

St Michael's C of E (A) First School, Penkridge

Terms of Reference for the Governing Body

1. Purpose of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of this Voluntary Aided school provides **strategic leadership, accountability, and oversight** to secure high-quality education rooted in the school's **religious character** and **trust deed**. Its core functions are:

- Ensuring **clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**, consistent with the school's foundation
 - Holding executive leaders to account for **educational performance** and **staff performance management**
 - Overseeing the school's **financial performance**, including VA-specific capital responsibilities
 - Ensuring compliance with statutory duties including **safeguarding, SEND, health & safety, and equality legislation**
 - Preserving and developing the **religious character** of the school in partnership with the **Diocese/Foundation**
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2. Legal and Foundation Framework

The Governing Body operates within:

- Education Acts 1996–2011
 - School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (VA-specific provisions)
 - School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013
 - School Governance (Constitution) Regulations 2012
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
 - Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
 - The school's **Trust Deed**
 - Diocesan Board of Education guidance (where applicable)
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3. Membership

Membership is defined by the **Instrument of Government**, which for VA schools requires a **majority of Foundation Governors** appointed by the relevant religious authority.

Categories typically include:

- Foundation governors (majority)
- Parent governors
- Staff governor
- Local Authority governor
- Head Teacher (ex-officio)

Foundation governors must preserve and promote the **religious ethos** of the school. Terms of office are normally **four years**, except for the Head Teacher.

4. Chair, Vice-Chair and Governance Roles

- The Governing Body elects a **Chair** and **Vice-Chair** annually.
 - The Chair ensures effective governance and acts as the main link with the headteacher.
 - Additional roles may include:
 - **Safeguarding Governor**
 - **SEND Governor**
 - **Foundation/Christian Distinctiveness Governor**
 - **Health & Safety Governor**
 - **Finance/Resources Governor**
 - **Pupil Premium Governor**
 - **Looked-After Children Governor**
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5. Meetings

- The Governing Body meets **at least three times per academic year**.
 - A meeting is quorate when **50% of governors in post** (rounded up) are present, including a **majority of foundation governors** where required.
 - Minutes will be taken, approved, and retained as official records.
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6. Committees

The Governing Body may delegate functions to committees or individuals, except those legally reserved for the full board. The only current committee is for OSC (Out of School Care)

7. Strategic Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Approve and monitor the **School Development Plan (SDP)**
 - Uphold and promote the **religious character** of the school
 - Ensure curriculum provision reflects the school's **faith ethos**, including RE taught in accordance with the trust deed
 - Ensure statutory policies are in place and reviewed on schedule
 - Monitor **attendance, behaviour, exclusions, and safeguarding**
 - Ensure compliance with the **SEND Code of Practice**
 - Oversee **risk management** and **health & safety**
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8. Accountability Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Hold the Head Teacher to account through **support and challenge**
 - Monitor pupil progress and attainment, including SEND, disadvantaged pupils, EAL, and more able pupils
 - Review the **Head Teacher's performance** annually
 - Ensure staff performance management systems are effective
 - Engage with stakeholders including parents, pupils, staff, the parish, and the wider community
 - Ensure the school's **faith ethos** is reflected in leadership, curriculum, and culture
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9. Financial Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Approve the **annual budget** and monitor expenditure
- Ensure compliance with the **Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)**
- Oversee **internal financial controls**
- Ensure best value and effective use of public funds
- Approve financial policies including **charging, lettings, and procurement**
- Manage VA-specific responsibilities for **capital works**, including:
 - Governors' liability for **10% capital contribution**

- Oversight of **building maintenance, repairs, and capital projects**
 - Liaison with the **Diocese/Foundation** on capital funding and approvals
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10. Staffing Responsibilities (VA-Specific)

In a VA school, the Governing Body is the **employer of staff**. It will:

- Appoint all staff, including the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher
 - Ensure recruitment reflects the school's **religious character**, including the right to require **faith commitment** for certain posts
 - Ensure compliance with safer recruitment
 - Manage staff disciplinary, capability, and grievance procedures
 - Ensure employment policies reflect statutory requirements and **Diocesan/Foundation guidance**
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11. Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure the school meets all statutory safeguarding duties
 - Appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and a **Safeguarding Governor**
 - Ensure all staff and governors receive appropriate safeguarding training
 - Monitor safeguarding culture, record-keeping, and safer recruitment practices
 - Ensure compliance with **KCSIE** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
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12. Governor Conduct and Training

- Governors must follow the **Governors' Code of Conduct**
 - Foundation governors must uphold the **school's religious ethos**
 - Governors must declare **pecuniary and personal interests**
 - Governors must complete mandatory training including safeguarding, Prevent Duty, and induction
 - Governors should engage in ongoing CPD, including **Diocesan/Foundation training**
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13. Delegation of Authority

The Governing Body will maintain a **Scheme of Delegation** outlining responsibilities delegated to committees, the headteacher, and individual governors.

Delegated decisions must be reported back to the Governing Body.

14. Information Governance

- Governors must comply with **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**
 - Governors must use secure systems for communication and document storage
 - Confidentiality must be maintained at all times
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15. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed **annually** by the Governing Body and approved at a quorate meeting.
