



Belmont Community Primary School

Virtual Attendance and Voting at Governing Body Meetings

1. Introduction

1.1 The *School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013* (regulation 14(8)) allow governing bodies of maintained schools in England to:

“the governing body may 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 practice, the Governing Body’s current approved platforms for virtual attendance are Microsoft Teams and Zoom, accessed over a secure internet connection.

1.2 In relation to this, the governing body of Belmont Community Primary School has determined the following arrangements will apply.

1.3 These arrangements apply to meetings of the full Governing Body and to Committee Meetings.

1.4 Governing Bodies must ensure that any alternative arrangements are adequately secure to maintain confidentiality of discussions and to comply with the school’s Data Protection and GDPR policies.

1.5 All governors will be supported to participate in meetings, including through reasonable adjustments where required, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Virtual Attendance at Meetings

2.1 Where a governor wishes to attend a meeting virtually (or part of a meeting), they should notify the Chair and Clerk at least 48 hours in advance where possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The governor may be asked their reasons for not attending in person. Virtual attendance is subject to approval by the Governing Body at the start of the meeting, though such approval will not be unreasonably withheld. Virtual attendance will be recorded as such in the minutes. Where approval is withheld, the reason will be minuted and the governor informed immediately.

2.2 Governors attending virtually are entitled to vote on any issue provided they have participated in the whole of the agenda item concerned. Where a secret ballot is required, the Clerk will facilitate this through a secure method (e.g. taking a call off speaker phone and recording the vote confidentially, or using a secure digital polling tool). If secure arrangements are not possible, the governor may vote openly or abstain.

2.3 Governors attending virtually contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost, they cease to count towards quorum, though the meeting may continue if otherwise quorate.

2.4 The meeting will normally be chaired by a governor present in person, unless the governing body agrees that the Chair (or Acting Chair) may chair virtually.

2.5 If, after reasonable efforts, it is not possible for a governor to participate virtually, the meeting may still proceed provided it is otherwise quorate.

2.6 Governors must ensure they participate from a private location using a secure internet connection, and must take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons from overhearing or accessing meeting papers or discussions.

3. Virtual Meetings

3.1 Each year, the Governing Body will review its meeting schedule and agree the most effective mix of face-to-face and virtual meetings. The Local Authority recommends that the three statutory full Governing Body meetings are held face-to-face wherever possible, and governors should make every effort to attend in person. However, other meetings may be held virtually if agreed by the board, provided the usual quorum is met. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. public health restrictions), full Governing Body meetings may also be held virtually.

3.2 When a meeting is held virtually, every effort will be made to ensure that all governors can access the meeting. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required.

3.3 Statutory notice arrangements apply to virtual meetings. All papers must be circulated at least seven days in advance unless the Chair waives this in an emergency.

3.4 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as face-to-face meetings. Minutes will be prepared by the Clerk or, if necessary, another governor or staff member (other than the Headteacher/Chair) who is present virtually. Draft minutes will be presented to the next full Governing Body meeting for approval.

3.5 Virtual meetings must not be digitally recorded by any governor or attendee unless the Governing Body has given express prior approval for a specified purpose, and then only in accordance with the school's Data Protection and GDPR policies.

4. Review of this Policy

4.1 This policy will be reviewed at least annually. Any governor with concerns about its operation may request an earlier review.

Ratified by governors at their meeting on	16 th September 2026
Signed	
Review Date	1 October 2027