



WATER PRIMARY SCHOOL



GOVERNOR
HANDBOOK



2023/2024

WATER SCHOOL

Water Primary, a small school with a big heart. In our Water family, we encourage passionate curiosity and a deeper understanding of the world around us in an environment where everyone is valued, empowered and achieves their full potential.



CORE VALUES





Respect

We respect ourselves, each other and everything around us.



Self Belief

We have confidence in our own abilities.



Healthy and Active

We keep our bodies and minds active and healthy.



Resilience

We have the ability to bounce back after something difficult has happened.

WATER SCHOOL

Contact Information

Headteacher: Miss E McKay
Office Manager: Mrs A Graham
Tel: 01706 216414

Please also contact the office via the school email:
bursar@water.lancs.sch.uk

The school website can be found at: www.water.lancs.sch.uk

Our Twitter page: @waterprimary and @mrsejsmith

Information about the school including policies can be found on our
website.

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WATER TEAM

Miss McKay
Headteacher



Mrs Edington
Deputy Headteacher/SENDCo



Mrs Graham
Office Manager



Teaching Staff

Mrs Smith



Miss Ashworth



Miss Launder



Miss Wilson



Support Staff
Mrs Greenwood



Mrs Collins



Miss Crowther



Miss Knights



Mrs Cole



Mr Riley



Miss Ross



Mrs Sanderson



Mr Claxton
Forest School



Mr Barlow
Site Supervisor



TERM DATES

Absence

Please note that holidays taken within school time will be unauthorised and can affect your child's attendance and therefore impact their learning and progress.

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WELCOME TO WATER

Welcome to our governing body. We are delighted that you have agreed to be a school governor. We hope that you will enjoy working with us to help the school to provide the best possible opportunities for our pupils.

This pack has been put together by governors and we hope it will give you useful guidance in the early stages of your governorship and help you to become, and to feel, part of our team. The Clerk to the Governing

Body will also send you an induction pack and Governor's Guide to the Law which, together with information from the school, will help you through the first stages of your governorship. Some of the content may be very unfamiliar to you as much has changed in education since we were all in school, but given training and support from the rest of the team it will all begin to fall into place.

The full governing body meets once a term; and all the current governors are also members of one (or more) committees which meet at other times to discuss issues in depth and report back to the full governing body. You will be invited to join one (or more!) committees as soon as you feel able to, and you're welcome to go along to any of these meetings to get to know what goes on and to help you decide where you would be happiest to make a contribution. The main point to remember is that we were all new at one time! We welcome questions and discussion of points that may be puzzling to you – they may be matters we all want to know about as well, or they could be issues that we have worked out and we can explain them to you. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Best wishes
Miss Elizabeth McKay
Headteacher

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THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

Getting to know the Governing Body and the school.

To begin with, we want to help you get to know the rest of the governors, so soon after your election or appointment, the Chair/Vice Chair will contact you and fill you in on when the next meeting is and what will be happening at it. The Headteacher / Chair will also arrange to give you a tour of the school and introduce you to the staff, as well as giving you copies of any relevant written material. You will find the school website an excellent source of information, do visit us at: www.water.lancs.sch.uk

You are very welcome to visit the school and become involved in activities. Please contact the School Bursar, Mrs. Alison Graham, to make arrangements to meet with staff.

Training

To maintain our strong safeguarding culture, Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and this training is updated regularly, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. This training equips Governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place at Water Primary School are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

We strongly encourage Governors to participate in other training, such as Induction for Governors and training related to their role. Please keep our Training Governor, Mrs. Jennifer Edington, informed of what courses you have attended as she co-ordinates our training. We usually report back (briefly) on courses we've attended at the next full governors' meeting, and copy any materials given out at the training if they maybe of general use.

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YOUR ROLE

Meetings

The whole Governing body and its committees meet at least once a term. Each Governing body has a clerk, ours is Meg Calland, who arranges the meetings, circulates the agenda and background papers, takes minutes and supports the governing body in numerous ways. Your chair and vicechair are elected each year at the first full meeting in the autumn term from among those governors who are not employed at the school.

Roles and Responsibilities of the School Governor

Governors are most effective when they are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation and use the knowledge gained to challenge the school, understand its strengths and weaknesses and contribute to shaping its strategic direction.

A governing body has three primary strategic responsibilities:

- To provide strategic direction for the school
- To act as a critical friend to the Headteacher
- To ensure accountability

They also carry out a number of other important duties, which include:

- Monitoring standards in the school
- Agreeing and monitoring targets for pupil performance
 - Making sure that the National Curriculum is taught and that the needs of all pupils, including those with additional needs, are met
- Agreeing aims and developing policies for the school
- Monitoring how the school's budget is spent
 - The appointing and dismissing of staff
 - Hearing appeals and grievances
- Setting standards for pupils' behaviour and discipline
- Making sure school buildings are welcoming and safe
- Setting and monitoring the school's aims and policies
- Keeping parents and the local community informed about the work of the school

In order to fulfil your responsibilities you will be expected to:

- Attend meetings of the full governing body
 - Be an active member of one or more Committees or Working Parties which look in more detail at particular aspects of the school's work
- Join other governors in attending training and development sessions on the roles and responsibilities of governors
- Be a positive and supportive ambassador for the school
 - Visit the school occasionally during the school day, to see how the governing body's policies are being implemented and to get to know the staff and pupils better
- Be a good team player: to respect the confidentiality of governing body discussions and to be loyal to the corporate decisions you take
- Seek information and clarification in order to ensure that the school provides the highest possible quality of education
 - Be involved in making strategic decisions that contribute to long-term development in the school
- Help to systematically monitor their school's progress towards meeting agreed development targets
- Support honest, insightful self-evaluation by the school; recognising problems and supporting the steps needed to address them.
 - Contribute to reflections on the governing body's own effectiveness



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CODE OF CONDUCT

The governing body has the following core functions, as defined in Regulations:

- a) ensuring that the vision, ethos and direction of the school are clearly defined;
- b) ensuring that the headteacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school; and
- c) ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

In exercising their functions, the governing body shall:

- a) act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- b) be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take, and in particular shall be prepared to explain decisions and actions to interested parties.

Specifically, as individuals on the governing body we agree to the following:

Role and Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the headteacher and senior leadership team.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- *We shall fully cooperate with individual requests that are necessary to ensure organisational compliance, such as disclosure and barring checks.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher and senior leadership team.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the governing body and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the headteacher and their responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing body as set out by the relevant governance documents and law.

- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role, we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the school.
- We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing body.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to do so.
- We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor and continue to honour commitments made in this code.
- *We will participate in induction training, prioritise training in required areas (such as safeguarding) and commit to developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- 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's website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and logged on the Department for Education's national database of governors ('Get Information about Schools').

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will work to create an inclusive environment, where everyone's contributions are valued equally.
- We will express views openly, courteously, and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the clerk to the governing body and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct, both at meetings and at all times.

- We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities, any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (detailed below) or which may place pupils at risk.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff, parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.
- *We will respect the remit of, and engage constructively with, relevant authorities and other schools.
- We will be candid, but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
- We will have regard to our responsibilities under The Equality Act and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside of a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of Interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body.

Ceasing to be a Governor

We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office.

Breach of this Code of Conduct

If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing body will only use suspension / removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.

Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing body member, such as the vice-chair will investigate.