



Terms of Reference: Full Governing Body

Role of the Central Governing Board

The Full Governing Body (FGB) is the proprietary body for the Synergy Schools Federation and is the legally liable body accountable for delivery across all schools within the Federation. The FGB plays a vital role in setting the strategic direction of the Federation, overseeing educational outcomes, and holding senior leaders accountable for financial probity and the effective use of funds. For the Church schools within the Federation, it preserves and enhances the distinctive Christian foundation of the school. It is essential that those who serve on the Full Governing Body must always ensure that they act in good faith and in the best interests of the Federation and schools, exercising reasonable care and skill and having particular regard to personal knowledge and experience.

Membership and Terms of Office

The FGB will consist of 14 governors. Its membership is outlined in the Instrument of Government.

The FGB will also appoint a chair, a vice-chair and a chair for each Local School Committee on a two-year cycle. The vice-chair has a specific role and responsibility. They co-ordinate governor monitoring, challenge and support, as well as set the agendas for each Local School Committee alongside the Executive Headteacher.

Governors will usually serve a four-year term to ensure a full understanding and continuity in challenge and support. However, the usual term of office for a staff governor is 1 year. This is to ensure that staff across all schools in the federation have regular opportunities to take on this role if they wish. The Full Governing Body will usually undertake a self-evaluation on an annual basis, including a review of membership and skills, to confirm any changes or additions required. Where there have been significant changes within the governing body, this may occur more regularly. Recommendations for all appointments to the FGB will be based on the skills' analysis. Governors will only be granted sabbaticals in highly exceptional circumstances and for no longer than six months. Instead, if they are finding the time commitment too great, governors are encouraged to discuss this with the Chair of the FGB. The FGB can invite advisers (including members of staff in the schools) to attend meetings provided they do not take part in decision-making.



Associate members

Associate members will be appointed to both the FGB and Local School Committees based on their specific expertise, role and experience, so that they can contribute to the effective governance and success of an individual school and/or the overall federation. It is important to note that they are not governors and they are not recorded in the instrument of government. Associate Members may attend full governing body meetings, but they do not have a vote in governing body decisions and may be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil.

External Review

The FGB welcomes regular external reviews of governance and expects these to be undertaken every 3-5 years.

Chair of the Full Governing Body

The Chair will:

- Provide a clear lead and direction for the Board, understanding the aims and vision of the Federation and the roles played by all those involved.
- Build an effective team, helping ensure the Board has the necessary skills and experience, that it promotes equality and diversity and that governors can make a positive contribution to driving schools' improvement with support and development provided to do this.
- Work closely with the Executive Headteacher, Headteachers and Heads of Schools to ensure there is proper challenge and support.
- Hold the Board to account, ensuring all business is conducted efficiently and effectively, ensuring governors attend regularly, can contribute and are listened to, with clear decisions being made when necessary.
- With at least one other governor, approve governors' and associate members' expenses in line with the Governor Expenses Policy.

Meetings

The Full Governing Body usually meets six times each year (once every half term). The annual schedule of meetings will be confirmed as part of its date-setting during the first meeting of the academic year and communicated by the Clerk to the Governors. The quorum for meetings shall be 50% of the Board's membership (excluding any vacancies among governors). Governors can participate by phone or video conference. Absences, including lateness, should be notified to the Clerk to the Governors in advance. Attendance is expected at all meetings and is monitored. Absences are noted but not consented to. Attendance is reported to the Governors on an annual basis and published on the Federation's website. If Governors have low attendance, they will be asked to assess their commitment to the position and consider standing down.

Where a decision is required, governors will be asked to indicate their approval. Should any vote be tied, the governor chairing the meeting will have a second or casting vote.



Responsibilities

Strategic vision and oversight

- To determine and champion the vision, values and educational character for the Federation to ensure spiritual, academic, physical and emotional wellbeing of pupils in line with requirements and good practice
- To be responsible for all activity, educational performance and inspections (including Ofsted and SIAMS) in line with requirements and good practice
- To approve the Federation and the Swaledale Alliance's objectives, KPIs, evaluation and development plans
- Management of Federation-wide risks

Governance

- To approve the governance Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference
- To appoint and remove key governance roles (Full Governing Board Chair and Vice-Chairs and Local School Committee Chairs)
- To agree link roles and working groups
- To oversee governor induction and training
- To oversee annual governance self-evaluation priorities and setting meeting dates
- To approve and ensure publication of annual governance statement.
- To ensure compliance with all statutory policy requirements
- To approve any proposed amendments of admissions criteria
- To determine the approach to complaints including the Complaints Policy (including statutory sections relating to early years provision) and complaints at Stage 3
- To ensure compliance with all requirements including contracts and procurement, Disability Discrimination Act and Free School Meals
- To confirm term dates
- To ensure all requirements with Public Sector Equality Duty and approve the Equality Policy and Objectives
- To form Governor panels as requested, for example, relating to grievance and disciplinary matters as well as pupil exclusions.
- To approve any statutory early years policies not referred to elsewhere in the delegation scheme

Finance, administration and contracts

- To oversee and approve finances in line with requirements and good practice
- To approve the first formal budget and year-end for each financial year for individual schools and the Federation
- To receive reports from the Business Manager to monitor budget and any variances regarding income, expenditure and cash flow
- To take decisions as required regarding reports on school voluntary funds, audit reports and information from Local School Committees
- To ensure financial controls are in place
- To undertake an annual review of the Federation Register of Business Interests



- Approve Federation Recharge Policy

Curriculum and Standards, SEND and Pupil Wellbeing

- To determine the Federation-wide Curriculum Policy
- To review data and reports on progress and KPIs
- To approve Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Policies
- To approve policies relating to relationships and sex education
- To receive reports on pupil exclusions
- To determine the Federation's Safeguarding Policy (including statutory sections relating to early years provision)
- To be responsible for safeguarding across the whole federation
- To approve each school's Behaviour Policy

Staffing

- To appoint, suspend and dismiss the Executive Headteacher
- To appoint headteachers and Heads of Schools
- To receive updates on the well-being of all staff and consider what strategies the Federation is using to provide a positive working environment
- To approve Federation staffing policies
- To receive reports on performance management of the Executive Headteacher and make decisions/ receive reports on other staffing issues in line with policies and delegations.

Terms of Reference: Local School Committee

Role of the Local School Committee

The Synergy Schools Federation has established 5 Local School Committees (LSCs) across the federation to support governance. The role of the Local School Committee is an important one, ensuring there is local accountability for the performance of individual schools and that schools achieve strong outcomes for their pupils and the communities they serve. It is expected that the LSCs will schedule 4 meetings across each academic year.

The 5 Local School Committees will be structured as follows:

1. Aiskew, Leeming Bar CE and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School
2. Brompton-on-Swale CE Primary School
3. Crakehall CE Primary School
4. Hutton Rudby Primary School
5. Pickhill CE Primary School

Membership and Terms of Office

The Local School Committees must include at least 2 governors and will consist of a total membership of between 5 and 7 governors and associate members as follows:



- **1 Headteacher or Head of School**
- **1 Foundation Governor or Associate Foundation Member (Only applicable for those LSCs of Church Schools)**

For each Church School in the Federation, their local Incumbent is provided with an ex-officio position on the LSC, as explained below.

Aiskew, Leeming Bar CE Primary School	The Incumbent of the Benefice of Bedale and Leeming and Thornton Watlass
Brompton-on-Swale CE Primary School	The Incumbent, Easby with Skeeby and Brompton-on-Swale and Bolton-on-swale
Crakehall CE Primary School	The Incumbent of the Benefice of Lower Wensleydale
Pickhill CE Primary School	The Incumbent of the Benefice of Hallikeld

Should the Incumbent not wish to take up the ex-officio position, then the Full Governing Body will replace them with an already appointed Foundation Governor from the FGB. If this is not possible and after discussion with the Incumbent, a new Associate Foundation Member will be appointed by the Full Governing Body to fill their place on the LSC.

- **1 Staff Governor or Associate Staff Member**

The Staff Governor will automatically become a part of the LSC at the school where they work. For the other 4 LSCs, a member of staff will be elected to serve on the LSC, using the same process used to elect a staff governor.

- **1 Parent Governor or Associate Parent Member**

At least one parent must become part of the LSC. Parent governors are encouraged to be an active part of the LSC in the school that their child(ren) are being educated. For those LSCs that don't have a parent in the role of a parent governor on the FGB, the LSC should ask the FGB for permission to approach a parent to become an Associate Parent Member.

- **At least 1 and up to 4 Co-opted Governors or Associate Co-opted Member**

Although co-opted governors are welcome to become a part of a Local School Committee, it is helpful to support succession planning and ensure a comprehensive background in education knowledge for each LSC by co-opting associate co-opted members who only attend Local School Committee meetings.

The usual number of co-opted governors combined with associate members will be 3. However, in the case of an LSC of a community school who doesn't require a foundation governor (or associate foundation member) the number will increase to 4.

The Head of School will take a key role in their LSC. Wherever possible, each LSC will include at least 2 governors. The chair of the LSC will be a governor on the FGB. This is to ensure effective communication between the two bodies.

Recommendations for appointments to the Local School Committee will be proposed to the Full Governing Board (FGB) by the Chair of the LSC. Appointments will be ratified by the FGB before associate members attend meetings.

The Local School Committee Chair will be appointed by the Full Governing Body on a biannual annual basis.

Like governors, associate members will usually serve for a minimum period of four years to ensure continuity in challenge and support. The Local School Committee can invite advisers (including members of staff in the schools and the Synergy Federation leadership team) to attend meetings provided they do not take part in decision-making.

The Chair of the Local School Committee

The Chair will:

- Provide a clear lead and direction for the LSC, understanding the aims and vision of the school and wider Federation and the roles played by all those involved.
- Build an effective team, helping ensure the LSC has the necessary skills and experience, that it promotes equality and diversity and that governors and associate members can make a positive contribution to driving schools' improvement with support and development provided to do this.
- Work closely with the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher or Head of School to ensure there is proper challenge and support.
- Hold the LSC to account, ensuring all business is conducted efficiently and effectively, ensuring governors and associate members attend regularly, can contribute and are listened to with clear decisions being made when necessary.
- Meet regularly with the headteacher or head of school to receive school updates and provide pastoral support, as appropriate.

Meetings

Each Local School Committee is scheduled to meet four times each year. The annual schedule of meetings will be confirmed as part of its date-setting at the start of each school year.

A written report will be sent after each LSC meeting to the governing body. If required, the LSC Chair will give a verbal report at the governing body meeting to summarise the main points and actions discussed.

The quorum for meetings will be made up of at least 1 governor, the Headteacher or Head of School (or acting Headteacher or Head of School in event of them being unavailable) and totaling no less than four governors and associate members. LSC governors and associate members can participate by phone or video conference. A meeting will not become inquorate should the headteacher or head of school have to leave due to declaring an interest. Absences, including lateness, should be notified to the Chair of the LSC, headteacher or Head of School in advance. Attendance is expected at all meetings and is monitored. Absences are noted but not consented to. Attendance is reported to the Governors on an annual basis. If governors, including associate members, have low attendance, they will be asked to assess their commitment to the position and consider standing down.



Responsibilities

Strategic vision and oversight

- To recommend required school-specific changes to Federation vision, values and educational character to ensure spiritual wellbeing of pupils.
- To determine the LSC's own vision in line with the Federation vision and reports to FGB
- To review and recommend school evaluation (SEF) and development plans in line with Federation priorities (FIP)
- To receive and consider school reports from external partners in line with Federation priorities
- To contribute to planning prior to, and action planning after, inspections including Ofsted and SIAMS

Governance

- To provide oversight and monitoring (where required) for pre-school registration.
- To receive regular updates on governance and ensure all LSC governors and associate members attend appropriate training.
- To monitor school specific policy requirements
- To monitor the implementation of Federation policies at school level
- To ensure school compliance with statutory requirements, including Early Years
- To set and monitor school Equality Objectives in line with Equality Act
- To monitor the Equality Policy at school level

Curriculum and Standards

- To oversee the implementation of the federation-wide curriculum policy
- To monitor the quality of education at the school
- To approve the curriculum proposed by each headteacher or head of school (consistent with Federation policy)
- To oversee the target-setting process with the headteacher or head of school and monitor progress

Safeguarding, SEND and Pupil Wellbeing

- To ensure implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Policies
- To review and suggest amendments for policies relating to pupil behaviour
- To ensure implementation of the Child Protection Policy
- To ensure adequate safeguarding provisions in line with requirements
- To report safeguarding matters and procedures as required
- To nominate a designated governor or associate members who acts as link person between the Federated Governing Body, LSC and the nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Premises

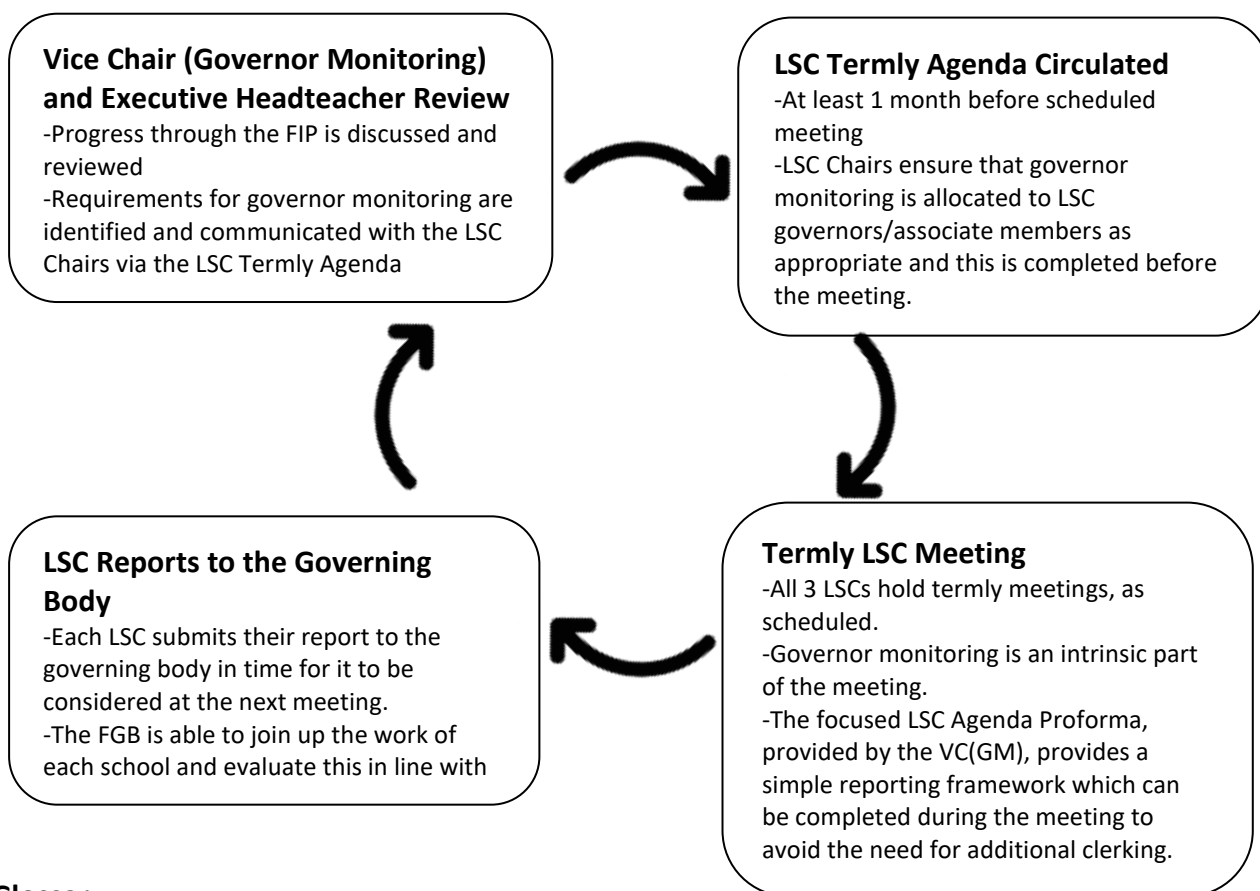
- To agree the school Health & Safety Policy
- To monitor implementation of the Health & Safety Policy including for premises work, site inspections, and receive reports e.g. on fire risk assessments
- To agree and monitor the school accessibility plan
- To review and maintain the buildings strategy and asset management plan
- To approve school's insurance arrangements
- To review risk reports
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Information management and communication

- To ensure effective implementation of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and Data Protection policies and procedures at school level
- To ensure school websites are compliant with statutory requirements.
- To establish and maintain community relationships and provide channels to respond to feedback.

Governor Monitoring

The process of governor monitoring is cyclical and can be best explained diagrammatically as follows:



Glossary

FIP – Federation Improvement Plan

FGB – Full Governing Body

VC(GM) – Vice Chair (Governor Monitoring)

LSC – Local School Committee

Synergy Schools Federation – Governing Body Meeting Planner
Post 6-School Federation

- 6 Full Governing Body Meetings (1 every half term)
- 4 Local School Committee Meetings

Governing Body Meetings

Standing items

- Attendance
- Business Interests and Confidentiality
- Minutes
- Correspondence
- Safeguarding/Health and Safety
- Approval/Ratification of Statutory Policies
- Any Other Business
- Future Meeting Dates

AUTUMN TERM	SPRING TERM	SUMMER TERM
1ST HALF TERM		
<u>MEETING 1</u>	<u>MEETING 3</u>	<u>MEETING 5</u>
Start of year procedures Scheme of delegation Register of business interests Skills audit Evaluation of FIP and SIP Agree FIP and SIP Statutory and End of Year Data	LSC Reports from Autumn 2 Governor Training SFVS Swaledale Alliance Report End of Autumn Term Data Report SENDCO Report FIP/SIP Update	LSC Reports from Spring 2 Governor Training Consider Outturn Report Approve Start Budget Staffing Structure FIP/SIP Update End of Spring Term Data Report
2ND HALF TERM		
<u>MEETING 2</u>	<u>MEETING 4</u>	<u>MEETING 6</u>
Headteachers' Report Revised budget Financial Benchmarking Staff/Parent/Pupil Questionnaires Performance Manage Report	Headteachers' Report Safeguarding Audit Report (Fed) Building Maintenance Programme Appraisal Outcomes – Supp Staff	LSC Reports from Summer 2 Headteachers' Report Swaledale Alliance Report SENDCO Report Initial Statutory Assessment Results, if available Staffing information, for September

Local School Committee Meetings

Standing items

- Attendance
- Business Interests and Confidentiality
- Minutes
- Correspondence
- Safeguarding/Health and Safety
- Any Other Business
- Future Meeting Dates

AUTUMN TERM	SPRING TERM	SUMMER TERM
1ST HALF TERM		
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING 1</u></p> <p>Start of year procedures Scheme of delegation Register of business interests Skills audit Sports Premium Report Show FIP and SIP Statutory and End of Year Data</p>		
2ND HALF TERM		
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING 2</u></p> <p>School website compliance Church School Distinctiveness Report FIP/SIP Monitoring Reports and Update Pupil Premium Strategy</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING 3</u></p> <p>FIP/SIP Monitoring Reports and Update End of Autumn Term Data Report Safeguarding Audit Report (Sch) Accessibility Plan and Equality Scheme Governor Training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MEETING 4</u></p> <p>End of Spring Term Data Report Governor Training Church School Distinctiveness Report FIP/SIP Monitoring Reports and Update Staffing information, for September</p>

Approximate Timings for Meetings Across the Academic Year

	Full Governing Body Meeting	Local School Committee Meeting
1st Half of Autumn Term	<u>MEETING 1</u> 1 st week of October	<u>MEETING 1</u> 3 rd week of September
2nd Half of Autumn Term	<u>MEETING 2</u> 4 th week of November	<u>MEETING 2</u> 2 nd week of November
1st Half of Spring Term	<u>MEETING 3</u> 3 rd week of April	
2nd Half of Spring Term	<u>MEETING 4</u> 4 th week of March	<u>MEETING 3</u> 4 th week of February
1st Half of Summer Term	<u>MEETING 5</u> 4 th week of April	
2nd Half of Summer Term	<u>MEETING 6</u> 1 st week of July	<u>MEETING 4</u> 2 nd week of June