

St James' CE Primary School
Virtual Participation in Meetings 2020



The Governing Board expects governors to be present at all meetings under normal conditions. However, in unprecedented situations an exception can be made. Virtual participation includes, but is not limited to, telephone, Skype, Teams, GovernorHub and video conference.

Virtual Participation Protocol

- The normal rule of restricting the number of virtual participants has been relaxed for the duration of the Covid-19 crisis. The entire meeting can now take place on line.
- Notice of virtual participation must be given to the Clerk of the Governing Board, no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting.
- Prior to agreeing a platform, the Chair/Clerk should ensure that all members have access to this technology.
- Anyone participating in a meeting using technology must 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. A digital sheet could be signed e.g. attendance recorded on GovernorHub.
- It is the responsibility of those participating virtually to ensure they have a reliable connection.
- If the communication connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are unsuccessful virtual participation will no longer be possible and the agenda will not be delayed. The clerk will note the time that the connection was lost.
- Ensuring quorate meetings is the responsibility of the clerk who will monitor this throughout any meeting involving virtual participation and advise the board if a meeting becomes inquorate.
- If there is to be a vote, governors must have relevant documents seven days prior to the meeting.

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- Normally if there is to be a vote, by secret ballot, governors participating virtually would not be able to vote. However, under current emergency conditions governors should contact the clerk directly to register their vote.

- Where there is no visual connection all meeting participants will always start their comments by stating their name.

- If there is no visual connection for an individual the outcome of any vote taken through a show of hands will be communicated that individual. That attendee will need to cast their vote by stating if they wish to vote in favour or against.

- During the meeting the chair can mute all participants to reduce background noise and prevent several speakers talking at once. A show of hands could be used to indicate that a governor wishes to speak and the chair could unmute one speaker at a time. This will ensure inclusivity and smooth running of the meeting.

- Take a note of what worked well and apply it to the next meeting.