



Governor Handbook 2018/2019

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REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision Date	Next review due	Summary of Changes (and author)
1.0	Spring 2015	Spring 2016	Handbook finished (M. Heathfield)
1.1	Summer 2016	Summer 2017	Updates to reflect GB changes, new meeting dates (M. Heathfield)
1.2	Autumn 2018	Autumn 2019	Updated (C. Goodyear)

Welcome

Hello,

This handbook is an introduction to the governing body of Alderman Pounder Infant and Nursery School.

Within this handbook you will find the essential 'need to knows' about what it is to be a governor, how we work as a team, and what you can get out of the role.

I strongly believe we have a governing body that is dedicated, committed and knowledgeable. We are also highly ambitious for the pupils of this school and for ourselves. We will base our decisions on a thorough understanding of the school's performance, and of staff and pupils' skills and abilities.

Whether you are a new governor or an existing governor this handbook is for you. Please take some time to read it and feel free to contact me or any of the governing body if you want to know more.

Clare Goodyear
Chair of Governors

Introduction to the Governing Body

Our governing body draws on the full range of skills and knowledge of its membership. This ensures different perspectives are considered when we make our decisions.

It also means we have at our disposal experience of social work, teaching, law, business improvement techniques, health and safety assessment, data analysis and contract management, to name just a few.

Our governors have come to us for a variety of reasons:

"I want to know more about how schools work and how children learn"

"How could I refuse the head teacher's request?"

"I'm keen to apply a business perspective to the work of a governing body"

"I'm thinking of going back into teaching"

We will support you to develop your role as governor through a proactive, individually-tailored training and development programme.

We are part of The Flying High Trust and as such are able to access support, training and development programmes through them. The '*Governors' handbook for governors in maintained schools, academies and free schools*' sets out clearly the essential information that all governors need about their duties and responsibilities.

In addition, the '*statutory policies for schools*' page outlines the policies and other documents school governing bodies are legally required to hold.

Our handbook will not duplicate what is detailed within these documents, but it will provide some basic information, guidance and assistance to new governors.

As members of the Flying High Trust we also follow the Trusts code of conduct and their A-Z acts as a guide to everything you need to know (see appendix i)

The Governing Body Code of Conduct can be found at Appendix ii. This sets out what behaviours are expected from school governors and the commitment required.

Contents

The Basics.....	3
Structure.....	4
Governors and Link Roles.....	5
What to expect.....	5
Governors and the school vision.....	6
Recruitment and Retention.....	6
Training	7
Support and Mentoring.....	7
Appendix i FHT A_Z	
Appendix ii Code of Conduct	
Appendix iii Terms of Reference	
Appendix iv Role Descriptors	
Appendix v Visits to school	

The Basics

Governing bodies need to focus on three core strategic functions:

- 1) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- 2) Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- 3) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Ofsted inspectors will judge the effectiveness of governance in school against these functions.

Here at Alderman Pounder this means we work closely with the Head Teacher and the Trust to ensure a whole school vision and a strategy for achieving this through the school improvement plan. We have high expectations throughout school for behaviour, progress of pupils and the conduct of adults working in the school.

We also hold the Head Teacher to account by asking challenging questions to ensure we know school performance is improving. These questions could be along the lines of, for example: Which groups of pupils are the highest and lowest performing and why? How is progress being monitored? How are standards being raised for all children including those with special educational needs, those receiving free school meals, those from a service background? What are the figures on attendance, behaviour, safeguarding? How are any current issues being addressed?

We need to check data ourselves to ensure it is robust and we are confident in its accuracy. Data analysis is an important part of governance

Governors are responsible for ensuring that Alderman Pounder's money is well spent. We therefore need to be asking further questions such as are we allocating our resources in line with the strategic priorities and how can we get better value for money from our budget and are we making full use of our assets and efficient use of all our financial resources?

We do all this with the background knowledge that we treat all our families and children with respect and care regardless of their backgrounds, religions and faiths. Our vision is of an inclusive school where all feel valued and no one view is paramount.

At Alderman Pounder we also value confidentiality. We will agree how and when to share the issues we discuss in our meetings with the wider school community

Structure

Our governing body was reconstituted according to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 in September 2018 when we joined Flying High Trust.

There are 14 members of our governing team. All governors contribute to the huge amount of work required of the governing body through specifically delegated committees. These committees meet each term and report back to the Local Governing Body for ratification of its decisions.

Alderman Pounder has four committees and you will be asked to sit on one of them.

Curriculum and Standards Committee: covers all issues relating to standards, including Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1 targets, School Improvement Plan (SIP), School Evaluation Form (SEF), and pupil performance through assessing performance data produced by the school

Resources: deals with all matters relating to the finance and staffing of the school, and is concerned with all aspects of health and safety, buildings maintenance and security

Pay: considers how teaching staff are assessed and paid through consistency of assessments, Head Teacher's performance and performance related pay

Hearings and Complaints and Appeals committees will be formed as deemed necessary.

See Appendix iii for Terms of Reference for each committee

Governors and link roles

We have several link governor roles at Alderman Pounder. You will be asked to fill one of these roles depending on your experience and knowledge and which committee you will sit on. Link governors must understand that their role is as a source of support to the school and a source of information for the governing body.

Our current link roles are:

- Quality of Teaching and Learning Link Governor
- SEND Link Governor
- Safeguarding Link Governor
- Health and Safety Link Governor
- Pupil Premium Link Governor
- Early Years Link Governor
- Outcomes for Pupils Link Governor
- Effectiveness of Leadership Link Governor
- GDPR Link Governor

They will meet members of staff responsible for that area within the school and work with them to ensure high standards are maintained throughout the school. See Appendix iv for role descriptors

What to expect

As mentioned previously being a governor has a number of key functions.

We are part of the leadership team of the school and as such we are judged by Ofsted but also we have to work in line with the Trusts ethos and policies. We would be supported by the Trust in the event of an inspection by Ofsted.

When there is an inspection there are five main judgements and an overall one. One of the judgements is leadership and we play a large part in this judgement – a school's rating can be affected by how well governors are involved in the school and how effective they are.

At Alderman Pounder we aim to be an outstanding governing body and therefore we need to be prepared to meet with the Ofsted inspection team and to share our knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for the school.

There is therefore a high level of commitment required by any potential governor. This is both in time and enthusiasm, and a desire to share any knowledge and skills already possessed

Any additional time that can be given directly to school, with the children, is greatly appreciated and your presence at whole school events is greatly appreciated.

With regard to skills and knowledge, use what you have to bring more expertise to the governing body and school on a day-to-day basis.

Being enthusiastic about children's learning, development and welfare is also paramount to being a governor. Therefore this is another level of commitment to the school and its wider community.

Governors and the school vision

As you will have read being a governor includes a focus on the school vision, and working closely with the Head Teacher (and others) so that vision is achieved.

We do this in many ways, as set out below;

- we contribute to the school vision
- a link governor is assigned to each area as above
- we use our skills and knowledge, supported by training and development opportunities
- we complete a skills audit annually
- we meet with other governors within the Trust and the wider community
- we support the SLT in managing attendance issues
- we have Governor articles in the newsletter
- we provide Safeguarding and SENCO support
- we attend committee meetings and contribute
- we assess our role, future aspirations and development needs
- we meet termly with subject leadership teams and attend the subject lead presentations annually
- we hold Governor days
- we challenge HT/DHT on provision from data analysis
- we visit school regularly

Recruitment and Retention

At Alderman Pounder we value the skills and experience of our governing body. We also look for specific skills, knowledge and experience that we may not currently have. This is achieved through an annual skills audit which helps identify any gaps, and as governors serve for 4 years at a time there is often a vacancy which needs filling.

Prospective governors are invited to meet with the HT/DHT/CoG/vice CoG for an informal 'interview', tour of the school and Q&A session. If both sides agree you are then invited to next LGB, as an observer. If all parties are happy then there is a formal vote to welcome you into governing body. Parent governors are elected by the parent body of the school in a slightly different process but it is still important that you bring the skills required at that time.

New governors are then advised to read this Governors Handbook, complete a skills audit, and look at training opportunities. You will be invited to attend both main committee meetings before deciding which one to join and hold a 1:1 meeting with CoG to review experiences to date, agree specific role and review aspirations.

Training

Training opportunities are available through the Trust and the Local Authority. The main ones are induction, finance, roles and responsibilities and basic safeguarding. Specific roles also engender training e.g. safeguarding, performance management, pupil premium. The overall plan is monitored by the CoG and informs the annual skills audit and review of the governing body.

Support and mentoring

Your views are important to the governing body and the school, we want to make you feel welcome and included, and hope that you enjoy your time with us. Please feel free to speak to the CoG or Vice CoG or Headteacher at any time if you have ideas to share or concerns to express.

Appendix i

[FHT A-Z Guide 2017-18 updated Feb 2018\[10515\].docx](#)

Appendix ii

[new code of conduct.docx](#)

Appendix iii

[Terms of Reference.docx](#)

Appendix iv

[Roles and remit of Link Governors June 13 \(1\).doc](#)

Appendix v Visits to School

Through our programme of individual governor visits we aim to:

- improve governors' knowledge of the ethos of the school and their awareness of the work within the curriculum

- assist the whole governing body to fulfil its statutory role with regard to monitoring and evaluation
- improve governor understanding of the needs of the school and the priorities for the school development plan
- monitor and evaluate the current school development plan especially in relation to curricular issues
- improve governor links with staff, pupils and parents
- help governors to be better able to support the school community
- report the need for resources

Range of visits include

- we expect all governors will visit at least twice a year during the working day
- all new governors are offered an introductory visit soon after their appointment as part of their induction programme
- governors are welcome to visit the school informally (but with prior notice if the visit happens during the school day)
- specific invitations are sent for some occasions
- visits to talk with the Head Teacher or subject leaders can also be made by appointment
- governors receive copies of parents' newsletters which contain notice of events and they are most welcome to attend any of these
- most often, governors will make monitoring visits as part of their monitoring and evaluation role

Protocol

- governors should at all times be aware of the confidentiality of what they see or hear
- in the unlikely event of governors observing something which gives them serious cause for concern, they should take the matter up as soon as possible with the Head Teacher
- governors should remember that a word of thanks and encouragement at the end of the lesson will help staff feel more confident about the visit and the role of governors