

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

GOVERNING BOARD HANDBOOK

Updated July 2018

WELCOME TO BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you, as a governor of Bramhall High School, with a basic understanding of your particular roles and responsibilities within the school. The Handbook is not a comprehensive resource nor does it overly duplicate large amounts of information to be found elsewhere but we hope it gives you some confidence to exercise your role as a governor as effectively as possible.

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THE FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board exists to promote the interests of the school and its students and to act as its advocate. Its core function is to:

- Ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined;
- Ensure that the Head teacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school;
- Ensure sound, proper and effective use of school finance resources.

In exercising these functions the Governing Board shall:

- Act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interests of Bramhall High School;
- Be open about the decisions we make and the actions we take and in particular be prepared to explain our decisions and actions to interested parties.

The Head teacher's responsibility includes:

- The internal organisation, management and control of the school;
- The educational performance of the school.

ABOUT BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

Having a good understanding of the school and its day-to-day activities is important background and context to the formal Governors' meetings. There are three main ways in which governors can find out more about the school than is discussed in Governing Board meetings.

Firstly, the school website. This will provide you with information on all aspects of school. Please do look at it, it is easy to navigate and will provide you with lots of information as well as bringing to life the excitement, commitment and achievements of the staff and students.

Secondly, school visits. All Governors are linked to an area of the curriculum. It is expected that Governors will meet with their subject leader once a term. See page 12 and Appendix 2 for guidance.

Thirdly, attending school events. The school puts on many functions and events e.g. music concerts, presentation evenings. Governors are encouraged to attend these as, again, they provide invaluable insight beyond the formal meeting structure and also show the Governors' support for pupils, staff and parents. It is not possible to put into words the buzz, which is characteristic of these activities, but the students will make you proud to be associated with the school.

If you are a new Governor we offer a range of support to help you settle into the role and be clear about what it entails. For those with no previous experience of governance in schools we would expect you to attend Stockport Local Authority's Governor Training course. (This course, covering all aspects of being a governor, is usually delivered in two 2 hour sessions which are offered as daytime or evening options. Details can be found on Governor Hub, see below). For all new governors the Head teacher will arrange a visit to the school during the working day so that you can look around, begin to meet staff and students and get a "feel" for Bramhall High School. All new governors are asked to complete a Skills Audit, which helps the Governing Board know where its skills and strengths are, and where there are development needs to cover any gaps. It is not expected, of course, that any governor will have skills or experience in each of the areas covered by the skills audit, it is a tool to help map expertise across the full Governing Board.

ABOUT THE GOVERNING BOARD AT BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL

At Bramhall High School, we are constituted, as required by legislation, to have:

2 elected Parent Governors

(at least) 11 Co-opted Governors

1 governor appointed by the Local Authority

1 Staff Governor

1 Head teacher

Half the number of governors in post are required to ensure full Governing Board meetings are quorate. Unusually it might be necessary for a governor not chairing a particular meeting to attend by either telephone or video link. The policy for virtual meeting attendance can be found on Governor Hub (see below).

All governors in our school are attached as a link governor to individual departments. In addition, some governors will be members of specific sub committees, e.g. pay, or policies, or will attend working groups, for example Finance. In addition some governors are the named link support for a particular aspect of the school, for example Wellbeing.

All governors will have access to the Bramhall High School section of the national Governor Hub. This is password protected and is the primary source for papers for meetings and other information relevant to the role. Here you can also access the local authority training on offer, Department for Education model policies and news articles of general interest to the education sector. There is an interactive help service on the Governor Hub site if you need it. In addition the school website has a Governing Board tab where further information may be found.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF INDIVIDUAL GOVERNORS?

- A strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for students
- The inquisitiveness to question and analyse and a willingness to learn
- Good interpersonal skills
- Be willing to promote meaningful and effective engagement with parents, staff and the wider community
- Be committed to sharing in all roles required in an outstanding governing board
- The time and inclination to fulfil the role adequately
- Attendance at least one parents' evening on a rota basis
- Attend at least one, evening school event (eg concert, awards evening, show, open evening).

WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE ARE REQUIRED OF MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD?

Whilst recognising that members will have a variety of experience and skills we need to ensure that across the membership of the governing board we have skills and experience in:

- Budgeting and driving financial efficiency;
- Performance management and employment issues, including grievances;
- Teaching and learning and analysing performance data;
- Safeguarding;
- Strategic management;
- Marketing, community and effective communication.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD

We would draw your attention to the Code of Practice for Governors at Bramhall High School (Appendix 1). We expect all of us to adhere to it. In summary,

- All Governors have equal status;
- Governors must observe complete confidentiality and should only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Board when they have been authorised to do so. Any decisions taken should be in the best interests of the school and not those of individuals or groups. Governors must be aware of, and at all times act within, the spirit of the Code of Practice;
- Governors should express views openly within meetings but accept collective decisions;
- Governors should not get involved in individual complaints. Any person with a complaint about the school should be directed to the School's Complaints Procedures and Guidelines document;

Visiting the school whilst it is in operation is the best way a governor can learn about the school. The purpose of such visits is to reinforce the Governor's monitoring role rather

than being seen as an inspection role and as such Governors should be mindful that they visit the school as guests and should sign in at reception and wear their security ID badge at all times. All visits should be at a mutually convenient time and should be planned carefully with an agreed focus. The Head teacher's PA should be notified of any visits and a note of visit (see Appendix 2) should be completed.

OUR COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

At Bramhall High School the full governing board (FGB) meets 3 times a term in the Autumn and Summer terms and twice in the Spring term. Each FGB meeting has a different focus to ensure that we, as a full governing board, strengthen our understanding and knowledge of the school to help us to lead its strategic direction. The pattern of meetings will be as follows:

Autumn Term

- Full Governing Board 1 – Results
- Full Governing Board 2 – Business
- Full Governing Board 3 – Review of Term

Spring Term

- Full Governing Board 1 – Business
- Full Governing Board 2 – Review of Term

Summer Term

- Full Governing Board 1 – Finance
- Full Governing Board 2 – Standards
- Full Governing Board 2 – Review of Term

In addition there are the following sub committees

- Strategic Group (one per term)
- Policies Group (one per half term)
- Budget Monitoring Group (one per term)
- Pay Committee (Autumn Term)
- Pay Appeals Committee (Autumn Term)
- PM Monitoring Committee
- Student Discipline Committee (occasional, according to need)

GENERAL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ALL COMMITTEES

- The quorum for all committees is 3; the Governing Board determines the membership and remit of each committee.
- Associate members may be given limited voting rights when co-opted on to a committee.
- Working Parties can be established for a specific purpose. Once the task has been achieved the group ceases to exist.
- Any governor can attend a committee meeting but only named committee members can vote.
- The chair of the committee, in liaison with the Head teacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team, compiles an agenda for each meeting; this agenda should be circulated to all members at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Functions that cannot be delegated to committees include: constitution of the governing board, appointment or removal of the Chair/Vice-Chair, suspension of a governor, appointment of a clerk to the governing board, establishment/remits of committees, appointment of governors, decisions on the delivery of SRE (Sex and Relationships Education), decisions on the length of the school session.

FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS

The full Governing Board (FGB) meets as outlined above. Each meeting has a different focus, to ensure that all the Governing Board's responsibilities, Standards, Finance, Resources and Premises are fully covered as outlined below. Separate sub committees will cover other responsibilities as detailed.

Topic focused FGB meetings take place as outlined below:

1. Standards responsibilities
2. Finance and Premises responsibilities
3. Personnel Responsibilities

STANDARDS RESPONSIBILITIES

Standards are reviewed termly to track, monitor and hold the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students.

Specifically:

- Ensure that the school promotes an ethos of high expectations for levels of achievement and behaviour for all learners and that this is communicated to students, parents and staff;
- Ensure that all staff have the appropriate skills and training to deliver a high quality learning environment;
- Be aware of any issues which may affect standards and look to how these may be addressed;
- Monitor achievement and standards at school and subject level;
- Monitor achievement and standards by different groups, e.g. by gender, ethnicity, level of disadvantage, children in care, young carers and children with special educational needs;
- Monitor patterns of attendance and exclusions and to receive statistical information on any (un-named) student exclusions ;
- Discuss, and recommend for approval, key targets;
- Monitor progress against targets;
- Be familiar with data eg in Raise on Line/Fischer Family Trust;
- Monitor trends in the quality of teaching and learning through review of the outcomes of lesson observations;
- Help to determine the format of reporting information about outcomes to the governors
- Monitor the SDP (school development plan);
- Ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is provided and ensure governors have a knowledge of how the curriculum is taught, evaluated and resourced;
- Receive reports on school innovations and how the school is responding to legislative requirements in the curriculum;
- Review policies on a regular basis and ensure staff are aware of the policies ;
- Ensure that the requirements of students with SEN and looked-after children are met and to ensure that the school has a designated member of staff for co-ordinating child protection within school & liaising with other agencies;
- Review the school profile;
- Review the school prospectus;
- Review the provision for collective worship and RE;
- Review, after consultation with the Head teacher, staff, parents and students, policies on welfare, health & safety of students and the dress and appearance of students with due regard to their spiritual, moral, cultural & social well-being whilst encouraging opportunities for their personal development;
- Review the procedures for school journeys, visits and residential activities – ensure thorough risk assessments have taken place and policies have been reviewed on charging, remission and conduct of these visits;
- Consider school improvement targets and monitor the progress of students;

- Ensure that racist incidents and incidents of physical intervention are recorded and reported to the LA;
- Consider ways of promoting the school in the community, developing positive links and providing extended services for the local community;
- Consider all issues regarding the welfare of pupils with due regard to their spiritual, moral, cultural and social well-being, whilst encouraging opportunities for their personal development;
- Promote extra-curricular activities and assist the school when planning for any special events in school;
- Promote community cohesion and meet requirements of the national Prevent Strategy;
- Ensure governors have the opportunity to gain understanding of the curriculum taught.

FINANCE AND PREMISES RESPONSIBILITIES

The FGB meets to oversee the financial performance of the school making sure its money is well spent; to monitor the condition of the school premises, to consider options for building improvements and to ensure that the school complies with health and safety regulations.

Specifically:

- Ensure the school meets statutory requirements to publish online information;
- Review policies on a regular basis and ensure staff are aware of the policies;
- Approve the budget plan (if this has been delegated to the committee) and monitor variations to the original budget (ensuring governors are provided with up-to-date financial information);
- Discuss the budget in accordance with school priorities (in line with SDP) and the longer term priorities of the school;
- Monitor regularly student numbers to assess the impact on future delegated budgets;
- Ensure that financial deadlines are met (i.e. approval of budget plan);
- Undertake an annual review of all expenditure with a view to achieving 'Best Value' with regard to the delegated budget and to ensure that the school's financial performance is in line with the budget and to approve a Statement of Internal Control annually;
- Undertake an annual review of all sources of income to ensure fees and charges remain appropriate;
- Discuss options available to the school prior to the approval of continuation/cessation of contracts including LA Buy Back agreements;
- Recommend the level of delegation afforded to the Head teacher, Chair and the committee;

- Ensure that there is an annual audit of the school fund and to monitor the expenditure of school funds;
- Ensure Business Interest Forms have been signed and dated by all governors (staff should be reminded to advise the Head teacher of any business interest and any interest should be noted);
- Ensure that the budget set reflects salary increases through meeting objectives from the performance management process;
- Ensure any budget carry-overs are accounted for in terms of projected expenditure;
- Ensure CPD (Continuous Professional Development) remains a focus for staff training;
- Monitor the condition of the school premises and consider options for building improvements (review Asset Management Plan);
- Undertake an annual safety check of the school premises;
- Approve applications for the use of school premises;
- Ensure that the governors' responsibilities regarding litter are discharged under the Environmental Protection Act 1990;
- Ensure that the school complies with health & safety regulations and ensure risk assessments are carried out regularly and the asbestos action plan is reviewed (if applicable)
- Review insurance arrangements;
- Ensure that the school is properly accountable for the financial aspects of its performance (i.e. it deploys resources in line with priorities, achieves planned levels of financial performance, avoids incurring financial loss and waste, receives favourable assessments from internal audit and Ofsted);
- Complete a self-evaluation of financial management competencies.

PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

The FGB oversees the review staffing structure, monitors the performance management of staff, reviews performance related pay and monitors appraisals and CPD (Continual Professional Development).

Specifically:

- Review the staffing structure/pay whenever a vacancy arises and review procedures for recruitment and selection ensuring that procedures are in place for managing staff levels (including re-deployment, early retirement, redundancy);
- Ensure that the principles of safer recruitment are adhered to;
- Review the salaries of main scale teachers annually, and make recommendations;
- Make recommendations relating to the award of discretionary payments for temporary additional responsibility for the approval of the governing body;

- Ensure that the budget set reflects salary increases through meeting objectives from the performance management process;
- Ensure that all teaching staff & support staff are valued and receive proper recognition for their work and contribution to the school life;
- Ensure CPD (Continuous Professional Development) remains a focus for staff training.

To meet statutory requirements there are a further 3 sub-committees covering personnel topics as follows:

Pay Committee

Pay Appeals Committee

Head teacher's Performance Monitoring Committee

Pay Committee

The purpose of the committee is to set the Pay Policy for the school and to implement the approved Pay Policy in respect of the pay for all staff.

Membership shall consist of at least three named members of the Governing Board, none of whom shall be employees or Associate Members. The Headteacher may attend all proceedings of the Pay Committee for the purposes of providing information and advice.

Function:

- To determine the Pay Policy for the school;
- To advise the Governing Board on current and future pay levels;
- To ratify appropriate salary ranges and starting salaries for Lead Practitioners, and members of the leadership group;
- To ratify annual pay progress for teachers as set out in the Pay Policy, taking account of any recommendations made on the Performance Management review statement, in accordance with the approved Pay Policy;
- To approve applications to be paid on the Upper Pay Range;
- To approve annual pay progress for the Head teacher, taking account of the recommendation made by the Head teacher's Performance Review Panel, following the annual review;
- To determine the application of national inflationary increases as required;
- To monitor and report to the full Governing Board on the annual pattern of performance pay progression at each level and the correlation between pay progression, quality of teaching and outcomes for students.

Pay Appeals Committee

The function of the Pay Appeals Committee is to deal with all appeals against pay decisions in accordance with the Appeals Procedures set out in the Pay Policy

The Pay Appeals Committee shall consist of at least three named members of the Governing Board, none of whom shall be employees or Associate members or members of the Pay Committee. The Head teacher may attend all proceedings of the Pay Appeals Committee for the purpose of providing information and advice.

Head teacher's Performance Monitoring Committee

Governors are responsible for reviewing Head teacher performance and should appoint **two** or more individuals from the full governing body to act as the performance review committee. This committee is charged with:

- Reviewing and evaluating the Head teacher's performance;
- Setting new objectives;
- Agreeing and implementing arrangements for monitoring against objectives.

The committee may also, depending on whether delegated powers have been accorded, be involved in making recommendations on Head teacher pay based on the statutory provision within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document.

The role of the externally appointed School Improvement Partner is to provide advice to the performance review committee on how to evaluate the performance of their Head teacher and on the most suitable objectives for the coming year. This involves:

- Discussion with the Head teacher about their performance;
- Discussion with the review committee to help them review performance and consider new objectives;
- Advising governors of the monitoring procedure.

STRATEGIC GROUP

The Committee comprises the Governing Board Chair and Vice Chair, and the Governing Board's members with expertise in the areas of Finance and Standards, together with the Head teacher. It meets termly to identify the priorities for the term, identifying any deadlines and delegating action for each committee. Specifically, to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;

- Build a productive and supportive relationship with the Head teacher while holding them to account for school performance and taking hard strategic decisions in the light of objective data;
- Set priorities for school improvement;
- Identify areas of development for the governing board.

POLICIES GROUP

The Policies group meets half termly to review all school policies and adopt new policies when required. A schedule is published at the beginning of each academic year and governors are asked to consider which meetings they will be best qualified to attend.

BUDGET MONITORING GROUP

To fulfil our statutory duties more efficiently we also have a Budget Monitoring Group. The group comprises the Governors with expertise in Finance matters and the Business Manager. It meets termly to monitor the budget in more detail than is possible in full committee meetings. It reports to the full Governing Board termly meeting.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS OUTSIDE THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Governors have a major role outside the main committee structure. These are:

- A Governor lead for specific areas of school work:
 - Disadvantaged Students
 - SEND and Inclusion
 - Health and Safety
 - Governor Development
 - Wellbeing, including Safeguarding, Child Protection, Looked after Children and Young Carers
- Link Governors. This role is vital. By visiting and building a relationship with a department a governor can become familiar with the work of the department and provide a degree of challenge and support from an external perspective;
- Student Discipline committee - formed when required, of any 3 governors to review the decision to exclude a student, training is available through Governor Hub.
- An executive role including appeals, grievances, conduct reviews, interviewing and appointment of a new head teacher when necessary.

DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS' (PUPIL PREMIUM) GOVERNOR

The purpose is to support, challenge, monitor and evaluate the work of the school in relation to raising the attainment and progress of children who are eligible for the pupil premium.

The governor with responsibility for pupil premium will:

- Report to the full Governing Board on a regular basis;
- Participate in an annual review, including discussions with staff, pupils and parents;
- Review the use of the pupil premium policy;
- Ensure governors are involved in decisions about how the pupil premium funding is spent;
- Keep up to date with research and changes in relation to the pupil premium and disadvantaged children.

Activities include:

- Meeting regularly with Senior Leaders and staff to discuss expenditure and impact of pupil premium expenditure;
- Knowing how many students are eligible and what their spread is across the school;
- Interrogating data in relation to pupil premium attainment and progress;
- Analysing the use and impact of the pupil premium and ensuring it is focused on eligible pupils;
- Holding discussions with key staff (e.g. teachers, Family Support Worker, attendance officer, Learning Support Assistants, SEND Co-ordinator) about the impact of their work with disadvantaged students;
- Ensuring that agenda for Governing Board and committee meetings include a focus on the use of the pupil premium;
- Encourage the conducting of surveys with staff/parents/students about impact of pupil premium grant;
- Supporting the school in encouraging the take up of free school meals;
- Visiting other schools to find out about pupil premium practice and activities;
- Supporting the development of a coherent pupil premium policy and ensuring its regular review;
- Producing an annual report to governors on the use of the pupil premium;
- Ensuring that the school website includes an up to date and comprehensive report on the use of the pupil premium.

SEND and INCLUSION GOVERNOR

The purpose of the role is to:

- Assist and advise the Governing Board on fulfilling its responsibilities towards students with Special Educational Needs and /or Disability (SEND);
- Ensure the school is compliant with the diversity and equality legislation especially those aspects that relate to identified groups that are vulnerable to underachievement;
- Ensure that the school has an equality statement and equality objectives to comply with the Equality Act 2010. To ensure that SEND students have access to the curriculum and that resources are used appropriately;
- Liaise with the School SEND co-ordinator;
- Have an overview of the provision for vulnerable groups - funding availability, school provision, student progression/performance;
- Ensure that the SEND policy is up to date;
- Monitor the implementation of the SEND Policy in school and in terms of its links to the School Improvement Plan, ensuring the necessary provisions are made for students with SEND;
- Ensure that the Governing Board is kept up to date with changes both locally and nationally for SEND students;
- Ensure the school considers the needs of learners with chronic or long term medical conditions alongside other vulnerable groups and are doing all they can to safeguard and support this potentially vulnerable group of learners (see below);
- The SEND Governor needs to be satisfied that any identified groups of learners achieve as well as other groups given their starting points.

As part of the monitoring it is appropriate for the SEND governor to include the progress of students with chronic or long term medical needs through:

- Confidence that staff members know how to keep any learners with chronic medical conditions safe in helping them to manage their condition?
- Confidence that the school ensures that learners with medical needs and chronic conditions have equality of access to the whole curriculum and extended activity of the school?
- Satisfaction that staff members are well-trained to support these groups/individuals learners? (For example has there been separate training, over and above first aid training, that covers administering emergency rescue medicines, use of an epi-pen, providing insulin injections and testing pupils' sugar levels)?
- Satisfaction that school staff members are aware of the potential risks of a learners' condition not being well managed in school? (For example, are staff alert to what would constitute an emergency?)

- Satisfaction that the school seeks to find out if parents/carers are satisfied with the quality of support, guidance and care provided by staff at the school in relation to learners with SEND/medical conditions?

HEALTH AND SAFETY GOVERNOR

Our Governing Board responsibilities include the monitoring of the school's organisation, arrangements and performance regarding the health and safety of employees, students and other people such as parents, visitors and contractors. It is not required that the Health and Safety Governor be a specialist or expert in health and safety matters. The responsibility for such matters remains with the entire governing body as a whole and is not devolved onto the designated governor.

Common matters of health & safety for monitoring at schools (in no set order of priority) include the following:

- Inspection/audit tours of the school's premises and equipment;
- Appropriate maintenance and checking of items such as electrical appliances & installation;
- Risk assessments for various activities and situations, including teaching & support tasks and glazing safety;
- Educational visits & journeys;
- Measures for health & safety emergencies, including procedures and contacts;
- Transport used by school, including coaches, minibuses and private cars;
- Actions after and recording & reporting of accidents and 'near misses';
- First Aid arrangements;
- Observance of Asbestos Management Plan by schools whose buildings contain asbestos materials;
- Preventative and reactive fire precautions;
- Appropriate health & safety training for employees;
- Observance and review of health & safety policies.

As part of the monitoring role it is appropriate for the designated governor to:

- Discuss relevant matters with the head teacher and/or other managers, and also teaching and support staff;
- See and review documents such as risk assessments, accident reports and relevant correspondence;
- Give regular updates about health & safety matters at Governing Board meetings.

Guidance, advice & support is available from various sources including:

- Guidance documents about various matters from Services to People, plus publications by HSE and DfE;
- Stockport Council's team of professional advisers in occupational safety & health. One of them specialises in school health & safety and can meet designated governors at their schools by arrangement;
- Training sessions organised by Services to People.

DEVELOPMENT GOVERNOR

Purpose of the role:

- To identify the skills and training needs of the governing body;
- To be aware of new governor appointments to induct new governors;
- To appoint a mentor for new governors if required;
- To ensure the Chairperson welcomes the new governor at his/her first meeting;
- To ensure that new governors receive a welcome pack and that they are aware of the New Governor Training programme;
- To ensure regular completion of the skills audit for all new and existing governors;
- To encourage and develop a reflective ethos for the Governing Board to assist in maximising their effectiveness;
- To ensure progression of the Governing Board Development Plan and that the required number of governors are appropriately trained in the areas in which they have expressed an interest;
- To encourage governor colleagues to attend training courses;
- To monitor attendance on training courses to enable information to be disseminated to the whole Governing Board;
- To attend governor development workshops;
- To maintain a resource bank of information for governors at the school;
- If required, support the Governor Review process for the Governing Board.

WELLBEING GOVERNOR (INCLUDING SAFEGUARDING, CHILD PROTECTION, LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG CARERS)

The purpose of the role is to:

- Act as a critical friend to the school for all issues relating to Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Child Protection, Looked After Children and Young Carers. This should include ensuring that the appropriate systems and procedures are in place to cover all aspects of the safeguarding agenda;
- Monitor the training records of the school to ensure compliance;

- Ensure that interviewing panels are convened appropriately, that safer recruitment practices are followed and that the single central record/identity checks are maintained;
- Be able to verify that the school has done all it can to inform its community of its responsibility to promote the welfare of students and keep them safe;
- Take account of how safe students feel when they are in school;
- Have responsibility for your own training and development needs to ensure that you are skilled for the role of Wellbeing Governor.

The evidence that needs to be seen includes:

- Up to date policies and school website information
- Commitment posters in school
- Information posted around school confirming the identity of the designated person
- How internal records are maintained
- How cases are monitored, though the governor will not have access to individual case files

Looked After Children and Young Carer Responsibilities

Purpose of the role:

Looked After Children (sometimes known as Children in Care) and Young Carers are amongst the most vulnerable groups of young people in our schools. The core purpose of this role is to act as champion for these groups of young people.

Looked After Children

Purpose:

- To ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibility in appointing an appropriately qualified designated teacher for Looked After Children (Children in Care);
- To ensure that the designated teacher has access to appropriate training to fulfil their role and meet their statutory responsibilities;
- To monitor the effectiveness of the designated teacher by ensuring that the school has a clear overview of the educational needs and progress of looked after children on roll; that the school's policies are effective in reflecting the needs of looked after children and that resources are allocated to support the designated teacher to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of looked after children;
- To ensure that (as a minimum) governors receive an annual report from the designated teacher (the report should not mention individual student by name);

- To ensure that the Governing Board and school leadership team consider what picture the information in the report is providing and what needs to be done to address any issues raised by the report;
- To ensure that in addition to considering and acting on the annual report, the Governing Board should make sure that there are arrangements in place to keep themselves informed about provision for, and attainment of, looked after children on the school's roll on a more regular basis.

Young Carers

Purpose

- To ensure the school adopts the policy for Young Carers;
- To ensure that the Young Carer's Charter is signed and displayed prominently in school;
- To appoint a senior member of the school staff to be the designated lead for Young Carers;
- To receive regular updates (via the Headteacher's termly report) on activities in school that identify and support the welfare, achievement and attainment of young carers as a vulnerable group.

LINK GOVERNOR

All Governors are linked to a department. The purpose of this role is to:

- Enable governors to gain a greater understanding of the work of the school;
- Provide curriculum areas with support and commitment through direct contact with governors.

It is expected that governors will meet once a term with their curriculum lead to discuss the work in the subject, strengths and weaknesses and progress against its priorities as set out in the School Development Plan. The Autumn Term meeting will focus on the previous summer's results, the Spring Term meeting on priorities for the following year's Development Plan, and the Summer Term on progress with the Development Plan. The meetings are not "inspectorial" but should enable staff to feel supported and governors to see how the subject area's work contributes to the priorities for the school as a whole.

After each meeting Governors should complete a Note of Visit (see Appendix 2) and send a copy to those listed on the form.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

When you are visiting the school for any reason other than a scheduled Governor meeting after the end of the school day, please use the main entrance and ensure you sign in. Meetings with staff, eg the link department staff, should be arranged directly with that person. As a courtesy please ensure that the Headteacher is aware of your visit by informing her Personal Assistant prior to the meeting.

Email is often the best way to contact individuals. All staff have email addresses which are usually of the following format:

Jane Smith would be jsmith@bramhallhigh.stockport.sch.uk

EVALUATING OUR WORK

As a Governing Board we strive to work effectively for the benefit of Bramhall High School. As part of this we continually evaluate our work. The following questions are used to guide us in this, they help provide information through monitoring, upon which we can evaluate what we do.

- Does the Governing Board work in partnership with the school?
- Are committee minutes/agendas produced and circulated in sufficient time?
- Is there a clear structure for committees?
- Is good use made of the Governing Board's time? Are meetings clear and focused and undertaken in a reasonable time?
- Are new governors given appropriate induction and offered mentoring from an experienced governor?
- Are we aware of the skills of each governor?
- What are governors' training requirements; are these reflected in the Governing Body Development Plan?
- How often do governors attend school functions?
- Is there an agreed policy on the management of governor visits?
- Are new governors given the opportunity to ask questions on anything they do not understand?
- How is the workload of the Governing Board organised? Is the workload spread out amongst the whole Governing Board?
- Does the Governing Board have an agreed process for appointing Community Governors
- Are Governors aware of the Code of Practice?

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNOR WEBSITE

Bramhall High School Governors' tab on the school website provides information useful to parents. This tab does not duplicate information about the school which is accessible through the school's main website.

GOVERNOR HUB

The Bramhall High School site on Governor Hub (a national site) is the source for most information about the Board's work. It is password protected and governors are allocated a password by the local authority. All paperwork for meetings is posted here. Other information including Board membership, dates of meetings can be accessed through the site. This is also where governors can access and sign up for workshops run by the local authority, including the New Governor training, plus other topic specific training to help with the governor role, for example Safeguarding or Pupil Discipline Committee training. Governor Hub also includes much useful information about governance in general.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT GOVERNANCE AND TRAINING?

Stockport Council has a site, "Learning Leads", which provides information, a forum for discussion and sharing of practice as well as the extensive programme of training courses. The courses cover a range of areas, so if you do not feel too confident about financial matters in schools, you will find a course to suit you. All members of our Governing Board who are new to governance are asked to attend the specific training course for new governors.

GOVAS (Governors' Association in Stockport) provides advice, training and an annual conference.

National Governors' Association has a site Modern Governor, again provides both information and training. There are many training modules on this site, which can be undertaken online. There is also a weekly newsletter with regular updates on issues relevant to education and governing matters in particular; you can also follow them on social media.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE GOVERNING BOARD

The following is not a definitive statement of responsibilities but is concerned with the common understanding of broad principles by which the Governing Board and individual Governors will operate.

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the governing board and the role of the head teacher.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the head teacher.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board and agreed with the head teacher.

- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our names, terms of office, roles on the governing board and category of governor will be published on the school's website.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the head teacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or students, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension or removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.

The Code of Conduct is based on the NGA Code of Conduct and can be found in full at <http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Legislation,policies-and-procedures/Model-Policies/Code-of-Practice.aspx>

APPENDIX 2 NOTE OF VISIT PROFORMA

BRAMHALL HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY: - NOTE OF VISIT TO SCHOOL

<i>Governor:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	<i>Staff Involved:</i>	<i>Duration:</i>
<i>Focus</i>	<i>Discussion Points</i>		<i>Decisions / Action</i>	<i>Comments (if appropriate)</i>

Please copy this form to:

- **The Chair of Governors**
- **The Head teacher**
- **The staff involved in the visit**