



CONWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Body Virtual Attendance Policy

Approved by: Stephen Piper

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Background

At Conway Primary School we recognise that technology means that the governors are now able to take a flexible approach to attendance at governing body and committee meetings. Historically there has been a requirement on a governor to be physically present at a meeting in order for him or her to be officially recognised as present and, when necessary, vote. The new regulations for this aspect of governance, which were introduced in 2013, state that ‘the governing body may approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference.’ By adopting this policy the governors of Conway Primary School are seeking to maximise attendance, ensuring that all governors are able to be part of the decision making process and no individual is treated unfairly due to work commitments, caring responsibilities or similar issues.

Responsibility for the Policy

This policy is owned by the governing body and, unless there is a specific requirement to do otherwise, it will be reviewed on an annual basis during the first meeting of the academic year.

Approved on behalf of the Governing Body of Conway Primary School

Procedures for Virtual Attendance

General

- ❑ There can only be one governor attending virtually at any meeting
- ❑ Governors will, apart from in exceptional circumstances, inform the meeting's chair and Headteacher that they intend to have a virtual presence no later than 24 hours before the meeting is due to commence in order that the necessary arrangements can be made to meet this request
- ❑ Governors cannot attend more than two meeting virtually per annual unless a specific request is approved by the governing body
- ❑ No meeting will be chaired virtually. If the chair is unable to attend the meeting in person the vice-chair will lead the meeting

Agenda, Papers and Minutes

- ❑ A planned virtual attendance will, where possible, be recorded on the agenda. If a request is to attend virtually is received after the agenda has been published the chair will inform the remaining governors at the beginning of the meeting
- ❑ When a meeting is taking place virtually the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the chair has exercised his/her right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation
- ❑ Virtual governors should not vote on any issues where the papers have been tabled and they have not has access to the detail
- ❑ Meetings where there is a virtual attendance will be minutes in line with existing procedures but the nature of the virtual attendance will be recorded.

Meeting Quorum and Voting

- ❑ Governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to its quorum. If the communication link is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum. This will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate at which point not decisions can be made by the remaining governors
- ❑ Where a time-sensitive secret ballot is required the virtual governor will inform the clerk by telephone of their voting intention. If this is not possible the virtual governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- ❑ Provide the facilities which will allow governors to have a virtual presence to attend governing body or committee meetings including but not limited to Skype, a telephone with loudspeaker or iPad - Facetime

The Virtual Governor will:

- ❑ Ensure that their surroundings are secure and that a third party cannot hear any confidential or sensitive information.
- ❑ Ensure that any virtual meetings do not happen when travelling on public transport
- ❑ Ensure that the integrity of a virtual meeting is maintain throughout
- ❑ Attend for the whole meeting not just for a one item or vote
- ❑ Confirm their identity before commencement of the meeting