Role Descriptor
Chair of the Management Committee

Note in this document "Governing Body" refers to the Management Committee and "governor" refers to Member

Purpose: Lead an effective governing body that provides strategic direction, constructive challenge and assurance that the school serves all pupils well.

Accountability: Accountable to the governing body for the leadership of its work. The governing body retains collective responsibility for its decisions.

Appointment and term of office

The governing body elects the chair from its existing governors. A governor employed at the school cannot be chair, regardless of governor category. The governing body determines the term before the election; the term as chair is separate from the individual's term as a governor. The chair must remain an eligible governor. The clerk supports a properly conducted and recorded election. [2]

Strategic leadership

- Lead governors in agreeing the school's vision, values, strategic priorities and measures of success, including its religious character where applicable.
- Keep agendas focused on pupil outcomes, safeguarding, inclusion, educational standards, financial sustainability and the school's principal risks.
- Ensure governors receive clear, proportionate information that enables them to assess progress, identify concerns and challenge leaders on the impact of decisions.
- Promote a culture in which governors ask strategic questions, consider different views and make decisions based on evidence and the needs of all pupils.

Effective meetings and decisions

- Agree agendas with the headteacher and governance professional or clerk, allowing sufficient time for strategic discussion and statutory business.
- Chair meetings fairly, draw out quieter voices, manage time and keep discussion relevant. Differentiate information, scrutiny, decisions and agreed actions.
- Work with the clerk to check quorum, voting rights, conflicts, lawful delegation and required procedures. Seek specialist advice when the governing body needs it.
- Ensure minutes accurately record decisions, reasons where appropriate, challenge and actions, with named responsibility and deadlines. Follow up progress.
- Ensure urgent issues are addressed through the correct procedure, with appropriate records and accountability.

Working with the headteacher

- Fulfil the headteacher line management responsibilities allocated by the governing body. Maintain regular professional contact, combining support and challenge while preserving the headteacher's operational responsibilities.
- Ensure the governing body arranges the headteacher's appraisal, appoints an external adviser and makes lawful arrangements for objectives, review and pay decisions. Participate where appointed and eligible. [5]
- Take a lead in monitoring the headteacher's wellbeing, workload and support needs, and in identifying leadership risks and succession needs.

Chair Responsibilities and Expectations

Governance development and relationships

- Work with the vice chair and clerk to review governance effectiveness, skills, attendance and training. Address poor participation or conduct fairly through the appropriate procedures.
- Plan succession for the chair, vice chair and committee leadership. Support induction and distribute work so that responsibility does not rest with a small number of governors.
- Support an effective, independent governance professional or clerk. Undertake line management or contract liaison where this is allocated by the governing body.
- Ensure the governing body hears the views of pupils, parents and staff, communicates agreed decisions appropriately and maintains effective relationships with the local authority and relevant partners.

Safeguarding and sensitive matters

- Ensure safeguarding receives regular scrutiny and that the designated safeguarding governor has suitable support. This does not transfer the governing body's collective responsibility to one governor.
- Follow the safeguarding policy where a concern or allegation relates to the headteacher. Act as case manager where required, consult the local authority designated officer promptly and obtain appropriate advice. Preserve the independence of any later hearing or appeal. [4]
- Handle complaints, staffing matters and other sensitive issues only within the adopted procedure and any specific delegation. Refer matters elsewhere when personally conflicted or previously involved.

Authority and boundaries

The chair cannot routinely make governing body decisions alone, direct staff or commit the school to expenditure without appropriate authority. Regular contact with the headteacher does not replace discussion and scrutiny by the governing body.

Regulation 8 permits limited urgent action when the chair considers that waiting until the earliest reasonably practicable governing body or relevant committee meeting would be likely to cause serious detriment to the school, a pupil or their parent, or a person working at the school. The vice chair may use this power only when the chair cannot act. The power covers functions specified by that regulation and is not a general power to override the governing body. Record the urgency, legal basis, decision and reasons, report promptly in writing and ensure the action is minuted. [2]

Skills and personal qualities

Sound judgement; integrity; impartiality; confidence in constructive challenge; effective listening and chairing; discretion; ability to read educational and financial information; and willingness to seek advice. The chair should enable others to contribute and respond calmly to disagreement.

Commitment and indicators of effectiveness

Allow additional time beyond normal governor duties for agenda planning, contact with the headteacher and clerk, governor development and occasional urgent matters. Agree availability and cover with the vice chair.

Effectiveness is demonstrated by purposeful meetings, clear decisions, completed actions, informed challenge, a balanced workload, appropriate support for the headteacher and evidence that governance is helping the school improve.

Adoption and Source References

School adoption record

Approved by: ACE Management Committee

Meeting date and minute reference: 15th October 2026, MCM

Next review: Autumn 2027

Review these descriptors when governance arrangements, relevant law or statutory guidance change. Confirm each governor's category, term, committee membership, link responsibilities, training and agreed commitments in the school's governance records.

Sources and interpretation

Prepared with reference to the sources below, checked on 14th September 2026. References in square brackets identify the supporting framework. The document combines legal requirements with practical role expectations; local allocations of work must remain within the governing body's lawful powers.

1 DfE Maintained schools governance guide

Updated 15th July 2026. In particular: effective governance; strategic leadership; accountability; governor conduct; the chair; appointments and checks; types of governor; and governance evaluation.

2 School Governance Roles Procedures and Allowances Regulations 2013

As amended. Regulations 6–8 cover roles, chair and vice chair, and urgent powers; regulations 12–16 cover meetings, records and conflicts; Schedule 1 addresses restrictions on participation. Delegation and reporting are addressed in regulations 18–20.

3 DfE Constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools

School Governance Constitution England Regulations 2012

As amended. Parent and staff governor eligibility, election, appointment and tenure; the instrument of government; and disqualification provisions. Check the relevant schedules and any subsequent amendments when administering an election.

4 DfE Keeping children safe in education 2026

In force from 1st September 2026. Part two addresses governing body responsibilities and training; Part three covers maintained school governor checks; Part four covers concerns or allegations about staff, including the headteacher.

5 Education School Teachers Appraisal England Regulations 2012

As amended. External advice, objectives and appraisal of the headteacher. Read alongside the school's adopted appraisal and pay policies and applicable conditions of employment.

6 The Seven Principles of Public Life

Committee on Standards in Public Life. Principles supporting ethical conduct in public service.