advice
- Develop working relationships with the diocese and other key partners as applicable
- Work in close partnership with the Clerk to manage the work of the GB effectively
- Meet Trustees/Governors of other local schools from time to time
- Be ready to admit failure and accept more than a fair share of blame
- Be ready to take on the jobs no-one else will do

VICE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES/GOVERNORS

The vice chair supports the chair to ensure the effective functioning of the Governing Board and has a vital role in upholding the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance.

Role and responsibilities in addition to those listed in All Trustees/Governors

- Deputise during the absence of the Chair of Trustees/Governors
- Support the Chair in the conduct of meetings
- Work closely with the Chair and take responsibility for agreed areas of work
- Support the effective operation of committees
- Check, with the Chair, that decisions taken by the GB are enacted