

## [Insert name of school]

# Virtual Meetings Protocol 2021-22

The Governing Board expects governors to be present at all meetings. Where face-to-face meetings are not possible, including during the Covid 19 pandemic, meetings will take place and decisions will be made virtually. This protocol outlines how meetings will be conducted, enabling the Governing Board to discharge its duties effectively and efficiently.

### Alternative Participation Protocol

- Rules of quorum for governing board meetings remain in place for all virtual meetings. Ensuring quorate meetings is the responsibility of the clerk, who will monitor this throughout any virtual meeting and advise the board if a meeting becomes inquorate.
- It is the responsibility of individual governors/trustees, the clerk and members of staff, participating in virtual meetings, to ensure they can do so through a secure method in an environment conducive to confidential and private communication. **All attendees participating in a virtual meeting using technology should declare that they are in an environment which is secure, and which protects confidentiality.**
- Virtual participation must be for the entire meeting and not just for specific agenda items or solely for voting purposes.
- It is the responsibility of those participating virtually to ensure they have a reliable internet connection.
- If an individual's internet connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are unsuccessful, virtual participation will no longer be possible. The meeting will continue, and the clerk will note the time that the governor left the meeting.
- If there is to be a vote, governors should have relevant documents seven days prior to the meeting. The chair will decide how to ensure that all eligible votes are sought.
- If there is to be a vote, by secret ballot, this should be considered in advance of the meeting by the chair and clerk. An appropriate secure and confidential method of conducting a secret ballot must be in place enabling all governors to vote.
- All meeting participants should mute their microphone, unless invited to speak by the chair. Instructions will be outlined at the beginning of each meeting indicating what those attending should do if they wish to speak.
- If there is no visual connection, virtual meeting participants will always start their comments by stating their name.

This protocol does not apply to any formal hearings e.g. pupil exclusion, parental complaint, where all consent will be sought to conduct such a meeting virtually.