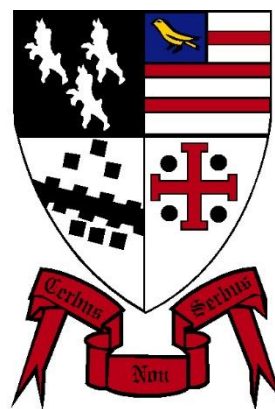


Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation



Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England
Primary School

Governance Virtual Attendance Policy

Last reviewed: **Full Board of Governors – February 2026**

Next review: **January 2027**

1. Introduction

- 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”.
- In relation to this the governing board of Grantham Villages' CE Primary Schools Federation has determined the following arrangements will apply.
- These arrangements apply to meetings of the full governing body and to panel meetings.

2. Definitions

- **Face-to-Face Meetings** are meetings where the majority of governors are physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda.
- **Virtual Attendance** at a meeting is where a governor is not physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda but participates or votes at a meeting through virtual means including but not limited to telephone or video conference.
- **Virtual Meetings** are meetings where the majority of governors are not present at the same physical location and participate or vote at a meeting through Virtual Attendance.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The clerk to governors is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the protocol for conducting remote meetings is agreed upon by all members of the board prior to the meeting taking place.
- Recording, within the written minutes of the meeting, the details of the remote meeting, in the same way as a face-to-face meeting.

The chair of the governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all members of the governing board are aware of the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Notifying members in advance that the meeting will be conducted remotely.
- Considering any objections to meetings taking place remotely.
- Deciding whether a recording is appropriate during the remote meeting, and notifying members that a recording is taking place, prior to the meeting.
- Ensuring that recordings of any meetings are properly dealt with in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Members of the governing board will:

- Be aware of, and act in accordance with, the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Act in accordance with the Governing Board Code of Conduct whilst in remote board meetings.
- Not take covert recordings of meetings.
- Notify the chair of any objections they have to the meeting being held remotely.
- Notify the chair of any objections they may have to a recording being made.

- Be respectful of the rights of individuals who do not wish to be recorded.
- In the absence of either the chair or the governance professional, their responsibilities, as outlined in this procedure, will be carried out by a designated member of the governing board with exception to any governor who is an employee of the school.

4. Scheduling of Face-to-Face Meetings and Virtual Meetings

- The six statutory full governing board meetings will be Face to Face Meetings unless agreed to be held virtually due to public health concerns (including COVID-19) or other safety reasons.
- Additional or extraordinary full governing board meetings and panel meetings can take place as Virtual Meetings (as long as the usual quorum of governors are present through Virtual Attendance).

5. Virtual Attendance at Face-to-Face Meetings

Notification

- Where a governor wishes to attend a Face-to-Face Meeting of the governing board through Virtual Attendance, the Chair and Clerk must be notified when possible, **at least 2 working days** in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible.

Governing Board Approval of Virtual Attendance at a meeting

- At the start of a Face-to-Face Meeting, any governor who is participating by Virtual Attendance will be asked their reasons for not physically attending the meeting.
- A governor's Virtual Attendance **may** be subject to the approval of the governing board at the beginning of the meeting; however, approval **must** not be withheld without good reason.
- Where approval is withheld, the reason for this must be minuted and the governor informed immediately.

Voting Rights of Governors participating through Virtual Attendance

- Governors attending a Face-to-Face Meeting through Virtual Attendance will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to.

Secret Ballots

- 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 facilitation is not possible, the governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.

Quorum

- Governors attending through Virtual Attendance 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.

Technological or other Issues

- If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a governor to participate through Virtual Attendance the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

Meeting Chair

- A Face-to-Face Meeting must be chaired by a governor who is physically present at the physical location listed in the meeting agenda.

6. Virtual Meetings

Reasonable efforts to give all Governors Virtual Access to Virtual Meetings

- When a Virtual Meeting is taking place, all reasonable efforts must be made to enable all governors to access the meeting through Virtual Attendance.

Statutory Notice Arrangements

- When a Virtual Meeting is taking place, the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered must 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.

Clerking Arrangements

- Virtual Meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings with either the clerk or another governor (other than the headteacher) attending through Virtual Attendance taking the minutes which will be provided for approval at the next meeting of the full governing body.

6. Review of this Policy

- The policy will be reviewed at least annually, but any governor with any concerns about its operation can request that it is reviewed at any time.