



# **The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust**

## **Board of Trustees and Local Governing Board Remote Meetings Policy**

Status and review cycle;	Non-Statutory every 2 years
Responsible group:	The Trust
Reviewed February 2023	
Next Review Date:	April 2025

**THE DIOCESE OF GLOUCESTER ACADEMIES TRUST**  
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**Policy**



**1. Policy Statement**

The Trust is an organisation with a Christian foundation. Responsibility for the governance of the Trust lies with the Board of Trustees as set out in the Trust's Articles of Association (the articles). Trustees are required to hold a minimum of three meetings in each school year to exercise their functions as set out in the Trust's articles. The Trust's scheme of delegation sets out a requirement for Local Governing Bodies (LGB's) to hold between three and six meetings in each school year and an additional three finance and resources meetings within the school year. The Trust's articles and scheme of delegation include provision for Trustees and Local Governors to attend meetings remotely via telephone or video conferencing.

**2. Purpose and scope**

This policy is intended to provide guidance to Trustees, the LGB, Clerk to the Board of Trustees and Clerks to LGBs for holding virtual meetings

Remote meetings should not be the only way Trustee or LGB meetings are held, and face-to-face meetings remain an expectation of the Trust Board. Remote meetings can be used to maximise attendance, reach quorum, or support volunteer wellbeing by making meetings more accessible.

For the purpose of this policy any Trustee or Governor attending a meeting remotely will be referred to as the 'remote attendee'.

**3. Participating in a meeting remotely**

3.1 A Trustee or Local Governor is permitted to attend a meeting by telephone or video conference if:

- They have given notice of their intention to do so at least 48 hours before the meeting commences.
- They have provided details of the telephone number or video conferencing software to the clerk at least 48 hours ahead of the meeting.
- All other Trustees and Local Governors have access to the appropriate equipment for remote participation to take place.

3.2 If appropriate equipment is not available or accessible, then the meeting may go ahead, without the participation of the remote attendee so long as the meeting is otherwise quorate.

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- 3.3 The attendance of the remote attendee must be recorded as such in the meeting minutes and on the published meeting attendance record.
- 3.4 If a vote is to be held during the meeting the remote attendee is entitled to participate and vote as usual. If an open vote is held, the Trustee or Local Governor participating remotely should be asked directly what their vote. If a closed vote is held the Clerk should ensure video streaming and speakers are turned off and they should ask the Trustee or Local Governor to confirm their vote to them. The remote attendee's vote is not required to be separately recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If this is not possible then the remote attendee will be required to vote publicly or abstain.

**4. Remote meeting proceedings**

- 5.1 The statutory notice arrangements of seven clear days written notice of the meeting, as set out in the Trust's articles and scheme of delegation for LGBs, shall apply.
- 5.2 A written agenda and all papers relevant to the meeting shall be distributed seven clear days of the meeting as set out in the Trust's articles and scheme of delegation for LGBs.
- 4.3 The quorum for the meeting shall be as set out in The Trust's articles or scheme of delegation for local governing boards or the relevant committee terms of reference.
- 4.4 A Chair shall be appointed from the membership of the meeting attendees – excluding any employed member of Trust staff.
- 5.5 The meeting shall be clerked in the same way as any other meeting of the Board of Trustees or LGB. If the Clerk is for any reason unavailable to clerk the meeting, Trustees or Local Governors may appoint – excluding a Trustee or Headteacher - a clerk from their membership.
- 5.6 Any new or existing conflict of interest pertaining to the agenda items for discussion will be declared at the start of the meeting. If a trustee or Local Governor, due to a conflict of interest, is prevented from participating in any part of the meeting the Clerk should ensure they fully cease participation and end the telephone call or video conference access, reconnecting when the item discussion or vote has concluded.
- 5.7 The meeting minutes shall be drawn up and distributed as set out in the Trust's articles or scheme of delegation for LGBs.
- 5.8 The meeting minutes shall be agreed by the meeting membership and signed by the Chair of the meeting at the next meeting. If the next meeting is held remotely then

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the minutes may be agreed at that meeting and signed by the Chair outside of the meeting.

**5. Data protection**

6.1 The meeting shall not be recorded on any digital device or programme used by the Clerk, any Trustee or Local Governor unless:

- The intention to record the meeting is made clear to all attendees prior to the recording being made with the opportunity to express any objections.
- All attendees provide consent to the recording taking place.
- It is agreed that recording the meeting will assist with the accuracy of creating a written record of the meeting.

6.2 If attendees agree to the recording of the meeting the following must apply:

- At the meeting, before recording is commenced, the Chair will notify all attendees that recording will take place.
- Attendees who are not present at the start of the meeting will be notified upon their arrival if a recording is being made.

6.3 Within the minutes of a meeting, details of the following will be recorded:

- Any objections made regarding the meeting being recorded.
- The Chair's consideration and final decision regarding the commencement of recording.

6.4 Whether attendees other than the Clerk are permitted to make recordings is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees or LGB. When this decision is being made, the purpose of the recording will be taken into account.

6.5 All actions taken by the Board of Trustees or LGB, including the creation, storage, retention and disposal of recordings will be in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation and Freedom of Information Act 2000, where relevant.

6.6 Where a confidential item is on the agenda, attendees will be informed of this at the beginning of the meeting and prior to the commencement of recording.

6.7 Confidential items will only be included within a recording of a meeting if the purpose and intention of the recording is clear and justifiable.