



UP HOLLAND
HIGH SCHOOL
Dedicated to Excellence

**POLICY ON GOVERNOR VIRTUAL MEETING
ATTENDANCE**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing boards of maintained schools in England to: “approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing board including but not limited to by telephone or video conference”.
- 1.2 In relation to this the governing board of Up Holland High School has determined the following arrangements will apply.
- 1.3 These arrangements apply to meetings of the full governing board and to any of its committee meetings.

2. Virtual Attendance at Face to Face Meetings

- 2.1 Where a governor wishes to attend a meeting of the governing board by either telephone or video link the chair and clerk must be notified at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible. The governors will be asked their reasons for not attending the meeting in person and their attendance virtually will be subject to the approval of the governing board at the beginning of the meeting, though this approval will not be withheld without good reason. Where approval is withheld the reason for this will be minuted and the governor informed immediately.
- 2.2 Governors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been ‘present’ for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. 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 this is not possible the governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.
- 2.3 Governors attending the meeting virtually 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.
- 2.4 The meeting will be chaired by a governor who may be present in person.
- 2.5 If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a governor to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

3. Virtual Meetings

- 3.1 The three statutory full governing board meetings and termly scheduled committee meetings will be face to face meetings. However additional and extraordinary meetings can take place via telephone or video conference call

as long as the usual quorum of governors is 'present' on the call. If restrictions are imposed or recommended regarding face to face contact, the governing board may vote to hold all regular meetings virtually until such time as it is practical to resume normal procedures. This does not include governor panel meetings related to the policies of the school such as HR, Complaints, Exclusions and Admissions.

- 3.2 In circumstances where all the attendees are meeting virtually the meeting will be chaired following the normal protocols that would apply as for a physical meeting.
- 3.3 Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all governors to access the meeting.
- 3.4 Where a meeting is taking place virtually the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will 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.
- 3.5 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a governor who is present, other than the headteacher, taking the minutes, and these will be presented to the next meeting of the full governing board.
- 3.6 Virtual meetings should not be video, or audio recorded by any governor or the clerk without the approval of the governing board and for a specified purpose.
- 3.7 Appendix 1 shows the protocol to be followed by an individual or full governing board when a virtual meeting is being held.

4. Review of this Policy

- 4.1 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.

Date:

Signed:

Virtual Meeting Protocol

This protocol should be followed when using alternative arrangements to participate and vote in meetings of the governing board.

The protocol that applies to individual governors/trustees using alternative arrangements to participate and vote in meetings.

Where the governing board has approved and has in place alternative arrangements for individual governors/trustees to participate and vote in meetings (e.g. by telephone or video conference) and a governor/trustee wishes to use these alternative arrangements they should:

- restrict themselves to using the arrangements agreed by the governing board;
- inform the clerk to the governing board that this is their intention as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours before the meeting is due to take place (subject to the meeting being convened giving the normal notice period);
- communicate and co-operate with the clerk to the governing board, school or trust as necessary to ensure that the alternative arrangements can be put in place and work well for all concerned, and abide by the normal rules, procedures and code of conduct adopted by the governing board and give particular regard to the duty to maintain confidentiality.

The protocol that applies to the full governing board when using alternative arrangements to hold their meetings.

Where the full governing board decides that a meeting should take place using alternative arrangements (e.g. by telephone or video conference) that have been previously agreed then the following will apply:

- The usual (statutory) notice and arrangements for issuing papers except where the chair has exercised their right to waive the usual notice;
- The chair may decide that only urgent items are to be considered and the agenda and meeting papers will reflect this;
- All participants to receive clear instructions regarding how to access the meeting including where they can access support if they experience difficulty;
- All participants will note and follow any instructions given on how to manage their participation at the meeting. For example, confirming attendance, speaking through the chair of the meeting, voting on matters etc;
- The governing board will abide by their normal rules, procedures and code of conduct adopted by the governing board and give particular regard to the duty to maintain confidentiality;
- Governors/trustees will contribute towards a safe and secure environment for the meeting by giving due regard to the school's policies relating to data protection and the appropriate use of ICT, and the minutes of the meeting will be taken by the clerk to the governing board and the meeting should not be recorded by any governor/trustee or the clerk without the approval of the governing board and for a specified purpose.

- If anyone must leave during the meeting please make this clear at the end of an agenda item when it is your turn to speak and ensure it is acknowledged so the clerk can record it in the minutes.
- Please review all documents made available before the meeting and if possible send questions in advance.
- For each item (or group of items) the chair will provide a brief overview of the information being presented to the governing board. This will be followed by each governor, in turn, being given the opportunity to ask questions or confirm that they are content. Once all governors have been given the opportunity to speak the meeting will move to the next item.
- Where questions have been submitted in advance the lead can provide answers during their brief overview (and identify that a question was asked in advance). Doing this will make the process more efficient so you are encouraged to provide questions in advance.
- At the end of the meeting all governors will be asked to confirm they are content.

Etiquette

1. With so many people dialling in there can be lots of background noise so can everyone put their phone on mute when they are not speaking.
2. It will not be possible to easily interject with questions as information is being presented so please note anything down as it occurs to you. You will be given the opportunity to ask it at the end of the agenda item.
3. Please be patient - not everything will run perfectly smoothly!
4. The chair will sum up the actions or conclusion after each item.