

A protocol for governors who wish to attend a meeting virtually – adopted by the Governors in response to the Covid 19 pandemic 29th April 2020

The board accept that, in line with the Regulations, the governors of Woolsey Primary School will be able to participate and vote at full board and committee meetings virtually, including, but not limited to, by telephone, Facetime, Skype, Webex and video and telephone conference.

The exceptions to this agreement are for any formal proceedings, such as staff grievance and discipline; considerations of exclusion, admission or complaints and for any appeal hearings, where only a physical attendance is acceptable.

Notice must be given to the clerk by the governor who wishes to participate virtually no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Virtual attendance will be for the whole of the meeting not just for specific agenda items, or solely for voting purposes.

Virtual attendance will only be used through necessity, it is not to be used as the default position for attendance unless agreed in advance by the board.

Should there be a requirement for a vote by secret ballot governors participating electronically will not be able to use their vote unless a mechanism has been established for them to vote remotely (e.g. via an online poll or survey). If a secret ballot becomes necessary during the meeting, and the quorum will not be achieved at the meeting due to virtual attendance, the agenda item will be rescheduled within 7 days so that a quorum can be physically present or an appropriate poll established.

If an urgent document is to be tabled at the meeting then the governors attending virtually will not be able to participate or vote for that agenda item unless it is possible for them to access the document electronically.

If the connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are not successful then virtual attendees will no longer be able to participate in the meeting. The agenda will not be delayed due to a technical failure.

Where any of the points above render a meeting inquorate the relevant agenda item(s) will be deferred to the next meeting.

Any governor attending virtually will consider confidentiality and will not participate from a setting where their conversation can be overheard. They will contribute from a quiet location giving their full attention to the meeting.

If there is no visual connection all attendees will start their comments by stating their name. Governors attending virtually will show courtesy to other members of the board and clerk, speaking in turn and repeating comments if requested to do so.

The governor attending virtually must be able to hear all discussions during the meeting clearly.

If there is no visual connection the outcome of any vote taken through a show of hands will be communicated by the individual attending virtually. The virtual attendee may cast their vote by stating if they wish to vote in favour, or against.

Where the majority of governors are physically present the chair will be permitted to attend virtually.

Any meeting where the majority of governors are attending virtually will be limited to not more than one hour and a half in length.