



Governor Induction Pack

2021\22

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1. Introduction

Welcome to your new governor induction pack, produced by Mason Moor Primary School.

This pack should help to explain the roles and responsibilities of being a governor, how the governing body is structured in our school and how the governing body carries out its duties.

This pack includes the following:

- The responsibilities of a governor.
- The different types of governor.
- The responsibilities of the Head teacher, Leadership Team and the Chair of Governors.
- Being an effective governor.
- The governing body membership and structure.

Before becoming a Governor in our school, we will ask you to complete the following:

- An application form.
- A pecuniary interests declaration.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application form. See section 22 below.

2. About Mason Moor Primary School

- We are a community school maintained by Southampton City Council, which means that the local authority owns our land and buildings.
- Southampton City Council coordinates our pupil admissions.
- Historically we were a one and a half form entry school which means that we could enrol up to 45 pupils in that year group but we are currently working towards a maximum of 30 pupils in each year group i.e. one form entry.
- We host a specialist resource unit for 10 pupils, on the roll of Springwell School, who are integrated into mainstream classes during afternoons.
- We were judged to be a good school by Ofsted in February 2018.
- Our current Headteacher joined us in September 2018.
- **We are a school that must secure rapid improvement in outcomes for our children.**
- We are part of the Redbridge and Lordshill Federation of schools.

As at the start of the Autumn Term **2021** the make-up of our pupil population was:

Number of pupils on roll	223
Number who qualify for Free School Meals (FSM)	120 (54%)
Number of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), including those with Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP)	50 (22%)
Number of Persistent Absentees whose attendance is below 90% (PA)	81 (36%)
Number of pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL)	37 (17%)
Number of Pupil Premium Grant qualifiers (PP)	129 (58%)
Number of Children in the Care of the State (CLA)	1 (0.4%)

We recently consulted on our school values so that we can re-launch our house system and name the houses after them. They are:

- Courage
- Determination
- Curiosity
- Positivity

Our school rules are:

- Ready
- Respectful
- Safe

3. What school governors do

A school governing body has a strategic role in the development of the school but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues, this is the role of the Head Teacher. Governors are there to:

- **Provide a strategic view** - help to set and maintain the broad framework within which the Head Teacher and the staff should run the school.
- **Act as a critical friend** - provide the Head Teacher with support and offer advice and information, but also to provide some challenge. The governing body is there to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness and governors should therefore be prepared to ask challenging questions.
- **Ensure accountability** - the Head Teacher and staff report to the governing body on the school's performance. In turn the governing body is accountable to all stakeholders on the school's overall performance.

4. How our Governing body is structured

The whole Governing Body will meet once each half term for a formal business meeting which looks at current issues within the school, takes a report from the head teacher and also raises any issues from committee minutes.

Our Finance & Resources and Teaching & Learning committees also meet half termly. Their responsibilities are reviewed each September and recorded in delegation of responsibilities documents.

We also have a Safeguarding Working Party that meets on a half termly basis.

Terms of reference for both committees and the working party are available on the school website.

5. Induction process

Governors can feel overwhelmed at first and unprepared for the volume of information that they are provided with or the wide range of issues that they are exposed to. In order to be effective, every governor needs to gain some basic knowledge about their school which will then underpin the wider understanding of education and the school that they will gain.

To support new governors, we offer:

- An informal meeting with the Chair of Governors who will provide an overview of governance, outline the priorities of the governing body and discuss committee membership.
- An informal meeting with the Head Teacher who will; provide background on the school, outline the current challenges we face, explain where the school sits in terms of academic progress both locally and nationally, explain the relationship between the Head Teacher and governing body, introduce the key documents that underpin our plans to improve outcomes for children.
- A guided learning walk around the school with a member of the leadership team. Learning walks help governors to see for themselves what's happening in the school.
- A meeting with the School Business Manager who will ensure that; DBS paperwork is completed, the DfE website 'Get information about schools' is updated, a school e-mail address is allocated if required, access arrangements to the school and door\gate access codes are explained, a governor ID pass is requested and the Google drive explained.

The Clerk to Governors will update the governor list on the school website, ensure a Register of Pecuniary Interests form is completed and notify SCC Governor Services of your appointment by the whole governing body. The Chair of Governors will arrange for an invitation to join The Key.

To ensure that the above happens, actions will be recorded at the governing body meeting where appointments are ratified.

6. Key documents for governors

The school is currently on a journey to become a paperless environment so the following documentation will be provided\accessible to new governors in the following ways:

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	AVAILABLE FOR GOVERNORS	TO BE PROVIDED BY
Instrument of Government	Determines the constitution of the governing body.	School website	
School Improvement Plan	Identifies the current foci for improving key aspects of the school's performance.		Headteacher
Last OFSTED Report	The last OFSTED report will always be a benchmark for the next, identifying the reasons for the school's grading and its priorities in order to further improve and achieve the next grade.	School website	
Governors' Code of Conduct	Sets out the expectations of and commitment required from school governors	School website	
Safeguarding Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Child Protection • Staff Code of Conduct • Whistleblowing 	Safeguarding is made up of proactive and reactive work covered by 4 key policies. They ensure the safety and well-being of pupils, visitors, governors and staff.	School website	

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE	AVAILABLE FOR GOVERNORS	TO BE PROVIDED BY
Staff List and Staffing Structure	This enables an overview of deployment of staff as well as key responsibility holders.	School website	
Our delegation checklists	They are a summary of governance responsibilities from various documents and reflect our agreements as to where those responsibilities lie.		Chair of Governors
Record of Governor Visit form	This form provides us with an opportunity to record and evidence observations and experiences when visiting the school.		Chair of Governors
Committee and working party terms of reference	Outlines the purpose, membership and operation of our committees.	School website	
Governors' Allowances Policy	Governing bodies are allowed to choose whether to pay allowances or expenses to cover costs incurred as a whist serving as a governor.	School website	
Copies of recent minutes		Google drive	
Meeting dates			Chair of Governors

7. Different types of governor

All maintained schools are required to have an Instrument of Government which determines the constitution of the governing body. Ours states that the total number of governors shall be twelve.

No. of gobs	Category	Further information
1	Headteacher	Headteachers can choose whether or not to be a governor at their school.
1	Local Authority	Appointed by the Local Authority who take regard of the skills and experience a school requires and appoint candidates who support the schools' ethos and mission.
1	Staff	This category includes the Headteacher (who serves in an ex-officio capacity), teaching and non-teaching staff at the school. They are elected by their colleagues.
2	Parent	Parents who have a child in school at the time of their election are elected by the parents with children at the school. If there are insufficient nominations from parents to fill vacancies, the governing body has to appoint parent governors.
7	Co-Opted	Appointed onto the governing body by the other members because they come from a specialist group, such as the business community, or because they possess a particular skill which can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

In addition governing bodies may appoint associate members to serve on committees. Associate members can attend full board meetings but do not vote and may be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil. They are appointed for a period of between one and four years and can be reappointed at the end of their term of office. Associate members are not governors and they are not recorded in the instrument of government.

We currently have an Assistant Head Teacher of Redbridge Community School supporting our Teaching and Learning Committee.

8. Specific responsibilities of the Governing Body

Governors work in conjunction with the Head Teacher to:

- Set the overall budget for the school.
- Decide on the number of staff.
- Decide on the level of pay for teachers.
- Help to decide the priorities for the school when the school improvement plan is being developed.
- Ensure the national curriculum is taught to all pupils.
- Ensure that targets are set for pupil achievement.
- Publish national test and exam results.
- Compare the performance of their school to similar schools.
- Have a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns.
- Ensure that health and safety issues are addressed.
- Set the times of school sessions.
- Help develop school policies and procedures.
- Consider the repair and maintenance of school buildings.
- Consider the use of school premises outside school hours.
- Appoint committees of governors to look at specific issues such as finance, staffing, curriculum and premises.
- Ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, including the Prevent duty.

To deliver these responsibilities the governing body will be supported by the Head Teacher and senior leadership team who will take steps to ensure that governors are well informed and therefore able to ask challenging questions and reach appropriate decisions.

We believe that the best way governors can learn about us is to visit and spend time in school, but we understand that not all governors can visit school regularly during the day due to family and work commitments. Spending time in school enables governors to meet staff\pupils and observe practice which will assist in their monitoring and evaluation role. Other support provided will include:

- The provision of data or reports on specific topics, such as on the quality of teaching in the school or pupil absence.
- Presentations from members of staff on relevant topics.
- Presentations from pupils.
- Provision of examples of pupil work.
- Head Teacher briefings at meetings.
- Training\awareness sessions for governors on areas where they feel they have knowledge gaps.

- Providing structured opportunities for governors to directly access pupils and parents.

9. What Governing Bodies do not do

- Inspect the school.
- Report on the quality of teaching after visiting the school.
- Authorise all expenditure.
- Share concerns about staff capability.
- Decide on how pupils are taught different subjects.
- Have the right to exclude a pupil.
- Write the school's policies on their own.
- Rubberstamp recommendations from the Head Teacher.
- Automatically approve all apologies for absence for meetings sent by governors.
- Need to be aware of the performance objectives which had been set for individual teachers.
- Write the OfSTED action plan.

10. Key responsibilities of the Head Teacher

- The internal organisation, management and control of the school.
- Performance Management of all staff.
- Formulating aims, objectives and policies for the governing body to consider adopting.
- Advising on and implementing the governing body strategic framework.
- Giving governors the information they needed to help the school raise its standards.
- Reporting on pupil progress.

11. The Leadership Team

We will begin the Autumn Term 2021\22 with the following structure.

Senior Leadership Team

Headteacher

1 Assistant Headteachers (maternity cover)

1 Assistant Headteacher vacancy

School Business Manager (post to be advertised)

Leadership Team

SENCo

2 Coaches

12. Responsibilities of the Chair of Governors

The National College for Teaching and Leadership lists the key roles of the chair as:

- **Leading effective governance:** Giving the governing body a clear lead and direction, ensuring that the governors work as an effective team and understand their accountability and the part they play in the strategic leadership of the school and in driving school improvement.

- **Building the team:** Attracting governors with the necessary skills and ensuring that tasks are delegated across the governing body so that all members contribute and feel that their individual skills, knowledge and experience are well used and that the overall workload is shared.
- **Relationship with the Head Teacher:** Being a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement, holding the Head Teacher to account and ensuring the Head Teacher's performance management is rigorous and robust.
- **Improving your school:** Ensuring school improvement is the focus of all policy and strategy and that governor scrutiny, monitoring and challenge reflect school improvement priorities.
- **Leading the business:** Ensuring that statutory requirements and regulations are met, that the school provides value for money in its use of resources and that governing body business is conducted efficiently and effectively.

13. Link governors

Each September linked governors are agreed to either meet a responsibility of the whole governing body, or to try and better manage our monitoring of the School Improvement Plan.

For the 2021\2022 academic year link governors were appointed to cover:

- Panel of governors (staff appeals, admissions, pupil & staff discipline) – to be agreed as needed and cannot include staff governors.
- Safeguarding
- HT performance management
- SEND
- Children Looked After
- Health & Safety
- Website compliance
- Allegations against HT
- Attendance
- ?leadership and management
- ?wellbeing

Detailed overviews for link governor roles are being developed.

14. What makes an effective School Governor?

- You care about improving children's educational attainment.
- You want to work as part of a team and can value and respect the contribution made by different people.
- You are willing to listen, learn and to ask questions.
- You are open to ideas and have a feel for what is important to people.
- You are enthusiastic.
- You can commit time and energy.
- You will attend relevant training where possible.

15. What does the effective Governor need to become familiar with?

- The recent history of the school.
- The type of school and the nature of the pupil intake.
- The number of pupils on roll and projected future numbers.
- How the school is staffed, organised and managed.
- The status of the school budget.
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- The Self Evaluation (SEF).
- The curriculum provided at the school.
- The range of extracurricular activities on offer and the nature of any extended services.
- School policies.
- How the school communicates with parents, other schools and the community.
- The layout of the buildings, grounds, their suitability and state of repair.

16. Development opportunities for governors

Training or development opportunities are another way for governors to enhance their educational knowledge and it is delivered in a variety of ways:

- Training can be delivered at governors' meetings.
- On occasions the local authority will run training.
- Federation schools organise training sessions for governors on relevant topics or issues.
- Briefings take place at joint local authority\Southampton Governors' Association meetings which all governors are welcome to attend.
- We have a subscription to The Key for Governance.
- Presentations are made to governors by school staff with lead responsibilities.

17. How much time do Governors give?

A governor's term of office is usually for four years, but as a volunteer you can resign at any time.

Your main task is to attend whole governing body meetings which are held every half term. We have two committees (Finance & Resources and Teaching & Learning) who meet two weeks prior to our whole governing body so that they can feed into these meetings and also a Safeguarding Working Party.

Individual governors are aligned to specific areas of our School Improvement Plan and become members of either our Finance & Resources or Teaching & Learning Committee. This is discussed at the last whole governing body meeting of the academic year.

18. Right to time off work

Employees can get a 'reasonable' amount of time off during their work day if they are a school governor. The amount of time off should be agreed between the employee and employer beforehand, based on how long the duties might take, the amount of time the employee has already had off for public duties and how the time off will affect the business. Further information can be found in Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

To minimise the impact upon governors' day jobs and commitments, whilst also recognising the importance of the work life balance of school staff, whole governing body meetings are held at the end of the school day at 4 pm. We currently hold our Teaching & Learning Committee meetings between 7.30 and 9.00 am, followed by the Finance & Resources Committee at 9.15 am.

Timings of all meetings will be discussed at the last whole governing body meeting of the academic year at which meeting dates and membership are agreed. **In recent years they have mainly been held on Tuesdays.**

19. Be prepared for meetings

Governing bodies have a substantial workload and we have found that preparation time before meetings gives us time to really engage with school improvement activities, such as actually looking at pupils' work (which is one of our methods of evidence gathering), or, to have discussions in greater depth about important topics.

We tend to use IT to display papers at the meeting to reduce the need for additional printing, unless they were not issued in advance of the meeting but would recommend that governors:

- Read the papers before the meeting.
- Prepare your thoughts and questions before the meeting.
- Bring with you a pen and notebook.
- Be familiar with our Governors' Code of Conduct.

20. Attendance

Any governor who, without prior agreement, is absent from meetings of the full governing body for a continuous period of six months will cease to be a governor. If you need to offer apologies for a meeting this should be done through the Chair or the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

Governors should note that there is now a requirement on all schools to publish governors' attendance at meetings on the school website.

21. Visit protocol

Governors will be invited into school by the Head Teacher, for specific reasons, at governors' meetings. Other than this, governors wishing to visit the school should make arrangements in advance with the Head Teacher, who will then be able to ensure that the purpose of their visit can be met. Visits should have a clear focus.

On arrival at school governors should sign in using the electronic system and sign out when they leave, wearing an ID pass at all times whilst in school.

There is an expectation that governors will be aware of school policies and strategies to improve standards, however, there is also an expectation that governors can evidence that what they are being told is in place and effective. Visits are one of the ways that governors can do this. For this reason governors should complete a Report of Governors Visit form when they have spent time in school for reasons other than governor meetings.

22. Confidentiality

Governing body meetings are not open to the public. Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed, as may governors where a conflict of interest has been identified or a vote is taking place that affects a specific governor.

Governors observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the governing body in meetings and from their visits to school as governors. How an individual governor votes should always be regarded as confidential. The minutes of any part of the meeting that are confidential should be kept separate. In the main confidential items will be those where the privacy of an individual needs to be respected.

Governors should be familiar and comply with our Code of Conduct.

23. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

Legislation requires governors elected or appointed on or after 1st April 2016 to hold an enhanced DBS criminal record certificate, which the governing body will apply for within 21 days of appointment or election.

The DBS is a non-departmental public body of the Home Office which enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involve children and provides wider access to criminal record information through its disclosure service.

24. Frequency, notice & duration of meetings

Meeting dates are agreed at the last meeting of the academic year for the following year and are listed in the minutes of meetings. Meetings will be held on days and times that are convenient for the Clerk and, thereafter, for the majority of governors.

You should receive your agenda and accompanying papers, by e-mail, seven days before the meeting with instructions as to what is required for each piece of documentation. We aim for meetings to last no longer than two hours.

25. Agendas

Generally speaking the whole governing body agenda will be set by the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher, taking account of the statutory duties of the whole governing body (some of which will have been delegated to committees), deadlines dictated by our stakeholders, actions agreed at previous meetings, regular lines of reporting that have been agreed and any other issues that may have arisen. Chairs of Committees will set their agendas. Agendas will be issued by the Clerk to Governors **apart from the Safeguarding Working Party which is not minuted in the same way as other meetings.**

Governors can request items to be added to an agenda either by raising the issue at a preceding meeting, or, by e-mailing the Chair of Governors\Committee at least one week prior to the meeting. Other than this, AOB is always an agenda item to accommodate issues that were not known in advance. Please remember, however, that should your agenda item require investigation by the Head Teacher or evidence to be collated, sufficient time should be allowed for this to be achieved.

26. Quorum

The School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003 state that the quorum for a meeting of the governing body and for any vote on any matter at such a meeting, shall be one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the governing body when complete.

Whilst a meeting may not be cancelled if it is found not to be quorate when other governors have convened, no voting may take place. In some cases this situation may require a further meeting to be arranged as soon as reasonably practicable.

The quorum for committee meetings is recorded in the terms of reference.

27. Voting

The School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003 state that every question to be decided at a meeting of the governing body shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors present and voting on the question. Where there is an equal division of votes the chair or, as the case may be, the person who is acting as chair for the purposes of the meeting (provided that such person is a governor), shall have a second or casting vote.

Governors should be provided with sufficient evidence and/or background information to enable appropriate decisions to be reached so, in practice, most issues discussed reach agreement and this is recorded as such in the minutes. On occasions where there is not unanimous agreement a vote will be held and the outcome recorded, but not individual governors' voting preferences.

28. Register of pecuniary interests

Governors and school staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and affairs and the interests of the school. Each Governor is required to complete this register each year and a briefing document and template will be issued to governors.

In addition, declaration of interest, in relation to any items listed for discussion, is an agenda item at start of every meeting.

29. Minutes

Our current clerking arrangements are that the Clerk to Governors takes minutes of whole governing body and both committee meetings.

Once approved by the whole governing body or committee, the minutes are held in school and are a public record.

The following matters are generally regarded as confidential, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Those concerning specific members of staff or pupils.
- Courses of action that might lead to redundancies, disciplinary action or dismissal.
- Consideration of legal advice, of estimates or tenders for work or supplies or valuations.
- Proposals to suspend or remove governors

- Formal complaints – depending on the nature of the complaint.
- Matters regarded by the local authority as being confidential.
- Any other matter which, by reason of its nature, the Governing Body is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.

When a matter has been judged to be confidential, the topic heading will be included in the minutes with an indication that it has been dealt with on a confidential basis. The discussion record will then be held in a separate confidential set of minutes not available for public inspection.

Areas of focus, outcomes and actions are recorded following each Safeguarding Working Party and circulated to all governors.

30. Information on individual governors

Since September 2016 maintained school governing bodies have been under a duty to provide the DfE with information on their governors. The DfE website 'Get information about schools' is the method of collecting this information, which enables the DfE to identify individuals who have a role in governance.

A range of information is collected, depending upon an individual's role within the governing body, however, not all of the information collected and held within 'Get information about schools' will be publicly available.

31. School website

The DfE specifies a range of information that schools are required to publish on their websites so please take a look at the Mason Moor Primary School website where you will find copy newsletters, staffing information, term dates, copies of our policies and much more.

32. Redbridge and Lordshill Federation

We are part of the Redbridge and Lordshill Federation along with the following schools:

- Bitterne Park Primary School
- Fairisle Infant School
- Fairisle Junior School
- Hardmoor Early Years Centre
- Holy Family Catholic Primary School
- Mansel Park Primary School
- Newlands Primary School
- Oakwood Primary School
- Redbridge Primary School
- Shirley Warren Learning Campus Primary & Nursery School
- Sinclair Primary School

This arrangement is known as a soft federation. It has no legal status, but the collaboration affords us the following benefits:

- We retain our own Head Teacher, governing body, character, control of our budget and can focus on the particular needs of our pupils.

- Each governing body retains their individual statutory responsibilities.
- All schools are equal partners and Head Teachers meet regularly to discuss issues that affect all schools, exchange ideas and opinions and agree uniform policies that for use across all federation schools which can avoid duplication of effort.
- It provides schools with opportunities to share best practice, resources and expertise, including devising, running and reducing the cost of high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Schools within the Federation can provide support for each other.

33. **Governors' allowances**

We review our governors' allowances policy on an annual basis and a copy will be provided to new members of the governing body.

34. **Sources of further information**

Publicly available information:	<p>DfE Governance Handbook. DfE 'Get Information About Schools' website. DfE 'Find and compare schools in England' website. OFSTED Website (OFSTED Inspection Handbook & Framework). Schools Financial Benchmarking website: https://www.education.gov.uk/sfb/login.aspx Our LA number is 852 and establishment 2771 Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.</p>
External Sources of Information (not publicly available):	<p>The Key for Governors. DfE Analyse School Performance. Ofsted (IDSR) inspection data summary report. Local Authority reports. FFT (Fischer Family Trust) aspire governors report.</p>

35. **Contacts**

Mason Moor Primary School 023 8039 0140

- Headteacher: Kristy Wharton
- Chair of Governors: Tina Selby (messages only)
- School Business Manager: Donna Shorter

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