



Lewes New School

Primary Education Led By Curiosity & Imagination

# Governing Body Guidebook

V.1.09

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## Mission

To pioneer education led by curiosity and imagination.

## Vision

We find within all people an endless capacity to learn, which our school nurtures into a passion for engaging with ideas, each other and the world around us. We see a future where anything is possible.

## Ethos

We aim to nurture intellectual, emotional and spiritual development within a safe and supportive learning environment.

We work to create a community where every member has the skill to communicate with respect and emotional honesty.

We encourage the children to develop their own beliefs and values as well as to respect those of others.

We teach and practice ecological principles and constantly strive to improve both the School's and the natural environment.



# List of Governors and Trustees

## Governors

Jane Dickinson (Chair)  
Matthew Mills (Co-head)  
Lizzie Overton (Co-head)  
Anne-Marie Fauvel (Teacher)  
Louisa Thomsen Brits (Marketing)  
Karen Dobres (Parent)  
Duncan Baker-Brown (Grounds & Premises)  
Dahlan Lassalle (Fundraising)

## Trustees

Sharif Horthy (Chair)  
Scherto Gill  
Peter Mobbs  
Ivor Goodson



# The Role of the Governing Body

## Introduction

LNS is a registered charity operating as a company limited by guarantee. The directors of Lewes New School Company Limited are the Trustees. The Trustees have chosen to delegate the duties associated with running the School to the Governing Body. In order to ensure that the School remains true to its founding vision one of the Trustees has a seat on the Governing Body. The Trustees reserve to themselves the appointment of the Head Teacher(s) and the determination of the Head Teacher(s)' conditions of service. The Trustees are at liberty to vary the extent and nature of the duties delegated to the Governing Body. The Trustees carry legal responsibility for the proper functioning of the School. The Governors have a duty of care to ensure that the school operates effectively and to maximise the benefit derived by its students.

The following document sets out a series of policies and procedures through which the Governors serve the school and the Trustees.

The Governing Body has three distinct roles. The main aim of a governing body is to maintain a high standard of education, and to develop its staff and students in a manner consistent with the philosophy of the school. In order to fulfil this aim they must set the strategic direction of the School, ensure proper accountability, and act as a critical friend to the Headteacher(s) and staff.

### **1. Overseeing Strategy**

The Governing Body explore & implement ways to improve:

- Teaching & learning
- Pastoral care
- School, family & community relations
- School resources & equipment
- School premises and grounds
- Marketing the school
- Fundraising
- Admissions
- Financial security & growth

### **2. Accountability**

The Governing Body have a duty of care to determine, ensure and promote:

- a. The School's aims & objectives
- b. Educational standards
- c. School achievements



- d. The School's Development Plan for:
  - i. Premises and Grounds
  - ii. Marketing and Fundraising
  - iii. Human Resource Management
  - iv. Teaching & Learning
  
- e. The School's financial success through:
  - i. Setting budgets
  - ii. Monitoring and controlling income & expenditure
  - iii. Cash-flow
  
- f. Ensure and oversee on behalf of the Trustees:
  - i. Proper reporting of annual budget, income and expenses
  - ii. That the school is run honestly and efficiently
  - iii. The production of an Annual Governors Report
  - iv. Health and safety checks
  
- g. The Governing Body is responsible to School families and the wider community for:
  - i. Ensuring the school is run honestly and efficiently
  - ii. Providing the best possible education for its pupils
  - iii. The production of an Annual Governors Report and the publication of minutes of their meetings
  - iv. Holding Open Forums to promote the exchange of ideas and information
  
- h. The Governing Body is responsible to Teachers & Staff for:
  - i. Pay & conditions
  - ii. Employment policies and procedures
  
- i. The Governing Body is responsible to Ofsted for:
  - i. ensuring that all appropriate School policies and procedures are in place.

### **3. Act as a Critical Friend**

The Governing Body has a duty to provide timely and effective support to:

- a. The Headteacher(s)
- b. Teachers & staff
- c. School families



# Constitution of the Governing Body

## 1. Governing Body Structure

- a. Governor Positions
  - i. Chair
  - ii. Co-Head Teacher Governors
  - iii. Teacher Governor
  - iv. Parent Governor
  - v. Marketing & Fundraising Governor
  - vi. Finance Governor
  - vii. Community Governors
  - viii. Sponsor Governors
- b. Minimum number of 8 & maximum of 12 Governors.
- c. Trustees can be Governors and vice-versa.
- d. Governor's term is 2 years, renewable by vote. Except Co-Head Teacher Governor, whose position lasts as long as their appointment as Co-Head.
- e. Co-Head Teacher Governors share one vote on the governing body.
- f. At least 50% of the Governors are either current or ex LNS teaching staff or parents of children attending the school.
- g. 50% of the Governors make a quorum of which the majority may not be LNS teaching & non-teaching staff.
- h. Changes and additions to the Governing Body's Procedures and Policies to be voted by a majority, agreed and minuted by the governing body. They must be ratified by the Trustees.
- i. Trustees have 28 days after receiving minutes to ratify or reject proposals agreed by Governing Body. In the event of contention or concern, the Trustees will alert the Chair of Governors within the timeframe.
- j. Individual governors cannot act on behalf of the governing body, except where the whole governing body has delegated a specific function to that individual, for example, through the different Teams.
- k. A Governor or Chair of Governors may be removed from their position by a single majority vote by the governing body.

## 2. Governor Election & Re-election

- a. Any adult is eligible to be a Governor provided they are CRB checked.
- b. The Chair will poll the existing Governors at a meeting and get feedback if a new Governor should be nominated.
- c. New Governors to be proposed and seconded prior to being voted in by the majority of existing Governors.
- d. When a Governor stands to be re-elected after their 2 year term, then the Chair polls the views outside the meeting.



- e. If the Governor standing for re-election does not get the majority vote from the Governing Body, he/she may make a direct appeal to the Governors at the next meeting.

### 3. Chair of Governors

- a. Voted into office by the majority Governing Body
- b. Appoint a Deputy Chair
- c. Appoint a Clerk to the Governors
- d. Attend Trustee meetings & report on behalf of Governors
- e. Call & Chair the Body of Governors' meetings
- f. Set the agenda
- g. Sign minutes
- h. Create Annual Governors' Report
- i. Organize the termly Open Forum meetings
- j. Ensure Board fulfil their obligations
- k. Lead Appraisals of Co-heads
- l. Lead Skills Audit of Existing Governors
- m. Select new Governors
- n. Sign employment contract with (Co) Heads in partnership with Trustees.
- o. Ensure motions and agreements made by consensus or if necessary by vote.
- p. Ensure the nature of debate is reflected in the minutes.
- q. In the event of a split vote, the Chair has the casting vote.
- r. Chair of Governors routinely meets with Chair of Trustees
- s. Policies management on an annual basis

### 4. Governing Body Meetings

- a. Meeting held at least once every term
- b. Clerk to inform Governors of dates and make requests for materials
- c. Materials/Reports submitted 7 days before meeting
- d. Clerk to take and distribute minutes
- e. Chair to sign approve & minutes
- f. Final minutes to be made available to public (*the governing body is obliged to make this information available upon request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000*) However, the Governing Body may/can withhold information that constitutes personal data or confidential information or commercially sensitive information.
- g. Unedited minutes sent to Trustees
- h. Only Governors, Trustees and Clerk to attend Governors meetings unless by majority agreement by the Body (for example a specialist may make a presentation).



## 5. Emergency Decisions

- a. Chair usually makes emergency decisions between meetings with the agreement of the Co-heads and 3 other Governors
- b. Occasionally, when instant decisions are required, the Chair and Head Teacher may make the decision in extreme circumstances.
- c. All Governors to be informed of the issue by email
- d. All Governors to be informed of the outcome by email
- e. All Governors responses to be recorded and shared with the Body
- f. Emergency decisions to be reviewed by the Governors at the next meeting.

## 6. Teams

The Governors delegate particular responsibilities to each Governor that leads a Sub-Committee/Team.

- a. Governing Teams
  - i. Teaching & Learning
  - ii. Marketing
  - iii. Fundraising
  - iv. Premises and Grounds
  - v. Family
  - vi. Human Resources
  - vii. Finance
  - viii. And any other team that may be deemed necessary
- b. Each Governor, on behalf of their team, presents their Team Development Plan (TDP – see below) to the Governors to be reviewed and agreed. See timetable, below.
- c. Once agreed, the teams are given the authority to act upon their TDP.
- d. Each Governor, on behalf of their team, is required to report back to the Governing Body on their progress in implementing their TDP.
- e. Budgets are allocated at the beginning of each academic year. Expenditure on any individual item over £500 must be cleared by the Governing Body.
- f. The Junior Co-Head acts as the clerk for each of the teams in partnership with the Governor. Team meetings are held termly, the Junior Co-Head takes minutes.
- g. The Junior Co-Head works closely with the Governor to set the agenda, create and execute the TDP.



## 7. School Development Plan & Team Development Plans

The School Development Plan (SDP) (made up of the individual TDPs) is the School's strategy for improvement and development in all areas of School life.

- a. The Governors to monitor, evaluate and review the SDP.
- b. Each Team Development Plan to have the same format listing objectives and actions, and providing details of timescale, additional cost, additional training/personnel/materials needed, monitoring procedure and success criteria.
- c. Each creation of TDP and SDP adheres to an annual timetable. See separate Timetable of Commitments.

## 8. Clerk to the Governors

- a. To support the governing body, the clerk needs to work effectively with
  - i. Chair of Governors
  - ii. The Governing Body
  - iii. The Head Teacher(s)
- b. Duties of the clerk
  - i. Inform governors of dates for meeting
  - ii. Manage and update the online Annual Calendar
  - iii. Collect and distribute reports and other materials
  - iv. Take minutes which include the nature of the discussion as well as decisions made.
  - v. Distribute minutes
- c. The clerk is accountable to the governing body.

## 9. Recruitment

- a. The Governing Body, through the HR Team, supports the Co-Heads to identify the types of teacher required to work within the school's teaching and learning philosophy.
- b. The Governors approve the number of teaching staff, in accordance with the annual budget and School Development Plan.
- c. The Governors, through the HR Team, acts to support the Head Teacher (s) in the recruitment of new teaching staff. The appointments (and contractual amendments) are made by Head



Teacher(s) in agreement with the governors to ensure due diligence and proper process is followed.

- d. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for all staff. Should a member of the staff (teaching or support) leave, the Governors decide whether or not they should be replaced.
- e. The Trustees, through the HR Team, appoint the Head Teacher(s) in consultation with the Governors.

## 10. Trustees Requirements of Governors

- a. Governors are required to present the following materials to the Trustees for ratification
  - i. Accounts Income & Expenditure for outgoing year
  - ii. Budget for the incoming year
- b. Governors are expected to forward Trustees
  - i. Agenda for Governors' Meetings
  - ii. Minutes from Governors' Meetings
- c. Changes and Amendments to Procedures & Policies
  - i. Governors to consult with Trustees over changes and amendments to the Governors' Body Guidebook
  - ii. Trustees to consult with Governors over changes and amendments to their duties and responsibilities.
- d. School Buildings
  - i. Any modifications and changes to the school grounds and buildings need to be approved by the Trustees.

## 11. Finance

The body of Governors are responsible for

- a. Reviewing and approving the Budget for the incoming year
- b. Reviewing and approving Accounts Income & Expenditure for outgoing year
- c. Meeting the agreed dates as described in the Annual Schedule of Commitments.

## 12. Policies & Procedures

- a. The Governing Body to Implement and review all policies and procedures on a bi-annual cycle, through the relevant Teams.
- b. The Governing Body to delegate a Governor to be responsible for keeping up to date with relevant legislation.



- c. Policies & Procedures are overseen by the leaders of the Teams and reviewed & agreed by the Governing Body include;

#### Junior Co Head

- Health & Safety procedures
- First Aid procedure
- Manual Task & Risk Assessment procedure
- Preparations for Ofsted Visit

#### HR

- Teacher recruitment policy
- Disciplinary policy & procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Complaints procedure
- Head teacher(s) appraisal policy
- School evaluation procedures
- School race equality policy
- Equal opportunities & diversity policy
- Disability policy
- Pay & Conditions

#### Premises & Grounds

- Fire & Emergency procedure
- Flood procedure

#### Teaching & Learning

- School Outings policy
- Teacher Performance Management & NQT Training policy
- Early Years policies and procedures
- Sex, Drugs Education policy
- Special Needs policy
- Child Protection policies
- Special Needs policy
- Attendance policy
- Bullying policy
- Admissions policy and procedure
- Assessment and planning policy
- Development of Curriculum policy



## Individual Responsibilities of the Governing Teams

### **Whole Governing Body**

- Ensure all policies the school is legally required to have are in place, implemented, regularly reviewed and updated if necessary to keep with current legislation.
- To co-create and review School Development Plan in conjunction with the Co-Heads.
- Provision of an Annual Report to the School Families.
- Provide an opportunity for regular Open Forum meetings.
- Establish and review the specific policies for which Governors are responsible.
- Ensure Co-Heads provide termly (?) reports on their duties and respond accordingly.
- Support and provide advice to the Co-Heads in their duties and responsibilities.
- Rigorous self-evaluation plan. The Body of Governors create and implement policy and procedure to ensure best practice.
- To work with Co-Heads in preparing school for Ofsted inspections.
- Create & Implement policy to monitor and evaluate the School's Achievements and the school's Aims & Objectives.
- Work in conjunction with Co-Heads to create and implement a Communications policy & procedure to ensure the communication of changes to staff, policies, procedures, fees, achievements, and all other school concerns to the broad school community.
- Ensure redacted minutes and school accounts are available to public.

**Overseen by: Jane Dickinson**

### **Curriculum**

- Develop and review the Curriculum Development Plan.
- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Ensure the school has a clear Curriculum framework which is published to parents.
- Work with a School Improvement Partner to further the aims and ambitions of the teaching & learning.
- Ensure the school delivers the agreed curriculum.
- Ensure curriculum policies are in place and discuss them.
- Deal with parental concerns about the curriculum (inc. special needs) when referred to the Governors.
- Be informed of curriculum delivery resources.
- Ensure that the school has a process to ensure quality teaching and learning and that it is well managed, just and given time.
- Establish effective Child Assessment procedure.
- Policy to ensure child's educational/learning records are kept up-to-date.
- Work alongside the Co-Heads to monitor the use of school resources.

**Overseen by: Lizzie Overton**

### **Marketing**

- Develop and review the Marketing & Fundraising Development Plan.
- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Provide an updated Welcome Pack to new families.
- Evaluate local perceptions of the school.
- Work in conjunction with Co-Heads to secure good, well-founded publicity to attract parents and children to the school.
- Forward plan for representing the school at strategic times and opportunities.



- Undertake research among current parents to identify good communication strategies and promote these.
- Supply up-to-date marketing materials that promote the school; such as brochure, website, flyers, posters.
- Set Open Days and publicise these events.

**Louisa Thomsen Brits (Chair)**

**Fundraising**

- Work with the Jr Co-Head to identify sound sources of grants, income and financing.
- Support the Jr Co-Head in completing applications for grants etc to increase the income of the school.
- Plan the cycle of fund-raising events in liaison with staff.
- Set fund-raising targets in liaison with the Finance Team.
- Ensure that the school has secure procedures for ensuring that all funds raised are used for their designated purpose – transparent accounting (in liaison with the Finance Team)

**Dahlan Lassalle (Chair)**

**Finance**

- Create and review the Finance Development Plan.
- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Ensure budgets and accounts are agreed by the Body of Governors and forwarded to the Trustees on agreed dates for their ratification.
- Ensure the school has sound financial guidelines and that these are implemented.
- Consider the income of the school through raising fees.
- Ensure that Jr Co-Head has all accounts clear, up-to-date and correct.
- Set budget; receive and discuss budget-monitoring reports.
- Ensure school gets best value for money.
- Ensure that Jr Co-Head accounts for all school assets and that they are logged and always be accounted for.
- Draw up and monitor school's financial plan for short, medium and longer term.
- Liaise closely with other relevant teams to provide and receive information relevant to these responsibilities.

**Darren Carpenter (Chair)**

**Premises & Grounds**

- Including associated site health & safety
- Create and review Premises & Grounds Development Plan.
- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Support and advise Jr Co-Head in overseeing buildings maintenance and development.
- Ensure that the School's H&S Policy and Guidelines concerning use of buildings, access and egress, comply with national requirements and guarantee the safety of all who use the site.
- Conduct H&S inspections regularly to monitor the implementation of all relevant policy and guidelines.
- Manage the allocated budget for buildings and site and advise the Finance Team of priorities, costs, and forward planning.
- Demonstrate to the Trustees that there is adequate provision in the budget for maintenance of the school building and there is an ongoing maintenance plan.
- Ensure that the Trustees are included, during the planning stages in decision-making, related to building or structural changes.

**Duncan Baker-Brown (Chair)**





## **Personnel**

- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Create and review Personnel Development Plan Provide support and advice to all teaching & non-teaching staff.
- Agree and monitor the implementation of the agreed policies relating to pay and conditions of all staff.
- Support Jr Co-Head to ensure that all staff are provided with up to date contracts, Job Descriptions and salary information.
- Ensure the school operates within the current legislation of employment law.
- Ensure the appointments to vacancies, including Head Teacher, are undertaken correctly and the whole Governing Body is involved and Trustees are consulted as and when that is required.
- Ensure that all new staff are provided with a positive induction into the particular ethos and approach of LNS.
- Ensure that NQTs, or unqualified teachers are provided with proper support during an appropriate probationary period.
- Create policies to monitor the quality of management and leadership provided in the school.
- To support Co-Heads to ensure that agreed procedures relating to appraisal of staff are implemented and well conducted and that recommendations arising from them are furthered.
- Create and implement policy and procedure to appraise Co-Headship model.
- Create and implement policy and procedure to appraise the work of the Co-Heads.
- Ensure that staff professional development is identified and well managed in the school.
- Oversee any issues relating to staff professional relationships so that these reflect the declared Vision and Mission of the school.
- Create and implement a policy on staff pay increase and bonuses.
- Set up a confidential panel to deal with grievances and disputes and acts on the policies that exist.
- Set up and oversee the Exit Interviews with staff that leave pre-maturely.  
Along with the teaching team, determine the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with special needs; establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements; maintain a general oversight of the school's work. The governing body to report to parents annually on the school's policy on special educational needs.

XXXX XXXX

(Chair)

## **Families**

- Make available to parents/carers opportunity for complaints/praise.
- To provide support and advice to families.
- To act as a liaison between Governing Body and the families of the school.
- Ensure parents are available to support and represent the parent body at Open Days.
- Arrange Open Forums.
- Provide a termly update report to the Board of the Team's activity.
- Liaise regularly with Class Representatives.

**Karen Dobres (Chair)**



### **Governing Body Special Panel**

This group meets only if a member of staff, the head teacher or a parent needs to refer an issue to the Governors as a grievance matter.

In such cases it is imperative the Governors refer to the agreed procedures for managing grievance in the school and abide by them.

- In general, grievance brought by other than the respective managers, should first of all have been brought to the attention of the person with whom the grievance is and efforts made to resolve it there.
- If this fails it should then involve the head teacher.
- If matters cannot be resolved through these channels, then Governors must establish the correct panels to deal with them.
- Oversee any issues pertaining to the admission/exclusion of a child.

The Chair of Governors should normally have agreed in advance with Governors who will constitute the separate panels (usually up to three, which in each case should not have had anything to do with the matter preceding their hearing it).



## Governing Body Schedule of Commitments

Each year, other dates will be inserted which arise out of the Development Plans – eg. approval of key stages in an induction/appraisal process, or dates by which a policy is due to be approved.

The Clerk to the Governors creates and updates an annual calendar which is circulated to all Governors and exists on the internet.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Governors' Meeting** Sept

Review & approve previous year's balance & accounts  
Termly Status Report (refers to the Development Plan)  
Review & Approve School Policies\*

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Governors' Meeting** Jan

Termly Status Report (refers to the Development Plan)  
Set school fees for next year  
Propose draft Budget for following year  
Review previous year's accounts  
Review & Approve School Policies\*

### **Inter-meeting Actions**

Approve Budget for next year & send to Trustees	Feb
Trustees approve next year's Budget	Mar
Inform families of Fees for next year	Easter
Circulate next year's Team Development Plans	Easter

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Governors Meeting** May

Termly Status Report (refers to the Development Plan)  
Review & approve School Development Plans for next year  
Approve interim account for current year  
Review & Approve School Policies\*

### **Annual Report to Parents** June

### **Governors & Trustees Visioneering Party** July

*\* Chair of Governors responsible to ensure all school policies are reviewed by the Governing Body on a bi-annual bases.*