



# Governor Virtual Attendance Policy

<b>Policy Date:</b>	September 2023	<b>Version:</b> 1.2	
<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	September 2026	Headteacher: Nitash Odedra	<i>N. Odedra</i>
<b>Ratified by Governing Body:</b>			
Chair of Governors: Sue Welford		Insert Signature	<i>Sue Welford</i>

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The governing board of Rushey Mead Primary School determine that the following arrangements apply to full governing board meetings and committee meetings.

1.2 The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing bodies of maintained schools in England to: “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”.

## **2. Virtual Attendance at Face to Face Meetings**

Where a governor wishes to attend a meeting of the governing board by either telephone or video link every effort must be made to notify the Chair and Clerk at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible. The governors will be asked their reasons for not attending the meeting in person and their attendance virtually will be subject to the approval of the governing body at the beginning of the meeting, though this approval will not be withheld without good reason. Where approval is withheld the reason for this will be minuted and the governor informed immediately.

2.2 Governors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been ‘present’ for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the governor sharing their vote verbally with the clerk). Where this is not possible the governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.

2.3 Governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.

2.4 The meeting will be chaired by a governor who is present in person.

2.5 If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a governor to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

## **3. Virtual Meetings**

3.1 The three statutory full governing board meetings will normally be face to face meetings. At Rushey Mead Primary School, School Improvement Committee Meetings and Staffing and Finance Meetings will take place via video conference call as long as the usual quorum of governors is ‘present’ on the call.

3.2 Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all governors to access the meeting.

3.3 Where 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.

3.4 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a governor who is present, other than the headteacher, taking the minutes, and these will be presented to the next meeting of the full governing body.

3.5 Virtual meetings must not be recorded by any governor or the clerk without the approval of the governing body and for a specified purpose.

#### **4. Suggested protocols for Governors virtual / remote meetings:**

##### **Prior to virtual meeting**

1. Ensure normal procedures are followed - The governing board must abide by their normal rules, procedures and code of conduct and give particular regard to the duty to maintain confidentiality. If you are not able to attend a meeting, send apologies as you would for a face to face FGB or committee meeting and ensure the agenda and papers are sent out 7 days in advance.

2. Join the meeting early – To ensure the meeting starts on time, join the meeting before the start time (i.e. 5 – 10 minutes beforehand). This will also ensure that any technical issues can be resolved prior to the start.

##### **Start of the meeting:**

1. All governors will be encouraged to call in with their webcam/video switched on, if possible. It's much harder for everyone to participate, and for the Chair to moderate the meeting, if someone is not visible.

2. The Chair or Clerk will set up the call on whatever platform you choose, and circulate the link to everyone else.

3. If possible, the platform or system being used will be tested before the meeting.

##### **During the meeting**

1. Focus during virtual meetings can waiver during long meetings so consider limiting the length of the meeting as well as the fact that remote meetings can be harder to manage.

2. Time delays can happen, so the Chair will ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute and ask questions.

3. If the meeting will be discussing confidential information, the Chair will make sure, everyone can be in an appropriate location (to avoid other people overhearing confidential details).

4. The Chair will check in regularly with the Clerk – time delays and variable sound quality can make it hard to take accurate minutes.

5. If a governor is in a location with lots of background noise, microphones will be muted when not speaking – this improves call quality for everyone.

**End of Meeting:**

1. After the meeting consider what has worked well and whether any measures/processes need to be put in place to ensure it works better next time.