



Harvington Prep School

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND INDUCTION OF GOVERNORS POLICY

(INCLUDING EYFS)

INTRODUCTION

As Trustees of the Harvington Educational Trust, a registered charity, the Trustees, who are called Governors, of Harvington Preparatory School are responsible for the selection and appointment of new Governors. This is a legal responsibility that cannot be delegated, although the Governors encourage the Head to suggest the names of potential candidates. As Charity Trustees the Governors are aware of the importance of identifying the appropriate mixture of skills and experience that the Governors and their successors need to manage the multi-faceted affairs of a modern school which is also a Company Limited by Guarantee.

RECRUITMENT

The aim is to achieve a balanced Board with a core of individuals with educational, legal, accountancy, finance, property management, business, HR and marketing backgrounds, all of which are needed for the Governing Body to fulfil its responsibilities. This skill balance is reviewed regularly, with the goal of achieving a broad range of professions and backgrounds. The Memorandum and Articles of Association specifies that there should be a minimum of 3 Governors.

Governors are appointed at the AGM. They may also be co-opted by the Governing Body but only after the following are in place:

- Barred list check
- Right to work in the UK check
- Prohibition list check
- Photograph ID check
- Clear DBS disclosure received

However, the co-option must be confirmed in post at the AGM.

SELECTION

The Clerk to the Governors

The Clerk to the Governors combines the role with that of the Chief Administration Officer. In that capacity, he is required to advise and assist the Governors in the exercise of their functions. The Clerk to the Governors plays an important role in assisting with the appointment of new Governors, in arranging briefing and induction programmes at the school and in ensuring that the correct paperwork is sent to new Governors.

The Initial Stage

When a potential Governor has been identified and has expressed an interest; he/ she will be invited to meet informally with the governor whose responsibilities are most closely associated with their background eg property, HR etc. to discuss the role they might be expected to play on the Board. They will then meet with the Chair of Governors perhaps in the company of another experienced Governor. At that meeting, they will describe the Board's strategic vision for the next 3-5 years and the direction in which the Governors see the school moving. The aim at the informal meeting is to ensure that every prospective Governor has a clear understanding of the commitment expected of him or her, in terms of time and attendance and is given sufficient information about the school to allow a well-informed judgement to be made before committing themselves to the appointment process. At the informal meeting potential Governors are briefed about the range of statutory checks that are required as part of the appointment process. He/she will then be invited to visit the school and to meet the Head and to tour the school with the Chief Administration Officer.

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The second step is to invite the prospective Governor to attend a Board meeting as an observer. He/she then submits a copy of his/her CV under a covering letter to the Chairman of Governors. All prospective Governors are recommended to the full Governing Body by the Chair. Care is taken to select Governors who are prepared to serve for a minimum of three, and preferably six years which is the normal maximum length of a term of appointment, and who are prepared to commit the time necessary to any specialist appointment they may be required to fill.

All new appointments can only be made at the AGM and are formally recorded in the minutes of the AGM but newly elected governors cannot take up their position until the following are in place:

Barred list check
Right to work in the UK check
Prohibition list check
Photograph ID check
Clear DBS disclosure received

A formal letter of appointment is sent by the Chairman, which specifies the term of the appointment, the total tenure for a Governor, and, if appropriate, the sub-committee(s) to which the new Governor has been appointed.

The Clerk to Governors undertakes all of the above checks on all new Governors, and that they are not disqualified from acting as a Charity Trustee or Company Director, for example by virtue of an undischarged bankruptcy, before their appointment is confirmed. If the new Governor is also appointed as a Company Director a completed Form AP01 will be sent to Companies House to register the appointment. All the paperwork is handled by the School Business Manager/Clerk to the Governors.

THE INDUCTION PROCESS

Once a Governor has been appointed, the Clerk to the Governors will send him/her an information pack on the school that supplements the information that was provided at the initial stage (see above). This includes:

The Memorandum and Articles of Association
Governing body training
List of fellow Governors and their contact details
The Governance Structure, terms of reference and membership of the sub-committees
Minutes of most recent meetings
The most recent statutory accounts and AGM minutes
AGBIS/ISC “Guidelines for Governors”
The Charity Commission’s CC3 – “The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know”
School staff list
The School Development Plan
The School’s Risk register
The most recent budget and management accounts
The School’s Conflict of Interest Policy
The School’s Register of Interests
The School Calendar and list of functions
The Staff Handbook including School Policy documents
Prospectus
The most recent inspection report

Familiarisation Visits

New Governors are invited to spend a day at the school and to meet the key personnel and to attend lessons in order to gain an insight into the curriculum and to meet groups of children.

Formal Training

New Governors are to attend appropriate training courses to fit them for their role. Details of training courses and seminars for Governors are circulated regularly by the Clerk to the Governors and Governors are encouraged to attend, where possible.

All new Governors should undertake formal child protection training (to include safeguarding, Prevent and Channel courses) as an important part of their induction.

RETIREMENT

Governors are appointed for an initial term, usually of three years and may be reappointed thereafter. The Chair and Vice-chair are appointed for a 3 year period unless otherwise stipulated by the board.

RELATED POLICIES

Policy for managing conflicts of interest.
Bribery and anti-corruption policy.
Gifts and hospitality policy.

Annex:

- A. Skills and professional background requirements required of Governors.
- B. General statement of Governors' responsibilities.

ANNEX A

SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS REQUIRED OF GOVERNORS

The Board seeks to achieve a balance of skills that are complimentary and which add value to the daily operation of the Trust, its future development and long term financial stability. In general the following professions would be represented on the Board:

Finance and Accountancy
Legal
Education
Property development and management
Architecture
Health and Safety
Human Resources
Marketing
Fundraising
Business management and operation

Appointment	Primary attribute/skill	Other attributes/skills
Governor	Professional employment	
Chair	Operational business management	Strategic planning
Finance / Treasurer	Accountant	Finance, planning
Property and H&S Sub-committee	Property professional	H&S background Property development Planning consents Architect
Governor responsible for Safeguarding	Experience in area of Child Protection	

ANNEX B

GENERAL STATEMENT OF GOVERNORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The duties of the Governing Body of Harvington Preparatory School are defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Governing Body sets and reviews the school's vision for the future, policies, plans and procedures that will ensure the best possible education for present and future pupils of the school, including the proper control of its finances. As Trustees of the charity and Directors of the company Governors have a legal and fiduciary duty to protect the assets of the school, to promote the achievement of its charitable objects and to ensure that it is diligently and well run.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors have the legal responsibility for ensuring that the school complies fully with the law, is solvent and complies with all the financial regulations for charities and companies as well as with ISI and EYFS regulations. The school should be run in accordance with its charitable objects, including public benefit. Governors have a duty to keep in mind the interests of pupils, staff and parents as well as those of the community. Governors' responsibility for compliance cannot be delegated to the staff of the school and requires them to take professional advice where necessary and to ensure that they are kept up to date with changes in all of the regulations affecting independent schools.¹

Governors set the school's vision, ethos and direction, regularly review the school's performance against targets and monitor the risks to which the charity is exposed. They are responsible for ensuring that proper measures are taken by the school to mitigate all risks, by safer recruitment and child protection, compliance with health and safety and insurance. They are responsible for the Trustee structure. The conduct of operational business is delegated to the Head and Senior Leadership Team.

THE CHAIR

The Chair of the Board of Governors of Harvington Preparatory School is responsible for a complex, multi-disciplinary charitable operation with an annual turnover of approx £1.3M, set in 3 buildings located on Castlebar Road, Ealing.

The Chair is supported by the vice-chair and the Governing body and governance is exercised through two sub-committees, a buildings and finance, which meet at least once per term before the meeting of the main Board.

Day to day operational control is vested in the Headmistress, who works with the School Business Manager, Clerk to the Governors and the Senior Leadership Team.

Specific responsibilities

Overall responsibility for guiding the governance of the Board and the school.

¹ A current example is the Bribery Act 2010.

Support for the Headmistress; meeting regularly and listening.
Responsibility for the Headmistress' performance appraisal.
Remuneration of the Head and School Business Manager in conjunction with the Treasurer. In conjunction with the Board and following discussion with the Headmistress sets the school's vision and endorses the School Development Plan. Chairs meetings of the Board.
Knowledge/experience of primary education.
Oversees the appointment of a new Head and Business Manager.
Maintains close links with Vice Chair.
Ensures that the school has the requisite level of financial competence.
Leads on the appointment and induction of new Governors.
Understanding of the role of a Trustee of a charity and the appropriate working relationship with the school staff.
Ensuring that the key relationships work well
Ultimate oversight of the processes for dealing with grievances, disciplinary appeals and complaints.
Arranging the Chair's succession process in advance of retiring.

GOVERNORS

Governors' duties are to protect the assets of the school, to promote the achievement of its charitable objectives and to ensure that it is diligently and well run. They are expected to exercise independent judgement with reasonable care and diligence. They have to act fairly and in a manner that protects the reputation of the school. It is their duty to keep in mind the interests of pupils, staff and parents, as well as that of the community. They make sure that the school complies with the law, is solvent and complies with the financial regulations for charities and companies. It must be adequately insured against possible public and employers' liability (including Governors' liability) claims. Governors have a duty to declare any personal interest in any transaction or arrangement proposed by the school, to avoid conflicts of interest and not to accept benefits from interested third parties.

TIME COMMITMENT

Regular commitments consist of attending Board and the relevant sub-committee meetings. It is important that Governors and particularly the Chairman of Governors are available for the Head to discuss major strategic issues affecting the school. The Chair of Finance / Treasurer is likely to face similar calls on his/her time from the Head and / or Business Manager which will peak at the time of the audit, the preparation of the budget and of the management accounts. The call on the time of other Governors will be proportionately less.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All Governors are expected to comply with the school's Conflict of Interests Policy and to complete a Register of Interests form annually. All Governors, (like senior school staff) are required to sign the hospitality register if they accept gifts or hospitality valued in excess of £50 from an organisation or individual that has a relationship with the school.

Governors should act at all times with honesty and integrity. Each Governor has an important role in performing their duties as Trustee of a charity and in upholding the schools' policies. The school has a policy of zero tolerance of bribery and corruption and:

The Board accepts its fiduciary duty as Trustees of the charity to ensure that the school does not tolerate bribery and corruption

Taking, giving or attempting to give bribes constitutes gross misconduct and, if proven, results in dismissal/removal from post

Governors and staff have a duty to notify the authorities where they discover instances of bribery, fraud or other malpractice

Governors and senior staff sign a declaration of their outside interests on joining and annually thereafter

All contracts for goods and services will be subject to open and fair competition

LEGAL LIABILITIES OF TRUSTEES/GOVERNORS

The legal liabilities of Trustees/Governors are laid down in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.