Abbey Court School

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Abbey Court School

Terms of Reference

Governing Body

Ratification

These Terms of Reference were formally approved and adopted by resolution of the Governing Body of Abbey Court School at a duly convened meeting and take effect from the date shown below.

Approved by the Governing Body on 18 May 2026

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

Name: Jon Carthy

Role: Chair of Governors



Signature: _____

Date: _____05.06.26_____

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1. Purpose of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is the accountable strategic body for Abbey Court School. It is responsible for setting the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school; holding the Headteacher to account for educational performance; ensuring effective financial management; and overseeing safeguarding and statutory compliance. The Governing Body operates at a strategic level and does not involve itself in the day-to-day management of the school.

2. General Responsibilities

The Governing Body will define and review the school's vision and values, approve and monitor the School Development Plan, promote high standards of pupil achievement and wellbeing, and ensure compliance with safeguarding, equality and SEND duties. It will provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders and ensure effective use of resources.

3. Membership and Roles

The Governing Body is constituted in accordance with the Instrument of Governance and includes a Chair, Vice Chair, Headteacher and Clerk. Link governors are appointed for key areas including safeguarding, SEND, pupil premium, health and safety, careers and wellbeing.

4. Meetings

The full Governing Body meets at least once per term. Meetings are quorate when 50% of governors in post are present. Agendas and papers are circulated at least seven days in advance. Minutes are produced within 21 days and approved at the subsequent meeting.

5. Delegation of Functions

The Governing Body may delegate functions to committees, working parties or the Headteacher, except where prohibited by regulation. Committees operate within agreed Terms of Reference and report decisions to the full Governing Body.

6. Decision-Making

Decisions are made by majority vote unless otherwise required. The Chair has a casting vote. Urgent decisions may be taken by the Chair or Vice Chair and reported to the next meeting.

7. Standards of Conduct

All governors adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Seven Principles of Public Life. Governors act with integrity, declare conflicts of interest, maintain confidentiality and support collective decision-making.

8. Accountability and Transparency

The Governing Body ensures required governance information is published and accurate records of meetings, decisions and interests are maintained.

9. Review of Effectiveness

The Governing Body reviews its effectiveness annually, undertakes skills audits, reviews committee structures and commissions external reviews where appropriate.

10. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are reviewed annually and approved by the full Governing Body.

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Committee Terms of Reference

General Principles

All committees operate under delegated authority from the Governing Body.

They support strategic leadership, accountability and financial oversight.

All committees must record decisions through minuted meetings.

All committees must comply with safeguarding, equality and statutory duties.

1. Pay Appeals Committee

Purpose: To consider appeals against pay decisions.

Membership: Minimum of 3 governors; no Pay Committee members or staff.

Quorum: 3 governors.

Clerking: Clerked and minuted.

Responsibilities: Review appeals fairly, consider evidence and ensure compliance with Pay Policy.

Decision: Written outcome with reasons; decision is final.

2. Staff Dismissal Committee

Purpose: To consider staff dismissal cases.

Membership: At least 3 eligible governors; no staff governors.

Quorum: 3 governors.

Clerking: Clerk present; hearings minuted.

Responsibilities: Ensure fair procedures, consider evidence and representation.

Decision: Majority decision, confirmed in writing with right of appeal.

3. Staff Dismissal Appeals Panel

Purpose: To hear appeals against dismissal decisions.

Membership: Minimum 3 governors; no prior involvement.

Quorum: 3 governors.

Clerking: Clerked and minuted.

Decision: Final decision to uphold or overturn dismissal.

4. Headteacher Performance Management Committee

Purpose: To manage Headteacher appraisal.

Membership: Chair and Vice Chair.

Quorum: 2 governors.

Responsibilities: Set objectives, review performance, recommend pay decisions.

Reporting: Confidential report to Governing Body.

5. Finance Committee

Purpose: To provide strategic financial oversight.

Membership: Governors with financial skills where possible.

Quorum: 3 governors.

Meetings: At least termly.

Responsibilities: Monitor budget, ensure compliance, oversee financial controls and policies.

Delegation: Approve spending within agreed limits and recommend to Governing Body.

5. Pupil Discipline Committee

Purpose: To consider exclusions.

Membership: 3 governors; no Headteacher or staff.

Quorum: 3 governors.

Responsibilities: Review exclusions, consider representations and decide on reinstatement.

Appeals: Managed by independent panel via Local Authority.