

THE BIRMINGHAM FEDERATION OF MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOLS

Allens Croft Nursery School

Kings Norton Nursery School

Lillian De Lissa Nursery School

Adderley Nursery School

Jakeman Nursery School

Selly Oak Nursery School

St Thomas Centre Nursery School

Gracelands Nursery School

Shenley Fields Nursery School

Weoley Castle Nursery School

Newtown Nursery School

Highfield Nursery School

Virtual Attendance Policy

DATE APPROVED _____ NEXT REVIEW DATE _____

SIGNED BY CHAIR _____

The Birmingham Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools follow the policies and procedures from Birmingham City Council including BCC Financial Procedures Manual and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB), which includes the Government's Prevent Strategy.

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VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS POLICY

Purpose

The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing bodies of maintained schools in England to: “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”.

For the purpose of this policy “meeting” is defined as either a formally convened Governing Board (GB) or GB Committee meeting.

The rationale is to ensure each governor can make an informed decision through consideration of all papers submitted and governor discussion prior to voting.

Equality impact

This policy sets out how the GB will enable governors to attend meetings remotely on the occasions this is required allowing them to have the ability to take part in meeting discussions and decisions.

This policy will ensure no governor suffers from unfavourable treatment because of their work or caring duties.

Responsibilities of Federation schools

The Birmingham Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools will ensure there will be available, provision of a secure method of virtual presence as required at all full governing board meetings and meetings of the governing board’s committees.

Remote attendees will ensure:

1. Remote attendees must be aware of their surroundings. Confidentiality and sensitivity of information must be considered, and conversations must not be conducted in a place where they will be overheard, for example in an open public space. Confirmation of confidentiality should be declared at each meeting.
2. Governors in virtual attendance at any meeting of the GB must, under no circumstances, make any form of electronic recording of any part of the meeting, without the express permission from those in attendance at the meeting.
3. Those in virtual attendance must ensure they give full attention to the matters being discussed and avoid undertaking other tasks that may cause distraction for example, watching television, listening to background music, answering emails etc.
4. Virtual attendees must agree to undertake full participation in the whole meeting.
5. They advise the Chair of Governors/Local Committee Chair as soon as practicable and within at least 7 days of the meeting, of a request to attend by virtual method and the reason for non-attendance in person. In the event of an unforeseen emergency, then as much notice is to be given as possible. In this situation it is to be at the sole discretion of the Chair as to whether remote participation is possible.
6. They can identify themselves to the satisfaction of the other attendees.

All Governors and Clerks should note:

1. Remote attendees may only vote on items where they have been presented with all the papers to be considered.
2. A request to attend a meeting remotely may be made by any governor to the Chair of the meeting. Priority will be given to requests of an emergency or equality nature.
3. The Quorum of the FGB will be one half of the total membership of the FGB excluding vacancies. However, no decisions can be taken at meetings where the majority of those attending are employed by schools across the/in the Federation. Governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.
4. No governor may attend more than one meeting remotely without attending a meeting in person unless there are exceptional circumstances.
5. A meeting may not be chaired remotely unless there are exceptional circumstances identified by the Chair.
6. If technical difficulties occur governors should vote as to whether the remote attendee is still considered to be present at the meeting to ensure the meeting remains quorate. Technical difficulties would not include loss of visual communication providing there is still sound communications.
7. Indicate on the agenda whether virtual attendance has been agreed. Indicate on minutes when declaration of interest requested, a declaration of confidentiality is made by any virtual attendee.
8. Secret Ballots. The remote attendee may decide to either vote openly or to cast their vote with only the clerk and one governor (already having cast their vote) present.