



Procedure for managing concerns or complaints about a governor

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Mission Statement

Chatsworth High School & Community College is a caring, happy and progressive learning community in which each person is valued equally and respected unconditionally. Our school community promotes high expectations for each person and supports every member of our school community in achieving their potential as life-long learners. At Chatsworth High School every person matters.

Ten Core Beliefs

1. We believe the health and safety of our students is paramount
2. We believe in the right of all people to be emotionally healthy, financially secure and learning fulfilled
3. We believe we should all belong and feel we all belong
4. We believe in continuously improving our school through honest, collaborative teamwork
5. We believe our curriculum should be relevant, purposeful, accessible and constantly evolving
6. We believe teaching and learning should be enjoyable, exciting and consistently inclusive
7. We believe teaching and learning should be founded on established best practice and an openness to innovative approaches
8. We believe in working hard and doing our best
9. We believe we should help one another in our learning and support one another in our lives
10. We believe we are providing a foundation for our students' adult lives

Introduction

- Governing Bodies are corporate bodies and, as such, no individual governor has any special powers, except for the Chair of Governors who may act on behalf of the governors when clearly it would be in the best interests of the Governing Body to do so.
- The power that lies with Governing Bodies does so corporately and decisions are reached by a majority of governors present voting, after discussion.
- Whilst governors are required to hold the school and senior managers within the school to account, they should do so constructively and from a position of trust.
- Governors are required to promote high standards within the school.
- Governors do not bring a mandate from the group that may have selected, or elected, them to the Governing Body.
- Although governors are volunteers, they are obliged to follow the principles that underpin the standards of those holding public office. These are:
 - Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership
- Governing bodies are strongly advised to have adopted a governors' Code of Conduct and our Governing Body has done so. This is to ensure that all our governors know the agreed way of working and behaving in order that their work can focus on the key role of school improvement and any concern regarding a governor's conduct is challenged at the earliest opportunity. Our governor's sign up to the code of conduct at the start of each year and new governors when they are first appointed / elected to the Governing Body as part of their induction.
- Occasionally concerns may arise relating to the behaviour and / or actions of an individual governor and this procedure is our Governing Body procedure for what to do in the event of this happening, and to ensure that all members of a Governing Body are treated fairly and equally, irrespective of gender, age, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

General principles

The principles of a complaint should include the following:

- resolution should be sought at the least formal level in the first instance;
- complaints should be resolved as quickly as possible;
- the process of resolving a complaint should not undermine the work of the Governing Body;
- where advice is needed in managing a complaint against a governor this should be sought from the clerk to the Governing Body / Trust Board;
- where help and support is needed in managing a complaint against a governor, this could be sought from another school Governing Body / Trust Board;

- The involvement of the Trust Board should be sought where the issues cannot be resolved internally by the school or the expertise of carrying out investigations is required.

Categories of complaints

- Complaints against governors can be categorised as those from:
 - other governors on the Governing Body;
 - members of the public, including parents;
 - members of the school staff.
- Irrespective of the category of complaint the responsibility for dealing with the complaint is that of the Governing Body, which would normally fall to the Chair to manage.
- Where the complaint is made against the Chair then:
 - it could be passed to the vice chair; or
 - by agreement of the Governing Body, passed to the Chair of another school Governing Body to investigate.
- The Governing Body need to consider to what extent the internal investigation of a complaint against a governor by another governor generates a conflict of interest or prejudice.
- No member of the school staff, including the Headteacher, should be involved in the investigation of a complaint against a governor other than as a witness.

The procedure

This procedure is for complaints from members of the public, parents and governors.

1. All complaints must be in writing, which includes email.
2. The Chair must inform the governor against whom the complaint is made, the content of the complaint and how it is to be managed and should do this within 5 working days of the receiving the complaint.
3. All complaints must be reported to the Governing Body as soon as is practicable, however the information must be restricted to:
 - the date the complaint was received; and
 - against which governor the complaint is made.
4. Unless otherwise agreed by the Governing Body, the complaint should be managed by the Chair.

5. The Chair should arrange a meeting with the complainant to determine the nature of the complaint. To substantiate the complaint the complainant should be able to supply evidence.
6. It may be that due to the nature of the complaint, the Chair can resolve the issue at the initial meeting and no further action be taken. This outcome should be reported in writing immediately to the governor who the complaint is against and the Governing Body. This should be done within 20 working days of the receipt of the complaint.
7. Where the complaint cannot be resolved at the initial meeting with the complainant, the Chair will need to meet with the governor concerned and put to them the complaint in order for them to make a response. The meeting should take place within 20 working days of the complaint.
8. The Chair will write a letter to the complainant providing an outcome to their complaint. This should be done within 15 working days of the meeting held with the governor whom the complaint is made against.
9. The outcome of the complaint could be that:
 - the complaint is dismissed;
 - the complaint is upheld in part or whole and a letter of apology is sent to the complainant,
 - the complaint is detrimental to the reputation of the Governing Body and the governor concerned is invited to resign;
 - the governor is suspended;
 - the governor is removed from the Governing Body.

Procedure for managing complaints from school staff against governors

1. The member of staff should report their complaint to the Headteacher who will then report it to the Chair. Staff should not be submitting a complaint against a governor without notifying the Headteacher.
2. Staff may seek advice from their professional association to determine whether their issue constitutes a complaint or a formal grievance under the school's grievance procedure.
3. The procedure then follows as for complaints from members of the public, parents and governors as listed above.

Procedure for managing complaints against the Chair

1. Good practice supports this process being undertaken by an independent third party. Therefore, in the first instance, our Governing Body would approach the Chair of another Governing Body to support this process.
2. The procedure then follows as for complaints from members of the public, parents, governors and staff as listed above.

Recording the outcome of the complaint

The outcome of a complaint needs to be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Body meeting as follows:

Agreed: That a complaint was made against a governor and investigated by [insert name] the outcome being [insert details of the outcome].

Suspension, removal and resignation

1. Where a governor was at fault and the complaint so serious that was upheld such that the person should no longer serve as a governor, the expectation would be that the person would resign.
2. Should the governor not resign and their continuation as a governor affect the reputation and work of the Governing Body, the governor can be suspended.

The procedures for suspending a governor are outlined in the academy's Articles of Association.

3. In some circumstances it may be necessary to remove the governor from the Governing Body in order to resolve the issue. Such an action may be taken as a consequence of a complaint or by the governor's own inappropriate behaviour.

The procedures for removing a governor are outlined in the academy's Articles of Association.

4. Where the complaint is made against the Chair, the Governing Body has the power to remove him from office. This also includes the vice chair.