The Mary Bassett Lower School

Terms of Reference and Standing Orders of the Governing Body

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The Governing Body will operate at all times within the requirements of all legislation which applies to schools and will follow guidance set out in the Department of Education Governance Handbook (October 2020).

In addition, the following procedures will apply to the operation of the Governing Body. They will be reviewed annually.

September 2026

Introduction

The Governing Body of The Mary Bassett Lower School works as a 'whole team' with support from the Finance & Premises Committee. It will meet at least 6 times per year.

The agenda for each meeting will be drawn up, taking into account all the tasks which the Governing Body is required to undertake and in line with the "Rhythm of the Business" document adopted by the Governing Body. (see attached)

When necessary, small working groups will be set up to consider larger or more complicated tasks which may arise from the business of the meeting, and which would require more time and input than the regular meetings allow for. The composition, scope and the reasons for the working groups will be recorded in the minutes.

Any working group formed to undertake a particular task will report back to and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Governing Body who will then decide what action should be taken.

In addition, the Governing Body has identified a number of Link Governor roles to cover all areas of the curriculum. Each Link Governor will oversee (but is not wholly responsible for) a specific aspect of the work of the School or the Governing Body. These roles will be allocated at the September meeting of the Governing Body and will take into account the skills of the individual Governors.

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Terms of Reference for the Governing Body	
The Governing Body has resolved to conduct all its business as a full governing body with the support of the Finance & Premises Committee. The attached Standing Order 'Delegation of Functions to Headteacher' outlines those responsibilities wholly delegated to the Headteacher. The main responsibilities to be managed by the Governing Body are outlined below:	
Operational	● To draw up the Instrument of Government and any amendments thereafter ● To review the Standing Order for Election of the Chair and Vice Chair including the length of the term of office. ● Elect (or remove) the Chair and Vice Chair. ● To appoint (or dismiss) the Clerk to the Governing Body. ● To hold at least 6 Governing Body meetings each year. ● To appoint and remove co-opted governors and any associate members. ● To suspend or remove a governor. ● To decide when working groups should be set up, the specific role and scope of that group and the composition of it. ● To receive reports from any working group and to consider whether any action by the Governing Body is necessary. ● To review the structure and working practice of the Governing Body annually. ● To recruit new governors as vacancies arise. ● To set up and publish a register of Governors' Business Interests. ● To approve and set up a Governors' Expenses Scheme. ● To regulate the Governing Body procedures where not set out in law, and record these as Standing Orders. ● To delegate to the Headteacher the functions as described in the Delegation of Functions to Headteacher Standing Order (attached). ● To monitor the progress of the issues identified in the School Improvement Plan. ● To arrange a suitable induction process and mentoring for newly appointed or elected governors. ● To audit individual and collective development needs and promote appropriate training. ● To evaluate Governing Body performance. ● To ensure the Headteacher provides such reports as requested by the Governing Body to enable it to undertake its role ● To set up, where appropriate, working parties to undertake a particular task, clearly defining the role and scope of that working party and taking into account the skills of the Governing Body when considering the composition of them. ● To identify and appoint Link Governor roles on an annual basis, taking into account the needs of the school and the skills of the Governing Body.
General	● To regularly review the vision and values of the school and ensure that these are shared with all stakeholders. ● To take an active role in School Self Evaluation identifying success and areas requiring improvement. ● To update and review regularly the School Improvement Plan, identifying monitoring opportunities for the Governing Body. ● To review regularly how the school is regarded by pupils, parents and carers.

	● To ensure the school has in place all statutory policies and to keep these under regular review, consulting with representative stakeholders as appropriate. ● To approve policies on review. ● To approve all school trips involving an overnight stay away from home. ● To ensure that the school does not discriminate against pupils, job applicants or staff on the basis of race, religion, gender, age disability or sexual orientation. ● To discharge duties in respect of pupils with special needs by appointing a 'SEND governor'. ● To ensure that the Governing Body complies with all other legal duties placed upon them.
Budget	● To approve the first formal budget plan each year. ● To agree a 3-year budget. ● To monitor monthly expenditure. ● To agree annual action plans. ● To monitor how the school premiums are spent, to include PPG and Sports Premium.
Staffing	● To make Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher appointments, to include appointing an appropriate selection panel. ● To determine the staff structure. ● To agree a pay policy and pay discretions. ● To establish a governor panel to hear staff appeals against dismissal, redundancy or grievances. ● To dismiss the Headteacher. ● To end the suspension of staff or Headteacher. ● To determine dismissal payments/early retirement. ● To establish and renew procedures for addressing staff discipline, conduct and grievance.
Curriculum and Learning and Achievement	● To ensure the National Curriculum is taught to all pupils. ● To monitor the Curriculum Policy. To establish a Charging and Remissions Policy for activities. ● To decide which subject options should be taught having regard to resources and implement provision for flexibility in the curriculum (including activities outside the school day).
Appraisal and Performance Management	● To establish, review and approve the Staff Appraisal Policy. ● To determine the timing of the Headteacher appraisal review cycle and appoint three governors to act as reviewers alongside an external advisor.
Discipline/ Exclusions	● To establish a Statement of Behaviour Principles on which the school can produce a Behaviour Policy. ● To review the use of exclusion and decide whether or not to confirm all permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where a pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in total in a term. ● To receive reports on bullying, homophobic and racial incidents.
Premises & Insurance	● To seek advice from the LA, to ensure adequate levels of buildings insurance and personal liability insurance are in place.
Health & Safety	● To ensure that a Health and Safety Policy and appropriate procedures are in place. ● To ensure that Health & Safety Regulations are followed. ● To establish and to review an Accessibility Plan at least every three years.

Inclusion and Equality	● With the Headteacher, to establish and review a SEND policy. ● To publish and update at least annually a SEND information report (meeting requirements set out in the Special Needs and Disabilities Regulations 2014).
Religious Education	● To ensure that the school provides teaching of religious education for all pupils in accordance with the school's curriculum and has informed parents and carers of their right to withdraw their child.
School Organisation	● To publish proposals to change category of school. ● To decide whether to convert to academy status. ● To establish a Data Protection Policy and review it every two years and ensure that it is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.
Information for Parents and Carers	● To ensure that statutory requirements for ensuring information published on the school website, including details of governance, are met. ● To determine, with the Headteacher, whether the school should have in place a Home School Agreement. ● With the Headteacher, to establish, publish and review a Freedom of Information scheme and ensure the school complies with it. ● To establish, publish and review a Complaints Policy.
Formal Collaborations **Safeguarding**	● To consider whether to form a federation or to join an existing federation. ● To consider requests from other schools to join a federation. ● To have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn in to terrorism and to oversee the incorporation of the necessary procedures and practices outlined in the Prevent duty in to the Child Protection Policy. ● To adopt and review annually a child protection policy and relevant procedures.

Membership of the Governing Body

Rob Merry	Co-opted	(Chair)
Lily Crank	Co-opted	(Vice-Chair)
Janet Woolsey	Co-opted	
Terry Pettitt	Co-opted	
Vacancy	Co-opted	
Vacancy	Co-opted	
Vacancy	Co-opted	
Jo Radford Cutler	Parent	
Vacancy	Parent	
Vacancy	Local Authority	
Victoria Bather	Staff	
Hilary Wheeldon	Headteacher	

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	**September 2027**
Quorum: one half of the number of governors in post (rounded up)	

Terms of Reference for Pay Committee
• To develop, implement and administer the pay policy. • To consult with members of staff in the drafting of the Pay Policy and at its reviews. • To ensure that each member of staff has access to a copy of the Pay Policy. • To ensure that appropriate funding is allocated for pay within the school's staffing structure and pay policy, with regard to planned and potential determinations on performance pay progression. • To handle appeals, if the matter cannot be resolved informally. • To keep up to date with relevant developments and any legal changes and to advise the Governing Body when the school's pay policy needs to be revised. • To have responsibility for pay determinations in accordance with the pay and appraisal policies on behalf of the Governing Body. • To minute clearly giving the reasons for all decisions and report these decisions to the next full Governing Body meeting as a confidential item to be received. • To seek professional advice from the Local Authority as necessary. • To attend relevant training as appropriate.
Membership: 3 governors Any three governors excluding the Headteacher and any other members paid to work at the school ie Staff Governor. It is not recommended that an individual governor be assigned to this role as this may leave decisions open to challenge

Membership:
Janet Woolsey
Lily Crank
Terry Pettitt

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	**September 2027**
Quorum	**3**

Terms of Reference
FINANCE AND PREMISES COMMITTEE

Purpose

1. To provide FGB with appropriate information and recommendations to meet FGB's obligations in connection with Finance, Premises and Health & Safety.

Finance Responsibilities

Internal Oversight

2. The FGB delegates day-to-day financial responsibilities to the Headteacher.
3. If required, coordinate with CBC Internal Audit function and any appointed external audit regime initiated by CBC.
4. To review and recommend, at least annually, a Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) for FGB approval.
5. Ensure that the school operates within the Financial Regulations of CBC

Conflicts of interest

6. Members must declare any potential relevant interests of conflicts of interest at each meeting and these will be recorded and declared at the next FGB meeting.

Financial Management

7. In consultation with the Headteacher, draft the first formal budget plan of the financial year for approval by FGB and carry out any necessary revisions and monitor the budget (monthly).
8. To establish and maintain an up to date 3-year financial plan
9. To review the Outturn Report and report any significant variances from the original budget to FGB
10. In the event of a material overall budget deficit, recommend a Medium Term plan to inform the recovery of deficit at least each year, if applicable
11. To consider a budget position statement including virement decisions at least termly and to report significant anomalies to FGB
12. To indicate to FGB whether sufficient funds are available for proposed pay increments as recommended by the Headteacher
13. In light of the Headteacher Performance Management Group's recommendations, to indicate to FGB whether sufficient funds are available for proposed increments
14. To monitor cash-flow reports at least termly and report annually to the FGB on the outcome of the monitoring
15. To review and approve financial policies on an annual basis
16. To report, at least annually, to FGB on Value for Money and report on the effectiveness of finance in relation to the School Improvement Plan.
17. Recommend to FGB dismissal payments/early retirement where necessary
18. To recommend to FGB decisions in respect of service agreements, contracts and insurance (buildings and public liability)

19. Maintain an overview of and ensure an up-to-date asset register is maintained together with an annual inventory

Controls

20. Monitor and report on the compliance with relevant finance obligations
21. To monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds kept on behalf of the Governing Body
22. Report to FGB any incidents of fraud, improper use of public money or assets and subsequently report to CBC on behalf of FGB
23. To review, monitor and approve the Governors' Expenses scheme under delegation

Premises and Health & Safety Responsibilities

1. To advise the Governing Body on priorities, including Health & Safety, for the maintenance and development of the school's premises (*links to SFVS evidence 14/17*)
2. To oversee arrangements for repairs and maintenance (links *to SFVS evidence 14/17*)
3. In consultation with the Headteacher, to oversee premises-related funding bids
4. To oversee arrangements, including Health and Safety, for the use of school premises by outside users, subject to governing body policy
5. To establish and keep under review a Building Development Plan
6. To ensure, as far as is practical, that Health and Safety issues are appropriately prioritised
7. To establish and keep under review an Accessibility plan (statutory requirement for review every three years minimum)
8. To carry out risk assessments for the premises and ensure that the results of these are actioned and reported
9. To review and agree policies relating to Premises, Health and Safety as delegated
10. To institute and keep the Health and Safety Policy and its practice under review and to make revisions where appropriate

Name of Governor/Associate Member	G/AM	Date Appointed to the Committee
Rob Merry	G	September 2024
Vicki Bather	G	September 2024
Sophie Benjamin	G	September 2024
Hilary Wheeldon (Headteacher)		September 2024

Chair of the Committee	Rob Merry
Clerk to the Committee	Adam Woulds

Quorum (minimum of 3, committee can determine higher number	2 (including Headteacher)
Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Date of Review	**September 2027**

Terms of Reference for the Clerk to the Governing Body

The Clerk is expected to work within the following terms of reference:

Guiding Principles

- The Clerk is accountable to the Governing Body.
- He/she is employed by the Governing Body and line managed by the Chair of Governors, whose responsibility it is to provide induction and conduct an annual appraisal.
- The Clerk will be provided with a contract of employment.
- Governors, associate members and the Headteacher cannot be appointed as Clerk to the Governing Body.

The main responsibilities of the Clerk are:

- To provide advice to the Governing Body on governance, constitutional and procedural matters.
- To provide effective administrative support to the Governing Body.
- To ensure the Governing Body is properly constituted.
- To manage information in accordance with legal requirements.

Provide advice to the Governing Body

- Advise on governance legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings.
- Act as the first point of contact for governors with queries on procedural matters.
- Have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance and where necessary seek advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the Governing Body.
- Inform the Governing Body of any changes to its responsibilities as a result of a change in school status or changes in the relevant legislation.
- Offer advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures and self-evaluation.
- Ensure that statutory policies are in place and are revised when necessary, with the assistance of staff.
- Advise on the annual calendar of Governing Body meetings and tasks.
- Send new governors induction materials and ensure they have access to appropriate documents.
- Contribute to the induction of new governors taking on new roles, in particular Chair or Vice Chair.

Effective administration of meetings

- With the Chair and Headteacher, prepare a focused agenda for meetings.
- Liaise with those preparing papers to make sure they are available on time and distribute the agenda and papers as required by legislation or other regulations.
- Ensure meetings are quorate.
- Record the attendance of governors at meetings (and any apologies – whether they have been accepted or not) and take appropriate action in relation to absences, including advising absent governors of the dates of the next meetings.
- Draft minutes of the Governing Body meetings, indicating who is responsible for any agreed action with timescales, and send drafts to the Chair and Headteacher for approval.
- Circulate the reviewed draft to all governors within the timescale agreed with the Governing Body.
- Follow up any agreed action points with those responsible and inform the Chair of progress.

Membership

- Advise governors in advance of the expiry of a governor's term of office, so elections can be organised in a timely manner.
- Chair that part of the meeting at which the chair is elected, giving procedural advice concerning conduct of this and other elections.
- Maintain a register of governors' pecuniary interests and ensure the record of governors' business interests is reviewed regularly and lodged with the school.
- Ensure Disclosure and Barring has been carried out on all governors.
- Maintain a record of training undertaken by members of the governing body.
- Maintain governor meeting attendance records and advise the Chair of potential disqualification through lack of attendance.
- Advise the Governing Body on succession planning.

Manage Information

- Maintain up to date records of the names, addresses and category of Governing Body members and their term of office and inform the Governing Body and any relevant authorities of any changes to its membership.
- Maintain copies of current Terms of Reference and membership of any working parties and any link governors.
- Maintain a record of signed minutes in school and ensure copies are sent to relevant bodies on request and are published as agreed at meetings.
- Maintain records of Governing Body correspondence.
- Ensure copies of statutory policies and other school documents are kept in the school and published as agreed, for example on the school website.

Personal Development

- Undertake appropriate and regular training and development to maintain his/her knowledge and improve practice.
- Keep up to date with current educational developments and legislation affecting school governance.
- Participate in regular performance management.

Additional Services

The Clerk may be asked to undertake the following additional duties:

- Clerk any statutory appeal committees/panels the governing body is required to convene.
- Assist with the election of parent and staff governors.
- Assist with the training of new governors in areas appropriate to the clerking role.
- Maintain archive materials.
- Perform such other tasks as may be determined by the Governing Body from time to time.

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	**September 2027**

Delegation of Functions to Headteacher

The Headteacher is expected to work within the following terms of reference, and to provide the Governing Body with such reports in connection with his or her functions as the Governing Body requires:	
Budget	● To make miscellaneous financial decisions up to an agreed limit of £2,500. ● To enter into contracts up to the limit of £20k. ● To monitor monthly expenditure. ● To make payments.
Staffing	● To appoint teachers and non-teaching staff. ● To suspend staff. ● To dismiss staff. ● To produce and maintain a central record of recruitment and vetting checks. ● To make recommendations on pay reviews for staff to the Pay Committee for approval.
Curriculum	● To ensure the National Curriculum is taught to all pupils and consider disapplication for pupils as appropriate. ● To agree the content of any Sex and Relationship Education and to keep up to date a written policy for its delivery.
Appraisal and Performance Management	● To formulate and implement an Appraisal Policy. ● To undertake an annual appraisal of all staff and to keep a record of each appraisal.
Discipline/Exclusion	● To formulate the school Behaviour Policy and publicise it to staff, pupils and parents and carers.
Religious Education	● To provide Religious Education in line with the school's curriculum.
Collective Worship	● To ensure that all pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship.
Health & Safety	● To ensure that Health & Safety regulations are followed.
School Organisation	● To ensure that school lunch nutritional standards are met. ● To establish a Data Protection Policy and review it at least every two years and register with the Information Commissioner's Office. ● Maintain a register of pupils' attendance. ● To ensure provision of free meals to those pupils meeting the criteria.
Information for Parents and Carers	● To ensure that parents and carers are aware of their rights to withdraw their child from collective worship, RE and Sex and Relationship education. ● To consider with the Governing Body whether the school should have in place a Home School Agreement. ● With the Governing Body, to establish and publish a Freedom of Information scheme and ensure the school complies with it.
Extra-Curricular Provision	● To put into place the additional services agreed by the Governing Body.
Inclusion and Equality	● To designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision (the SEND Co-ordinator or SENDCo). ● To appoint a designated teacher for Looked After Children.

	● With the Governing Body, to establish an Accessibility Plan and review it every three years.
Safeguarding	● To appoint a member of staff to be the designated safeguarding lead.

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	**September 2027**

Terms of Reference for Link Governors

Link governors are expected to work within the following terms of reference:

There is no legal requirement to appoint link governors but The Mary Bassett Lower School believes them to be an effective way to help the Governing Body to understand, oversee, monitor and develop particular areas of responsibility within the school. The link governor should ultimately enrich the whole Governing Body's understanding of their particular area and therefore contribute to more informed decision making.

A link governor will:

- Take a special interest in a particular area of responsibility.
- Keep abreast of developments locally and nationally and report on them to the Governing Body.
- Attend appropriate training.
- Make focused visits to school and complete a written report which should be sent to the clerk for distribution within 14 days of the visit.
- Have regular contact with staff within the school, with responsibility for their particular area.
- Monitor how well relevant policies adopted by the Governing Body are operating within the school and understand any barriers to their implementation.
- Report back regularly to the Governing Body, making recommendations where appropriate for action by the Governing Body.
- Be responsible for ensuring that matters which fall into their remit are included in agendas for meetings of the Governing Body to ensure that the school runs efficiently and in line with the Rhythm of the Business.

All visits to the school will be arranged with reference to the Headteacher and in accordance with the Governor Visits policy.

Link Governors:

Maths	Terry Pettitt
Reading	
Writing	Rob Merry & Jo Radford Cutler
Science	Rob Merry
PE & Sports Premium	
RE, RSE & PSHE	Vicki Bather
History & Geography	Lily Crank
Music	Terry Pettitt
Computing	Terry Pettitt
Art & Design Technology	Lily Crank
Modern Foreign Languages	Sophie Benjamin
Early Years	Lily Crank
Safeguarding (to include Young Carers)	Lily Crank & Janet Woolsey

SEND	Jo Radford Cutler
Specialist Funding – PPG	Janet Woolsey & Jo Radford Cutler
Communications	Terry Pettitt
Data Analysis	Terry Pettitt
GDPR	Terry Pettitt
Governor Visits	Hilary Wheeldon
Health & Safety	Jo Radford Cutler
Technology and Social Media	Terry Pettitt
Training	Terry Pettitt
Website	Terry Pettitt
Wellbeing	Janet Woolsey
Whistleblowing	Lily Crank

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Terms of Reference for Panel Hearings
From time to time, it will be necessary to set up a panel of governors to deal with issues that may arise as part of the business of the school. ● To make any decisions under the Governing Body's HR procedures e.g. disciplinary, grievance, capability, where the Headteacher is the subject of the action. ● To make any determination or decision under the Governing Body's Complaints Procedure for Parent and Carers. ● To consider any appeals against a decision to dismiss a member of staff or to a decision short of dismissal e.g. disciplinary, grievance or capability. ● To make any determinations on behalf of the Governing Body in relation to staff redundancy and redundancy appeals. ● To consider any representations by parents and carers in the case of an exclusion (parents/guardians do not have to be invited). ● To consider the appropriateness of any permanent exclusion or fixed term exclusion which totals 15 days or more in one term or where a pupil is denied the chance to take a public examination (parents/guardians must be invited). ● All panels are to be convened by the Clerk to the Governing Body. **NB Any governor who has participated on a panel for a staffing decision, cannot sit on the appeal panel.**
Membership: 3 governors Any three governors who are: 1. Suitably qualified to undertake the role, and 2. Available on the dates specified and be able to commit the time needed to complete the task. *The Headteacher is disqualified from serving in this role.* *Any governor having a connection with either a pupil, a member of staff or the incident in question which could affect their ability to act impartially should not serve on the panel.*

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Terms of Reference of the Headteacher Performance Review Group

● To meet annually with an independent advisor and Headteacher to discuss and determine the Headteacher appraisal objectives for the coming year (the planning meeting). ● To review, with the support of the independent advisor, the performance of the Headteacher against the agreed appraisal objectives and determine the recommendation on pay progression (the review meeting). ● To prepare and agree the Headteacher appraisal review statement, and report to the Governing Body. ● To monitor through the year the performance of the Headteacher against the agreed objectives and to ensure that appropriate support and development opportunities are provided. ● To make recommendations to the Governing Body in respect of pay progression.
Membership: 3 governors
Janet Woolsey
Lily Crank
Terry Pettitt

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Standing Order for the Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Guiding Principles

- The Governing Body **MUST** elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair.
- When the office of Chair or Vice Chair becomes vacant, the Governing Body must elect a new Chair or Vice Chair at their next meeting.

The role of the Chair of the Governing Body

Role Purpose

To provide leadership to the Governing Body and ensure that governors fulfil their functions for the proper governance of the school.

Leading governance in schools

- To ensure that the Governing Body and Headteacher have a shared sense of purpose.
- To ensure the Governing Body sets a clear vision and strategy for the school.
- To lead the Governing Body in monitoring the Headteacher's implementation of the school strategy.

Leading and developing the team

- To ensure the Governing Body has the required skills to govern well, and that appointments made fill any identified skills gaps.
- To ensure all governors receive appropriate induction, ongoing training as needed and have a thorough understanding of their role.
- To ensure members of the Governing Body act reasonably and in line with the Governing Body's agreed code of conduct.
- To develop a good working relationship with the Vice-Chair, ensuring s/he is kept fully informed and delegating tasks as appropriate.
- To ensure that Governing Body members feel valued and encourage their development.
- To carry out a performance review of each governor.
- To ensure that there is a plan for succession for the Chair, Vice-Chair and any link governors, and that by recommending limits on office, there is always a mix of new and experienced members.

The Chair, the Headteacher and accountability

- To build a professional relationship with the Headteacher which allows for honest conversations, acting as a sounding board and ensuring there are no surprises at meetings.
- To meet regularly with the Headteacher, which in normal circumstances is likely to be monthly.
- To ensure that there are transparent and effective processes for the recruitment and induction of the Headteacher.
- To ensure appropriate governor involvement in the recruitment of senior leaders.

- To ensure all governors concentrate on their strategic role, receive information fit for purpose and hold the Headteacher to account.
- Where required, represent the Governing Body in its dealings with external partners and be an advocate for the school.
- To attend school functions (plays/sports days/prize giving) as appropriate and encourage other governors to do so.
- To ensure that complaints made to the Governing Body are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
- To play a lead role in any decision to suspend the Headteacher.

Leading school improvement

- To ensure the Governing Body is involved at a strategic level in the school's self-evaluation process and that this feeds into the key priorities.
- To ensure the Governing Body's business is focussed on the key strategic priorities.
- To take the lead in representing the Governing Body at relevant external meetings with agencies such as Ofsted, the Department for Education and the local authority.
- To ensure the Governing Body has mechanisms in place to obtain and listen to the views of parents, carers, pupils and staff.
- To ensure the Governing Body adopts a visits protocol which is linked to monitoring key strategic priorities and to delegate such visits to the relevant link governor.

Leading Governing Body business

- With the Clerk and the Headteacher, to plan for the Governing Body meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the Governing Body's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and reducing unnecessary paperwork.
- Chair meetings effectively and promote an open culture on the Governing Body that allows ideas and discussion to thrive whilst ensuring clear decisions are reached as quickly as possible.
- To collaborate with the Clerk to establish effective working procedures.
- To ensure that decisions taken at the meetings of the Governing Body are implemented.
- To ensure the Governing Body appoint a professional clerk capable of providing advice on the body's functions and that s/he is appraised and developed.

The Role of the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body

- Work closely with the Chair of Governors to establish a constructive relationship.
- Take on responsibilities delegated by the Chair.
- Deputise for the Chair during any absence.
- Support the Chair in exercising their role.
- Undertake a wide range of development and training to enable them to effectively undertake the role.

Procedure for electing Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body

1. The Governing Body will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from its number when either the Chair/Vice-Chair's term of office has ended or s/he has resigned the position.
2. The Governing Body of The Mary Bassett Lower School has decided that the term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair will be two years. The precise end date of the term of office will be determined prior to the meeting at which the election takes place.
3. The Clerk to the governors shall give governors at least three weeks' notice prior to the meeting requesting written nominations. These should be submitted to the Clerk at least one week before the election. Candidates may submit up to 250 words in support of their nomination. Nominations on the day will only be accepted where no written nominations have been received prior to the meeting. Governors who are employed at the school as a teacher or as another member of the school's staff cannot stand for election. Governors may self-nominate, but if nominating another governor their approval should be sought prior to submitting the nomination.
4. The Clerk will act as Chair during the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair and will ensure the meeting is quorate. Each nominated governor will be invited to speak to the Governing Body setting out her/his reasons for standing. Candidates will be limited to three minutes. All candidates must leave the room while a discussion and vote takes place. This will be the case even if there is a single nomination.
5. A vote by secret ballot will be held, even if there is only one nomination.
6. The Clerk will count the votes and announce who has been elected as Chair. The successful candidate will be invited to take the Chair.
7. In the event of a tie, the Governing Body will re-run the ballot. If it remains a tie, the tied candidates will draw lots.
8. The governors may reject all nominees for Chair if they choose. If no candidate has the support of the majority of the Governing Body, another candidate will be sought from the floor. If this candidate does not receive majority support, the Vice-Chair will take on the role of Acting Chair until the next full Governing Body meeting, at which the election procedure will be repeated. Where a Vice-Chair must also be elected, and the Governing Body has the quorum to do, it will proceed with the election.

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Standing Order for the Appointment of Co-opted Governors
● Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Body. They are people who in the opinion of the Governing Body have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. ● The Governing Body may advertise the vacancy broadly to reach as wide an area as possible. Priority may be given to candidates with particular skills if this expertise would enable the Governing Body to work more effectively. In these cases this would be clearly stated when notifying the vacancy. ● All prospective co-opted governors will be asked to complete an application form explaining their background and why they wish to be appointed. ● On receipt of the completed written application forms, each prospective co-opted governor will be invited to meet with a panel of governors. ● The composition of the panel will be decided by the Governing Body and will include the Headteacher and two other governors. ● In the event that only one candidate has met with the panel, a discussion will take place as to their suitability to join the Governing Body. If the panel agrees that they have the necessary skills and character to be an effective governor, a recommendation will be made for their appointment to the Governing Body. ● In the event that more than one candidate has met with the panel, a discussion will take place with a view to deciding which candidate best meets the needs of the Governing Body. ● Once the panel has decided on its preferred candidate, it will make a recommendation for appointment to the Governing Body. ● The Governing Body will be invited to ratify the recommendation of the panel at the next scheduled meeting.

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Standing Order for Meetings of the Governing Body

Governors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct referred to in pages 26 to 28 of this document. In addition they will:

- Arrive in good time for the start of any meeting, having read all the paperwork sent to them in connection with the agenda, and be prepared with questions to ask or comments to make.
- Be familiar with the contents of the School Improvement Plan.
- Limit discussion to policies and actions and not people.
- Participate in discussion and listen to the views and comments of others.
- Be brief and adhere to any time limits placed against agenda items.
- Follow up on action points between meetings.

The following persons have the right to attend all meetings of the Governing Body:

- Headteacher
- Clerk
- any governor
- associate members (unless the Governing Body requires them to leave for items relating to individual members of staff or pupils).

The following persons will, where appropriate, be invited to attend meetings of the Governing Body, depending on the subject matter of the agenda: Deputy Headteacher, members of the Senior Leadership Team, SENDCo. At other times, members of the Senior leadership Team will be invited to meetings to observe the workings of the Governing Body.

Governing Body meetings will be held at the school or virtually at least 6 times each year. The Clerk will prepare a suggested calendar of meeting dates for the following year, for approval at the meeting held in July of each year.

The Clerk to the Governing Body, with input from the Chair, will prepare an agenda for distribution at least seven days before the meeting. Governors wishing to place items on the agenda should inform the Clerk 14 days before the scheduled meeting, and provide a copy of any supporting papers.

Voting, where necessary, will normally be taken by a show of hands; however, the Chair may determine a secret ballot where this has been requested by two or more governors.

All meetings will be convened by the Clerk. Any 3 members of the Governing Body may request a meeting by giving written notice to the Clerk, which includes a summary of the business to be transacted. The Clerk will then prepare an agenda to call a meeting.

Draft minutes will be approved for email circulation by the Chair within 2 weeks of the meeting, before being formally approved by the Governing Body at the next meeting.

Agreed by the Governing Body on	**17 September 2026**
Review date	September 2027

Code of Conduct for the Governing Body of The Mary Bassett Lower School

(adopted from the NGA model code of conduct)

Once this code has been adopted by the Governing Body, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

Selflessness

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

We will be truthful.

Leadership

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

We will focus on our core governance functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

   NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

As individual governing body members, we agree to:

Fulfil our role & responsibilities

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.

2. We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our scheme of delegation.
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school.
4. We agree to adhere to school policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the governing body if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Demonstrate our commitment to the role

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and governing body protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Build and maintain relationships

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents, carers and other relevant stakeholders from our local community.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with governing body members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. We will work to create an inclusive environment where each governing body member's contributions are valued equally.

4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the governing body and ensuring appropriate conduct.

Respect confidentiality

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business, and these will be recorded in the register of business interests.
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school website.
7. We accept that information relating to governing body members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available. We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.

Adopted by: The Mary Bassett Lower School Governing Body on **17 September 2026**

The Governing Body agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full Governing Body.
