BROAD HINTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

'A Love of Learning for a Lifetime of Opportunities'

'At Broad Hinton School we are proud of our educational heritage, which is rooted historically in Christian Belief.

We aim to provide opportunities for all to learn and achieve within a happy, structured and disciplined Christian environment.

We welcome everyone to our village school where all faiths, cultures and abilities are received with love, care and respect.'

Circle Model Terms of Reference 2026-2027

(Circle Model – Whole Governing Board)

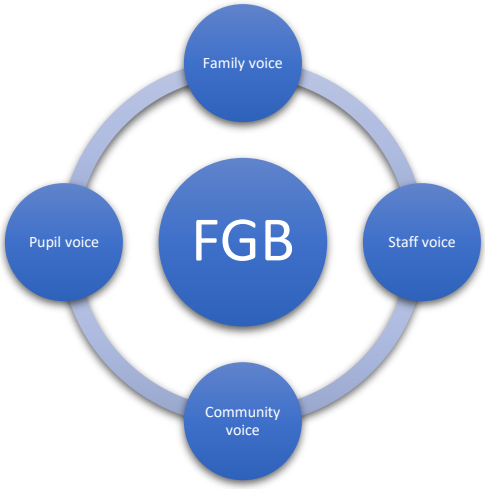
The Governing Board will always operate in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act; the School Governance Regulations; the Local Authorities Scheme for Financing Schools; the Local Authorities Financial Regulations and Procedures and all other relevant legislation.

This document will be reviewed annually

These documents were agreed by the Board at their meeting held on:

Related documents:

Monitoring visits policy and school code of conduct



1. Introduction

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Circular Model of School Governance at Broad Hinton Church of England Primary School, designed to promote an inclusive, collaborative, and dynamic approach to school leadership. The model is structured to empower all stakeholders—governors, school leaders, staff, pupils/students, parents, and the wider community, to share in the decision-making processes, with an emphasis on transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The governing board (known as the board) works collectively as a 'whole team', meeting at least six times per year, without any separate committees. An annual planner and agenda for each meeting will include all the tasks which the board is required to consider, and the board may 'commission' assignments or activities arising from the business of the meeting, which will be recorded in the minutes.

The board, to ensure its core functions are fulfilled, will delegate monitoring responsibilities to 'monitoring pairs' or 'individuals'. These include those the Department for Education (DfE) identified as, 'should have' (unless you have a very good reason not to), individual roles, roles recommended by the LA, and those focused on the priorities of the School Plan. The board recognises the delegated monitoring individuals/pairs are replacing committees in terms of challenge, responsibility and accountability when undertaking their monitoring and reporting back to the board, the board recognises that all decisions are made by the full board and no financial delegated authority is given to monitoring pairs.

Meetings of the board and delegated individuals/pairs will be considerate of the wellbeing of staff and headteacher by referring to the DfE teacher workload reduction toolkit. In each case where a function has been delegated there is a statutory duty for the delegated governor/s to report, by written monitoring reports, any findings, action, or recommendation for board decision. The board meets to consider monitoring reports and recommendations, makes decisions, and conduct routine business.

2. Purpose

The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight, and assurance for educational and financial performance. The board has resolved to conduct all its business as a board, and to work collectively without committees. The board will appoint the DfE identified individual delegated governor roles of safeguarding; special educational needs and disability (SEND); Attendance, finance and health and safety, to report back on their findings, as well as the delegated monitoring pairs (if required) to focus and report back, in replacement of a committee, on the school improvement priorities.

Having delegated governors does not reduce the collective accountability of the board for all its functions. The board will need to ensure that its agenda and reporting mechanisms enables all board members to have a collective strategic overview for all delegated monitored areas to enable accountability and effective informed decision making.

The board has three strategic core functions:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders/headteacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation/school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation/school and making sure its money is well spent. The main responsibilities to be managed by the board are outlined below: Items in bold may be delegated and reported back to the board.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this governance model are to:

- Facilitate effective, inclusive governance and decision-making.
- Empower each stakeholder group to have a voice in governance processes.
- Encourage collaboration and open communication among all stakeholders.
- Align the school's strategic direction with the needs of its pupils and community.
- Ensure that the school always operates in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act; the School Governance Regulations; the Local Authorities Scheme for Financing Schools; the Local Authorities Financial Regulations and Procedures and all other relevant legislation.

4. Governance Structure

The Circular Model of Governance is organised into interlinked "circles" of participation, each representing a key group of stakeholders. These circles interact as a group and collaborate via the FGB regularly to ensure that all viewpoints are considered in the decision-making process. Governors, therefore, will be representative of all stakeholder groups, these include:

- Pupils (parents and teachers) – parent and teacher governors (this could include visits to the FGB by the School Council).
- School leadership - headteacher
- Local authority – LA Governor
- Diocese – Foundation Governor
- The wider community - co-opted governor
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4.1 Core Leadership Circle

Composition: The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and any other senior administrative staff. This will also include input from the Chair of Governors (where appropriate).

Responsibilities:

- Set the overall strategic direction of the school.
- Oversee the implementation of policies, plans, and budgets including safeguarding compliance
- Monitor and evaluate the school's performance, including academic outcomes, well-being, and behaviour.
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements, including safeguarding, health and safety, and the curriculum.
- Report to the Governing Board on key decisions and performance indicators.

4.2 Governors Circle

Composition: The governing body of the school, including the Chair, Vice Chair, Headteacher, Parent Governors, Staff Governors, and Community Governors.

Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic oversight and accountability by asking challenging questions
- Ensure that the school is complying with legal and regulatory requirements (e.g., safeguarding, financial accountability).
- Independently monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness, both academically and operationally.
- Understand and approve major policies, budgets, and the school development plan.
- Support the Headteacher and SLT in their leadership of the school.

4.3 Staff circle

Composition: All teaching and non-teaching staff members, including support staff, pastoral staff, and administrative staff.

Responsibilities:

- Provide input into the development of policies, including curriculum design and delivery, behaviour management, and staff development.
- Collaborate with senior leadership on issues related to staff welfare, professional development, and performance.
- Contribute to the school's self-evaluation processes and help identify areas for improvement.
- Engage with students and parents to gather feedback and communicate school policies effectively.

4.4 Pupil Circle

Composition: Student Council representatives, elected student leaders, and class representatives.

Responsibilities:

- Represent the views and interests of the pupils and feedback these to the staff and core leadership circle.
- Provide input and feedback on key school policies, including curriculum, welfare, and extracurricular activities.
- Contribute and help to monitor to the development of the school's ethos and culture.
- Support student engagement in school-wide initiatives, including leadership programs, peer mentoring, and community service.

4.5 Parent and Community Circle

Composition: Parent representatives (e.g., Parent Governor, PTA members), local community representatives, and external stakeholders (e.g., local businesses, alumni).

Responsibilities:

- Provide feedback on school policies affecting students and families.
- Support school fundraising, volunteerism, and community engagement initiatives.
- Help foster a positive relationship between the school and the local community.
- Advocate for the school's needs and priorities at a local level, building strong partnerships with external organisations.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Each circle in the governance model has defined roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's strategic objectives. These roles are collaborative, ensuring each group is engaged and accountable.

5.1 Core Leadership Circle

- Lead the development and implementation of the school's strategic vision.
- Ensure alignment between the school's educational goals and the curriculum.
- Ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements (e.g., Safeguarding, SEND, and the Equality Act).
- Report regularly to the Governing Body on key issues, performance, and progress.
- Support the professional development of staff and ensure that resources are allocated effectively.

5.2 Governors Circle

- Ensure the effective governance of the school and uphold the Nolan principles.
- Build a picture of the school and challenge the school's performance against the School Development Plan (SDP) and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Approve and monitor the budget and resource allocation.
- Appoint, support, and review the performance of the Headteacher and senior leadership.
- Oversee the school's risk management processes, including safeguarding and health and safety.

5.3 Staff Circle

- Contribute to the development of the curriculum and teaching strategies.
- Engage in performance management and staff development processes.
- Contribute to the school's self-evaluation processes.
- Participate in policy development on matters of pedagogy, student well-being, and professional standards.
- Promote a culture of respect, collaboration, and continuous professional growth.

5.4 Pupil Circle

- Gather and represent the views of students on key issues, including school culture, student welfare, and extra-curricular activities.
- Provide input on the school's approach to behaviour, bullying, and mental health support.
- Support the development of student leadership opportunities, including student mentoring and peer mediation.
- Work with the Staff Circle to develop and improve student voice initiatives.

5.5 Parent and Community Circle

- Represent the views and concerns of parents and the local community.
- Support school fundraising and volunteer efforts.
- Promote parental involvement in school activities and governance.
- Strengthen the relationship between the school and the community through outreach programs and partnerships.

6. Decision-Making Process

Decisions in the Circular Model are made collaboratively, with all stakeholder groups involved in key discussions and decision-making processes.

6.1 Consensus Decision-Making

Wherever possible, decisions should be made by consensus, ensuring all stakeholders agree on the proposed course of action. If consensus cannot be reached, the Core Leadership Circle or Governing Body will have the final say.

6.2 Consultation and Feedback

Stakeholder groups will be regularly consulted on important matters, with feedback mechanisms in place (e.g., surveys, focus groups, meetings) to gather input from all circles.

6.3 Voting (if required)

In the event of a disagreement that cannot be resolved through consensus, voting will be conducted in accordance with the school's governance policies, with each circle having a defined voting process.

7. Communication and Reporting

Effective communication is central to the success of the Circular Governance Model. The following principles will guide communication:

- Regular Reports: The Core Leadership Circle will provide regular updates to the Governing Body and staff on key decisions and performance indicators. This will take the form of a headteachers report and/or SDP, SEF.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Feedback from students, parents, and the community will be regularly sought and communicated through surveys, consultations, and forums. This process will be managed by the Clerk.
- Transparency: All circles will ensure transparent communication of their activities and decisions.

8. Review and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Circular Model of Governance will be reviewed annually to ensure it is meeting its objectives and fulfilling the needs of the school community. This review will consider stakeholder engagement, decision-making efficiency, and overall school performance.

9. Amendment of Terms of Reference

This Terms of Reference document will be reviewed and updated every two years or as needed, to reflect any changes in governance practices, educational legislation, or stakeholder needs. Amendments must be approved by the Governing Body.

10. The role of the clerk to governors.

The clerk will ensure that the overall administration of the circular model is undertaken. This includes:

- Liaising with the Chair of governors and headteacher to compile the agreed full governing body agenda (see meeting schedule document).
- Maintaining robust FGB minutes, clearly identifying both the challenge and support being provided.
- Maintaining an accurate record of all professional development undertaken by governors in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensuring all policies and procedures are being maintained and followed.
- Ensuring each circle of governance has completed its cycle – this includes liaising with key leaders to ensure deadlines and activities are completed.

Approval and Endorsement

This Terms of Reference has been approved by the Governing Body of Broad Hinton Church of England Primary School and is effective from September 2025

Signatures:

- , Headteacher

- , Chair of Governors

- Date:

This terms of reference will ensure that the Circular Model of Governance is clearly defined, enabling all stakeholders to be actively involved in the school's governance, making decisions that are in the best interests of the students and the wider school community.