



Croft Church of England Primary School

Governor Handbook

2021 - 2022



Introduction

A very warm welcome to the academic year 2021 -2022.

This Handbook is designed to support both new and established members of the Governing Board.

The better the relationships are between staff, pupils, parents and Governors, the better the performance of everyone in school.

Vision

Our school vision has been created through consultation with parents, staff, pupils and the community.

We looked at the strengths of the school and what is important to us and identified what we would like the school to be in the future. As a Church of England school, we felt that this vision should be based around core Christian values.

Be happy: aspire, believe, achieve

Happiness is... the feeling you get when you help others and contribute to the world; when you work hard at something that was difficult to begin with; when you feel safe, cared for and respected; when you feel confident in your uniqueness and know where you are going.

Philippians 4:13

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'

Our vision is at the heart of what we are doing and aiming for every day in school.

Staff

HEAD TEACHER AND SEND LEAD

Mr Simon Robson

SENCo

Miss Amy Crisp

TEACHING STAFF

Early Years

Miss Nicola Bleasby (Staff Governor)

Year 1 and 2

Mrs Jade Jackson

Year 3 and 4

Mrs Gemma McManus and Mrs Lucy Lancaster

Year 5 and 6

Mr Jack Conway (AAHT)

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION & PREMISES MANAGER

Mrs Kate Banks

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Early Years

Mrs Joanne Little

Mrs Amanda Hinley

Years 1 and 2

Mrs Danielle Goundry

Years 3 and 4

Miss Liz McNulty

Years 5 and 6 Mrs Clare Martin

SEN Support Mrs Lisa Dobby

OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB STAFF
Miss Kerry Wilford (Manager)
Mrs Hayley Park

PERIPATETIC MUSIC STAFF

Guitar Teacher Mr Simon O'Byrne

Keyboard & Piano Teacher Mrs Janet Devlin

Drums Teacher Mr Daniel Shield

PREMISES STAFF Mrs Kathryn Beck

CATERING STAFF

Cook in Charge Mrs Sharron Breeze

Catering Assistant Mrs Carol Geldard

MIDDAY SUPERVISORS

Miss Liz McNulty Mrs Danielle Goundry

Mrs Lisa Dobby Mrs Clare Martin

Subject Leaders

Area of Learning	Subject Leader
English Writing and SPAG	Gemma McManus
English Phonics and Reading	Nicola Bleasby
Maths	Jack Conway
EYFS	Nicola Bleasby
Science	Gemma McManus
Computing	Jack Conway
PE	Nicola Bleasby/Jade Jackson
R.E. and Collective Worship	Lucy Lancaster
History	Nicola Bleasby
Geography/ Global Dimension	Nicola Bleasby
Design Technology	Simon Robson
Art and Design	Simon Robson
Music	Jack Conway
MFL - French	Simon Robson
PSHE, SMSC, British Values	Lucy Lancaster

SEN	Simon Robson/Amy Crisp
More Able	Simon Robson/ Jack Conway
Assessment	Simon Robson

Role of the Governing Board

The Department for Education provides a 'Governance Handbook' for trustees of academies and multiacademy trusts and governors of maintained schools.

The latest version is October 2020. It can be found through the following link:

[Governance Handbook 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The introduction explains the core functions of the Governing Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Effective governance is based on six key features:

- Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
- Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
- People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
- Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.
- Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

In practical terms, we ask that Governors attend as many Governor meetings as possible. Meeting attendance is published in the Annual Governance Statement and on the school website.

You will have responsibility for monitoring an area(s) of the School Development Plan. You may also have a link responsibility for a certain area. Each Governor is expected to make at least termly visits and update the Governing Board on your findings.

School Development Plan

Each year the school evaluates its progress against the prior year's development priorities. This, in addition to an honest self-evaluation of the school: forms the basis for the following year's Development Plan. This is part of a three year School Development Plan.

The main areas for development are highlighted and then actions drawn up with details of how we will achieve these. The success of this is dependent on Governors and Staff working together with honesty and integrity.

Each term all action plans and monitoring are evaluated and updated by the Head Teacher and shared with Governors. Emerging priorities are identified for the coming term. Governors are assigned to monitor the progress of the strategies and the impact they are having on children's learning and

progress. Governors are assigned to a particular aspect of the School Development Plan to monitor the impact on children's learning and progress of the actions being undertaken. Please refer to this year's School Development Plan for further information.

Our Governing Board

The Governing Board of Croft Church of England Primary School was reconstituted in September 2021 and is now made up of:

- 2 Foundation Governors, appointed by the Diocese
- 2 Parent Governors, elected by the parent body
- 2 Co-opted Governors, appointed for their particular skills
- The Head Teacher,
- 1 Staff Governor, elected by the staff of the school
- Associate Members, these governors cannot vote. They provide advice and support to the Governing Board.

A Governor's term of office usually lasts for four years. Governors can seek additional terms if they choose, except Parent Governors when their child has left school. Governors can leave the Governing Board at any time should they need to do so.

The Clerk to Governors is Mrs Val Brown. She produces the minutes of the meetings and ensures meetings are carried out with due process. She also acts as a resource and adviser to the Governing Board.

What is expected of a governor?

Individual Governors are expected to:

- Enhance the work of the Governing Board to ensure a strong focus on raising standards, so that every child achieves their potential.
- Demonstrate their commitment by getting to know the school and becoming involved in school life and activities. (In Governance terms getting to know the school involves reviewing pupil data, monitoring the impact of teaching on pupil progress and outcomes, understanding the financial status of the school and generally understanding the challenges the school faces internally and externally. See National Governors' Association (NGA) website for Getting to Know your School guidance notes).
- Take personal responsibility for their ongoing training and development.
- Prepare for meetings so they are well informed, having read all of the papers issued for the meeting with the agenda. These will be loaded onto the Governors section of Teams.
- Attend meetings (Governing Board/ Working Groups) and play an active part. Some meetings may be held virtually on Teams.
- Support the school with parents and in the community.
- Recognise the corporate status of the Governing Board and concept of collective responsibility.

- Respect confidentiality and the need to act with circumspection.

Refer to the Governor Role Descriptions for more information.

Structure of the Governing Board

Refer to the Governing Board Structure. The Governing Board elects a Chair and Vice Chair from its members annually.

The Vice Chair will ensure that Governors with responsibilities in their areas will carry out their relevant duties.

The Governing Board will not have any Committees. All Governors will attend all Governing Board meetings. These will be joint Resources and School Improvement meetings.

See Agenda Plan and Governors' Yearly Plan for more information about the content of each meeting. Extra meetings and working parties will be set up as needed.

Chair of Governors Alison Russell
Vice Chair Julia Clarke
Finance Governor Alison Russell
Safeguarding/ H&S Governor Alison Russell/Derek Blenkarn
SEND Governor Alison Russell

Governors have responsibility (a 'link') for an area of the School Development Plan/ Subject/ Subject Leader

Subject Leader	Subject	Link Governor
Nicola Bleasby	English Phonics and Reading EYFS History and Geography PE	Alison Russell (PE - Derek Blenkarn)
Gemma McManus	English Writing and SPAG Science	Alison Russell
Jack Conway	Maths Computing Music	Nick Potts
Lucy Lancaster	R.E. and Collective Worship PSHE, SMSC, British Values	Julia Clarke/ Viv Waugh
Simon Robson	Design and Technology Art and Design MFL	Julia Clarke

Other Governor Links

Link	Governor
Pupil Data: Attainment & Progress	Julia Clarke
Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium	Alison Russell
Gifted and Talented	Julia Clarke
Healthy Schools/SRE & Drugs Education	Alison Russell
School Council	Julia Clarke
Human Resources	Alison Russell
Governor Training and Induction	Kate Banks/ Julia Clarke

Panels and Statutory Committees

Panel	Number of Governors	Governors
Headteacher's Performance Management	2 Governors plus CEO and SIP	AR, JC
Headteacher's Performance Review Officer Provides appeal for HT PM	1	NP
Performance Pay Panel Decides validity of performance pay recommendations.	Same as HT performance Management Panel	AR, JC
Pay Appeals Panel	3 (no staff)	NP, KB, DB
Staff Discipline Panel	3 (no staff)	JC, NP, VW
Staff Discipline Appeals Panel	3 (no staff)	AR, KB, DB
Complaints	2 (no staff) + Chair + 1 Governor from another school	KB, JC
Pupil Discipline Committee	3 (no staff)	NP, JC, KB
Pupil Discipline Appeals	3 (no staff)	DB, VW, AR

Terms of Reference for Committees:

See Scheme of Delegation for Trust

Headteacher's Performance Review - CEO, School Improvement Adviser and two Governors

Staff Pay Appeals Panel

Membership: Any 3 Governors as available but excluding staff governors and governors involved with performance pay.

Quorum: 3 Governors

Delegation: The Committee has full delegated powers.

1. To hear appeals regarding performance related pay recommendations by the Head Teacher
2. To uphold or dismiss the appeal.

Staff Discipline Committee

Membership: Any 3 governors as available but excluding staff governors.

Quorum: 3 Governors

Delegation: The Committee has full-delegated powers.

1. To consider matters relating to staff discipline;
2. To determine whether an employee should cease to work at the school;
3. To apply the agreed criteria in the selection of staff for redundancy or other terminations.

Staff Discipline Appeals Committee

Membership: Any 3 Governors as available but excluding staff governors and governors involved in the issue through the Staff Discipline Committee.

Quorum: 3 Governors

Delegation: The Committee has full-delegated powers.

1. To hear appeals against initial decisions of the Staff Dismissal Committee or the Head Teacher about matters relating to the discipline of staff, dismissal of staff. Other terminations or staff redundancy in accordance with Trust policies;
2. To uphold or dismiss and appeal.

General Complaints Committee

Membership: Any 2 Governors as available excluding Staff Governors and the Chair of the Governing Body and 1 Governor from another school.

Quorum: 3 Governors.

Delegation: The Committee has full-delegated powers.

1. To determine an appeal of any formal complaint made pursuant to the Trust's formal complaints procedure;

Pupil Discipline Committee

Membership: Any 3 Governors as available but excluding Staff Governors.

Quorum: 3 Governors

Delegation: The Committee has full delegated powers.

For any exclusion, either fixed term or permanent, of more than five days:

1. To consider the actions of the Head Teacher in excluding the pupil;
2. To consider representations made by parents;

3. To make a decision to uphold; not to uphold; or otherwise to vary the Head Teachers' decision to exclude the pupil.

Pupil Discipline Appeals Committee

Membership: Any 3 Governors as available but excluding Staff Governors and governors involved in the Pupil Discipline Committee.

Quorum: 3 Governors

Delegation: The Committee has full delegated powers.

For any exclusion, either fixed term or permanent, of more than five days:

1. To consider the actions of the Head Teacher in excluding the pupil;
2. To consider representations made by parents;
3. To make a decision to uphold; not to uphold; or otherwise to vary the Head Teachers' decision to exclude the pupil.

Safeguarding Governor Role Description

1. Ensure that the school/trust is compliant with safeguarding policies, procedures and the law
 - Ensure that a senior member of staff is appointed as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and that this role is incorporated into their job description.
 - Ensure that a senior member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked after children (to be responsible for the educational achievement for children in care).
 - Ensure that inter-agency procedures are being followed where necessary.
 - Liaise with the DSL and designated teacher regarding safeguarding matter in the school and local area.
 - Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the functions of the DSL to be carried out in their absence.
 - Ensure that a system is in place and working effectively to ensure that the school's "Single Central Record" is administered correctly, is up-to-date and compliant with the requirements of statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education".
2. Lead on the governance of safeguarding
 - Liaise with the headteacher and/or DSL and designated teacher to ensure that safeguarding principles are embedded throughout the school and curriculum.
 - Review the annual safeguarding audit and providing a summary report to the full governing body or relevant committee.
 - Annually review the school's recruitment processes and make recommendations for approval by the governing board.
 - Annually review the school's safeguarding policy including child protection and staff behaviour policies; those relating to procedures for allegations against staff members; and those relating to peer-on-peer abuse and make recommendations for approval by the governing board.
 - Monitor progress and actions against the safeguarding audit.
 - Ensure pupils understand the safeguarding measures in place and are provided with a means for their voices to be heard and acknowledged.

3. Ensure that the school/trusts safeguarding training regime is robust
 - Ensure the DSL receives formal safeguarding training every two years: - The local authority should be able to either provide training or details of training providers. The NSPCC also has an online child protection course.
 - Ensure that the designated teacher for looked after children receives appropriate and regular training at least once every two years: - Again, the local authority should be able to provide details of available training.
 - Ensure all school staff receive formal safeguarding and child protection training on induction.
 - Ensure all school staff, including DSL and designated teacher, receives regular, updated safeguarding and child protection updates on annual basis.
 - Ensure all governors receive regular, up-to-date safeguarding training - they could be invited to staff training sessions, for example.
 - Ensure that at least one member of an interview panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.

4. Additional responsibilities in a MAT:
 - Ensure that a senior member of trust staff is appointed as the trust wide designated safeguarding lead and that this role is incorporated into their job description.
 - Ensure that the child protection policy is understood across the layers of governance and by all stakeholders: The Child Protection Policy should be ratified at local governing body level, should the Trust have them.
 - Ensure the trustees and local governors are trained sufficiently, and regularly: The Safeguarding Trustee should act as a co-ordinator for those governing at a local level.
 - Meet with nominated safeguarding local governors and disseminate best practice.
 - Oversee the Trust's Single Central Record, and ensure the proper procedures are in place for it to be administered correctly.

Meetings

Whenever possible, all full Governor meetings are held in school on Tuesdays, starting at 4.00pm. Working parties or panels may meet during the day. Some meetings may be held virtually on TEAMS. These will be shorter meetings. Where necessary some meetings may be a blend of in person and virtual.

Governors are expected to make a positive contribution to meetings:

- Prepare by reading any documents which have been circulated. Prepare any questions.
- If you are unable to attend, ensure you have notified the Clerk in advance of the meeting
- Arrive promptly
- Be mindful that meetings are a professional dialogue, we do not necessarily have to agree, but we should be respectful of other opinions
- Make your comments brief and stick to the point
- Support the person chairing the meeting and recognise their role
- If you have any items for the agenda, forward them to the Chair/ Vice Chair in advance (at least two weeks before the meeting)

Asking questions

Effective Governing Bodies hold their Head Teacher to account for improving school performance by asking the right questions.

In relation to Pupil Performance, Governors may ask:

- Which year groups, subjects and groups of pupils (Lower Ability, Middle Ability, Higher Ability, SEN, Pupil Premium, Boys, Girls, Ethnic groups) get the best and worst results and why, and how does this relate to the quality of teaching across the school?
- What is your strategy for improving the areas of weakest performance?
- How will we know if this approach is working?

In relation to the Quality of Teaching, Governors may ask:

- Have we got the right staff and the right development and reward arrangements?
- What is the school's approach to implementation of performance related pay?

In relation to the wellbeing of pupils, Governors may ask:

- Is this a happy school with a positive learning culture?
- What is our track record on attendance, behaviour and bullying?
- Are safeguarding procedures securely in place?
- How good our wider offer to pupils, are we offering a good range of sports, arts and voluntary activities?
- Is school food healthy and popular?
- Do we listen to what pupils and parents are telling us?
- What are we doing to address current issues and how will we know if is working?

Please see the Department for Education and NGA websites for further information on this.

School Visits and Governor Monitoring

Please refer to the Governor Visits to School Policy.

Governors need to know their school. Many Governors find that visiting, particularly during the day. Is a helpful way of finding out about the school. During Covid 19 pandemic visits to school may be restricted. Please refer to current guidance. Instead, Governors may organise TEAMS meetings with designated staff.

Visits can also be an important part of robust school accountability.

Through pre-arranged visits, Governors can check that the school is implementing the strategy, policies and improvement plans they have signed off and see for themselves how their vision and plans for the school are working in practice.

Visits also provide an opportunity to arrange meetings with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views.

While it may be helpful to see classes at work, Governors are not inspectors, and it is not in their role to assess the quality or method of teaching.

Governors are not school managers and should not interfere in the day to day running of the school. Both are the role of the Head Teacher.

It is vital that you are clear about the focus for your visit and if it is an official Monitoring Visit or an Informal one. Please speak with the Chair or Vice Chair for more information.



Support for Governors

Support for Governors is available from:

- NYCC – website and Governance team cyps.northyorks.gov.uk
There is a Governor Support Unit and information in 'The Red Bag' keeps schools up to date.
- National Governors' Association (NGA) www.nga.org.uk
All Governors should receive a weekly newsletter by e mail and a log in to access information
- SGOSS – the Governor recruitment charity

Where can I find?

All documents for Governors' meetings will be published on TEAMS which is accessed by your school email address. You will be informed by email when these documents are available.

The Governors' Section of the School website has all information for general circulation.

Thank you to Mary Kelly, Chair of Governors, Boroughbridge Primary School & Nursery for kindly giving permission to adapt their handbook for our use.