

KATHERINE SEMAR ACADEMIES

GOVERNOR HANDBOOK



2025/26

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Local Governing Body of the **Katherine Semar Infant School and Katherine Semar Junior School Academies**.

The school academies are part of the Saffron Academy Trust. Each academy is served by a Local Governing Body (LGB) which meet jointly and are dedicated to the belief that that the education of the whole child is fundamental.

We work in close partnership with the staff, pupils and parents in providing good quality education for all the students, which emphasises care for one another, scholastic achievement and sporting commitment.

Our aim is to provide an environment that respects the needs, values and cultures and opinions of others, where students can develop positive attitudes towards learning, discover success and develop self-esteem and where every student has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

We are committed to working with the staff to ensure high standards of achievement, behaviour and discipline and to ensure excellence for all our students. Not only in academic matters but also in the outstanding range of extra-curricular and sporting opportunities offered by the dedicated staff.

We are looking forward to the continued success of the schools and to working as part of the school community in ensuring that our students meet the challenges of today's world with confidence and enthusiasm.

We have produced this handbook to help new governors understand their role and how a governing body works and to ensure continuity for existing governors. We all work very much as a team for the benefit of the schools, respecting each other's point of view but always acting as a corporate body accepting the decisions reached by the majority.

Governing bodies have a strategic role in the development of the school but do not become involved in day-to-day management issues – that is the role of the headteacher. Working in partnership with headteachers and staff we have made the schools the success they are today and we very much hope that your contribution will enable us to continue to build on this success.

This handbook helps to explain the roles and responsibilities of being a governor and how, as a governing body, we carry out our duties.

2. KATHERINE SEMAR INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS' AIMS

Both schools aim to provide a positive learning experience for every individual. We take pride in the fact that our pupils are nurtured in a safe, enjoyable and respectful learning environment because everyone in our school matters.

- A school where everyone feels valued and respected
- A place with a warm, happy, calm, safe atmosphere where everyone enjoys learning and working together
- A school which has learning and teaching at the heart of everything it does
- An ethos which celebrates achievement and recognises success
- A place which has consistently high expectations for all and where academic achievement is not the only measure of success
- The school is an integral part of the community where parents can be involved in school life doing the best for myself, my community and the world community.

The outcomes for our children should be:

- Children that are confident and highly motivated with a good self-image who are fully involved in the life of the school
- Children who think positively, who say "I can ..."
- Fulfilling potential, rewarding success
- Children who behave well and who tolerate, care and support each other
- Children who can think for themselves, who are open-minded and have a love of learning and show initiative
- Lessons which take account of individual learning styles
- Children who achieve to the best of their ability and fulfil their own potential
- Children's views represented in the organisation of the school

Our ethos:

Our ethos, curriculum, working practices and environment should achieve these aims because:

- Our ethos will value all children as individuals, raising self-esteem whenever we can and creating a positive atmosphere through our interactions with the children and each other
- Our curriculum will be broad, balanced and creative with many opportunities for first-hand experience. Teaching will take account of learning styles and all abilities. SATS will be important but so will the development of the whole child through the arts and subjects such as PHSE
- We will teach the children life skills to equip them for tomorrow's world
- We are a performing and effective team who support each other and work for the positive development of our children. We are open, honest and supportive of each other, setting positive examples to the children

- Our environment will be attractive, calm, ordered, safe and stimulating. It will celebrate the achievements of the children and stimulate and support their learning. It will look bright and colourful and make an impact
- We will continue to develop positive relationships with parents and the wider community

3. THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

From the Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (The Nolan Committee)

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give clear reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands them.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

4. MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

Governing Body expects that the school will:

- Understand and respect its statutory purpose
- Recognise the shared commitment to improving the education provided for all pupils
- Respect governors as volunteers who bring other skills, experiences and perspectives, and value their contribution
- Work openly with the Governing Body and provide clear, concise and relevant information on which to base decisions
- Enable all governors to become involved in the life of the school
- Contribute to the induction, training and development of governors
- Ensure that where educational jargon is unavoidable it is, at least, explained.

School expects that the Governing Body will:

- Respect the professional expertise of the Headteacher and staff
- Work openly in partnership with the Headteacher and staff for the benefit of the school and its pupils
- Demonstrate its commitment, collectively and individually
- Act and take decisions that are in the best interest of the school and not of those of self, individuals or groups
- Support the school with parents and in the community
- Recognise the need for both governor induction and on-going training and development.

It is expected of individual governors that they will:

- Enhance the work of the Governing Body
- Be a critical friend at meetings but not openly critical in public
- Demonstrate their commitment by getting to know the school and becoming involved in supporting school activities
- Prepare for meetings so that they are well informed, having as a minimum read all the papers sent out with the agenda
- Attend meetings (Governing Body, committees or working groups) and play an active part
- Support the school with parents and in the community
- Recognise the corporate status of the Governing Body and the concept of collective responsibility
- Respect confidentiality and the need to act with circumspection
- Accept responsibility for their own training and development.

5. LOCAL GOVERNING BODY STRUCTURE

Baroness Elizabeth Berridge, in the October 2020 edition of the DfE's Governance Handbook stated:

“Governance has never been more critical to the education of our nation’s young people. As Minister for the School System, I see at first hand the impact of governors and governance professionals. The governance duty is, above all, to drive relentless ambition for the young people served by our schools’ system, whatever the circumstances”.

The Academy Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) are Committees of the Board of Trustees and have delegated decision making powers in accordance with the SoDA. The LGBs shall each hold at least four meetings in every school year.

There are eight elements to effective governance:

1. The right people around the table;
2. Understanding the role and responsibilities;
3. Good chairing;
4. Professional clerking;
5. Good relationships based on trust;
6. Knowing the school – the data, the staff, the parents, the children and the community;
7. Committed to asking challenging questions; and
8. Confident to have courageous conversations in the interests of the children and young people.

The Clerk of the LGB shall give governors: at least seven clear days' notice, in writing, before the date of an LGB meeting and a copy of the agenda for the LGB meeting.

Each LGB meeting shall be minuted and a copy of such minutes must be provided to the SAT Board of Trustees at the next board, or relevant committee, meeting.

The minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the LGB shall be drawn up and kept electronically by the person authorised to keep the minutes of the LGB; and shall be signed (subject to the approval of the of the LGB governors) at the same or next subsequent meeting by the person acting as the Chair thereof.

The minutes shall include a record of all appointments of officers made by the LGB; and all proceedings at meetings of the LGB and of committees of the LGB, including the names of all persons present at each such meeting.

The Chair shall ensure that copies of minutes of all meetings of the LGB (and such of the sub-committees as the SAT Board shall from time to time notify) shall promptly be provided to the SAT Board of Trustees when requested.

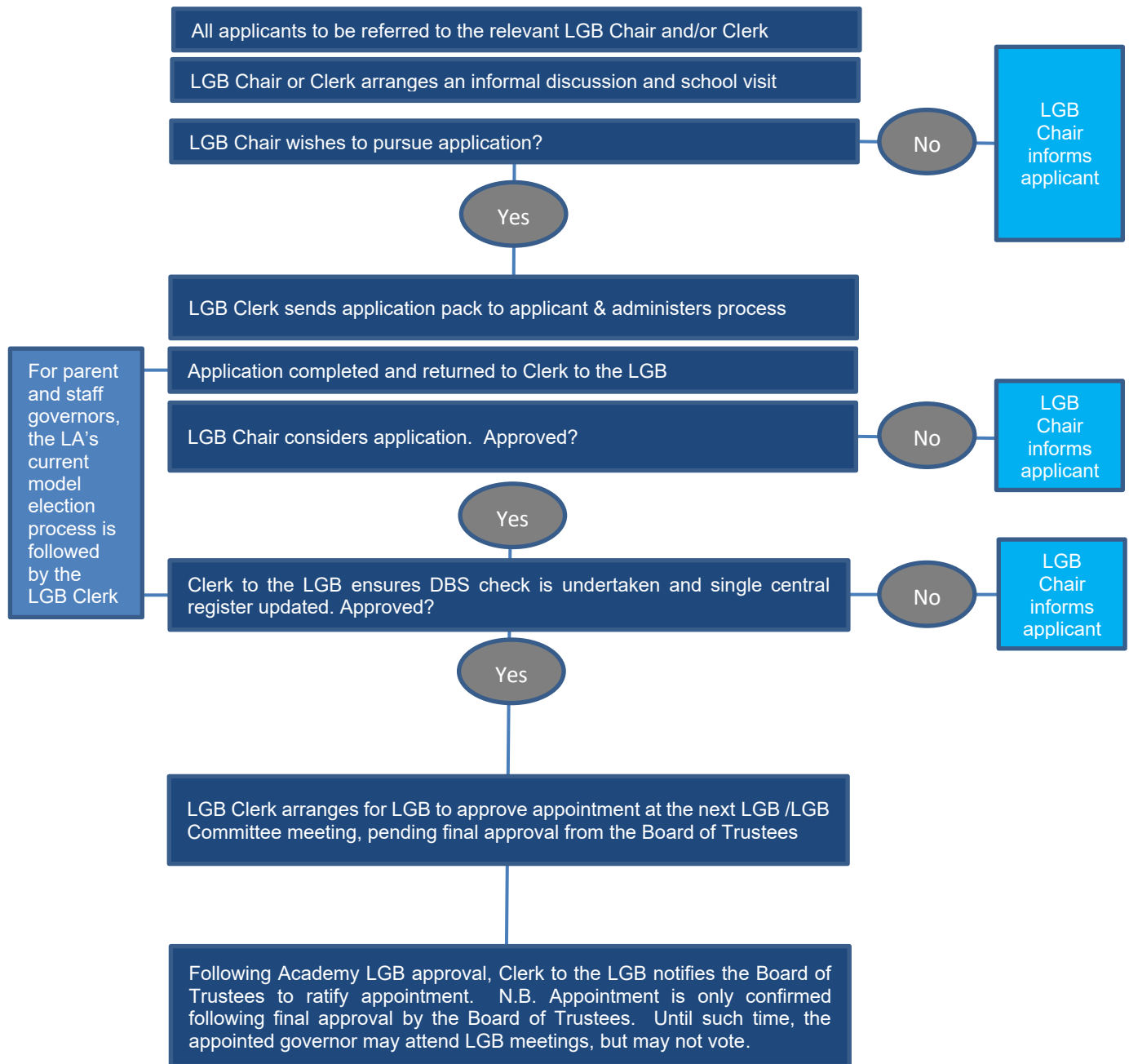
As set out in SAT's Articles of Association, the Board of Trustees establishes the LGBs and ensures that, as a minimum, two parents are elected or appointed. The Board of Trustees will determine what will be delegated to the LGBs.

Clerking

Each LGB and the Board of Trustees has a Clerk. The Clerk to the Trustees supports the Clerks to the LGBs. This team will communicate appropriately to facilitate sharing best practice, common processes, systems and documentation to be set up and to provide each other with support, guidance and assistance when needed.

The Clerk to the Trustees is responsible for setting the meeting timetable for all SAT governance meetings for the academic year. The LGB Clerk will set the Academy meeting timetable. The Clerks to the LGBs are given a timeframe in which meetings must be arranged, to allow flexibility. The Academy LGB meeting minutes must be available for SAT's Board meetings and Academy LGB committees' meeting minutes must be available for the relevant SAT committees' meetings. The LGB meeting minutes must be sent to the SAT Clerk no later than 10 days before the next relevant SAT meeting. This enables all meetings to interlink, which facilitates a robust, clear reporting structure.

5.1 RECOMMENDED ACADEMY LGB APPOINTMENT PROCESS



Note: Academies follow the local authority's current policies and processes for the recruitment of Staff and Parent Governors via the relevant election process.

5.2 COMPOSITION OF ACADEMY LGB

The LGBs are responsible for proposing the constitution and membership of their own LGB. However, the Board of Trustees is still ultimately accountable and therefore the Board of Trustees must approve the constitution of the LGB, including any changes to the constitution or membership. The total number of governors on the LGB cannot be less than seven, but there is no maximum.

The number of employees of SAT on the LGB, including the Headteacher, cannot exceed one third of the total number of governors on the LGB.

When seeking to find new governors to join the LGB, the existing LGB governors should seek to ensure that the governors serving on the LGB between them have an appropriate range of skills and experience and due attention is given to succession planning.

A person appointed to the LGB must be over eighteen at the date of appointment and must not be disqualified from serving as a governor. In addition, no current pupil of the Academy is entitled to serve as an LGB governor.

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY			
Type of Governor	Number	Term of Office	How they are appointed
Headteacher	1	Indefinite; for the duration of their employment as Academy Headteacher	N/A
Chair of LGB	1	Annual election	The Chair of the LGB shall be appointed in accordance with the school's level of autonomy (see Table of Responsibilities, below). Where there is an equal division of votes, the appointment shall be made by a majority vote of the SAT Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to remove or appoint a Chair if the need arises.
Parent governors	2 (recommended)	4 years	Parent governors shall be elected by the parents of the Academy. The recommended number of parent governors is two. In the event that the number of parents standing for election is less than the number of vacancies, the Board of Trustees may appoint Parent governors.
Staff governors	2 (maximum)	4 years	Staff governors shall be elected by the staff of the Academy. In the event that the number of staff standing for election is less than the number of vacancies, the Board of Trustees may appoint staff governors. No more than two elected staff governors shall serve on the LGB at any one time. Ideally, there should be representation from both Teaching and Support staff.
Appointed governors	N/A	4 years	Appointed governors are recommended by the LGB but are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.
Co-opted governors	N/A	1 year, can be re-appointed	Co-opted governors are recommended by the LGB but are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

5.3 LGB REMOVALS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

A Governor shall no longer serve on the LGB if any of the following apply:-

- they resign by giving notice in writing to the Chair of the LGB, who must forward a copy of the letter to the Chair of the Trustees;
- they are removed by the Board of Trustees, with notice given in writing, a copy of the letter is then forward to the Chair of the LGB;
- a recommendation to be removed is sent to the Board of Trustees, by the Chair of SAT. They are then removed by the Board of Trustees, with notice given in writing, a copy of the letter is then forward to the Chair of the LGB;
- they become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing or administering their own affairs;
- they are absent without the permission of the Chair of the LGB from all meetings of the LGB held within a period of six months and the GB resolves that his/her office be vacated;
- they are a staff governor and they no longer work for the Academy of which they are a governor;
- they are a parent governor, but their child no longer attends the Academy of which they are a governor. However, a parent governor may complete their term of office if their child leaves the Academy during this period;
- their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, or that person is subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- they are subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors' Disqualification Act 1986, or to an order made under the Insolvency Act 1986;
- by order of the Charity Commission that person has been removed from the office of charity trustee on the grounds of misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which they were responsible or to which maladministration her/his conduct contributed;
- they are included in the list kept by the Secretary of State under Section One of the Protection of Children Act;

- that person is disqualified from working with children in accordance with Section 35 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
- that person is barred from regulated activity relating to children within the meaning of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- a direction has been made against her/him under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or is subject to a prohibition order which takes effect as if contained in this direction;
- they have at any time, been convicted of any criminal offence excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of an offence which falls under the Charities Act 1993, section 72;
- they do not provide the Chair of the LGB with a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level. In the event that the certificate discloses information which in the opinion of the Chair or the Headteacher confirms their unsuitability to work with children that person shall be disqualified.

5.4 SAT SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS AND INTERVENTION

SAT is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the provision of education in accordance with its legal obligations. SAT desires to delegate many areas of decision making to individual Academies but reserves the right to change the level of authority delegated in order to fulfil its legal obligations.

Annually, each school will be risk assessed by the CEO and Director of School Improvement in consultation with the Headteacher against the following 10 factors:

1. Current Ofsted grading and timing of next inspection
2. Recent external examination results and trends over time
3. Attendance and exclusions data
4. Staff retention and unfilled vacancies, particularly where this impacts on the capacity of SLT
5. The experience of key personnel; the Headteacher or SENCO for example.
6. The functionality of the LGB. Whether meetings are regular and purposeful and LGB membership and attendance is strong.
7. Financial security
8. Site issues
9. Safeguarding issues
10. Complaints received

The agreed outcome of the risk assessment will determine what level of support the school will receive from the Trust in that academic year, from a range of 4 levels of support and challenge, as follows:

Enhanced Autonomy	<i>Schools receive annual Fresh Eyes Review and annual Safeguarding Audit, SAT level training and subject spotlights/curriculum reviews</i>
Supported Autonomy	<i>In addition to the above, the school receives a SAT Improvement Plan including DSI or SLE deployment in at least one subject area. This plan is negotiated with the headteacher.</i>
Enhanced Support	<i>In addition to the above, the Headteacher has a twice weekly meeting with the CEO/Deputy CEO. Support is provided for a detailed SAT Improvement Plan which is reviewed and RAG rated as progress is made against targets. School improvement is closely monitored by SAT Standards Committee.</i>
Immersive Intervention	<i>In addition to the above, the CEO/Deputy CEO and Director of School Improvement works alongside the Headteacher to secure urgent and rapid improvement.</i>

If at any time a critical event occurs at or in relation to an Academy which is significantly damaging to the reputation of the Trust, the Board of Trustees may change the authority delegated to the LGB as set out in section 10: [Table of Responsibilities](#) of the Scheme of Delegate Authority, until such time as the Board of Trustees is satisfied that the event that has occurred to trigger the lower levels of autonomy has been rectified or ceases to cause a concern to the Board of Trustees.

6. CURRENT MEMBERSHIP LGB

	LGB	HTPM	ACE Club
Sean Dodsworth	X		
Caroline Dolby	X		
Joanne Foote	X	X	
Emily Forster	X		
Bernie Gilbert	X		
Amy Kennedy	X		X
Polly Lankester	X		
David O'Brien	X	X	X
Nick Osborne	X	X	
Oliver Pottrill-Holland	X		
Julie Puxley	X		X
Matthew Rowlands	X		
Claire Sleep	X		
Peta Torrance	X	X	X
Janet Clark			X

The LGB will meet twice a term, the ACE Committee and HTPM Panel will meet twice a year.

Staff disciplinary and appeals committees will be established as and when required. Membership will consist of governors with the appropriate skills, experience and/or training.

ACE COMMITTEE:

Membership

At least three named members of the Governing Body, including the Headteacher.

Quorum

No business can be conducted unless at least two governors are present.

Activities

To maintain an oversight of all financial matters relating to ACE.

To authorise and monitor expenditure within the staffing budgets in a manner consistent with the fact that delegated powers for day-to-day staffing matters, including supply cover, are passed to the Headteacher.

Responsibility for approving and monitoring ACE specific policies.

Objectives

The Committee is required to abide by the requirements and guidelines that apply to the school and governors

To keep under review ACE's financial performance and report this to the FGB at each meeting.

To advise the Governing Body on the appropriateness or otherwise of intended spending.

To assist in the administering of the staffing requirements for ACE.

To approve procedures for the recruitment and appointment of staff.

Clerking

Each meeting of the committee must be clerked. The clerk can be the clerk to the governing body, a governor or an employee at the school. The clerk cannot be the Headteacher of the school.

Meetings

The Clerk or a member of the committee will make a record of all proceedings at each meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated to members within ten working days of the meeting and presented with the agenda for the next LGB meeting.

7. GOVERNOR RESPONSIBILITIES

2025-26

Aspect for monitoring	Lead staff	Lead governors
Attainment & Progress (data)	Anthony Hull	Peta Torrance Polly Lankester
Health & Safety	Anthony Hull Paul Meynell Dan Vinson	Oliver Pottrill-Holland
Pupil Behaviour and Attitudes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Anti-bullying Behaviour expectations Learning attitudes 	Rob Aiken Anthony Hull	Joanne Foote Polly Lankester (also 'Attendance')
Personal Development of pupils through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the INSPIRE Curriculum wider school work extra-curricular provision preparation for life in modern Britain 	Anthony Hull	Peta Torrance
Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEN/EAL Pupil Premium 	Kathie Moy Rob Aiken	SEND/EAL: Bernie Gilbert PP: Nick Osborne
Leadership & Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development (impact on teaching) Staff well-being Safeguarding 	Julie Puxley Caroline Dolby Kathie Moy	Safeguarding: Polly Lankester Amy Kennedy Filtering and monitoring: Nick Osborne
Extended Hours Provision (ACE)	Julie Puxley	Amy Kennedy Bernie Gilbert Peta Torrance David O'Brien
Early Years	Caroline Dolby	Amy Kennedy
Admissions Appeals		David O'Brien/Peta Torrance
Staff Wellbeing	Caroline Dolby	Matt Rowlands
Quality of Education		
Maths	Abbey Farrant Maddie Munro Hannah Gilkes	Bernie Gilbert

English		Emma Wilcox Caroline Dolby Molly Beckett (shadow) Charlotte Etherington (library)	David O'Brien
'Creative Arts' subjects	Music	Jude Savill	Matt Rowlands
	Art	Jo Hull Molly Beckett	Matt Rowlands
	PE	Tyler Gilkes Lyndsey Coote	Matt Rowlands
'Technology' subjects	DT	Josie Polmeer Anthony Hull	Peta Torrance
	Science	Julie Hall Gail Broadbent Alice Boyd	Peta Torrance
	Computing	Rob Aiken Josie Polmeer	Nick Osborne
'Humanities' subjects	Geography	Beth Lloyd-Ruck Richard Weller	Polly Lankester
	History	Lauren Fitt Cath Pargeter (shadow) Richard Weller	Amy Kennedy
	RE	Karen Whiter Beth Lloyd-Ruck	Amy Kennedy
	PSHE	Lyndsey Coote Jo Hull	Joanne Foote
	MFL	Anthony Hull Georgia Slade	Peta Torrance
	P4C	Karen Whiter Beth Lloyd-Ruck	Nick Osborne

All governors are linked/attached to an area of the school for monitoring purposes. These links are reviewed annually.

Terms of Reference for Governors with delegated responsibility for Curriculum/ School Areas.

- To liaise with the subject co-ordinator
- To visit the school and see the subject or area in operation
- To discuss the existing use of resources, staffing, targets, results and future needs
- To report regularly to the Standards Committee on developments and progress using the pro-forma provided (also orally if required to do so)
- To attend appropriate training when available

Terms of Reference for the Health and Safety Governor

- To liaise with the school Health and Safety Co-ordinator and School's Safety Representative
- To ensure all risks to Health and Safety are assessed both inside the premises and on residential school visits. To ensure any significant findings recorded
- To assist Head teacher in monitoring Health and Safety Performance
- To ensure meal providers are competent to deal with the various Health & Safety issues arising in meal provision
- To regularly report to the Governing Body on developments and progress through the Resources Committee
- To attend appropriate training

Terms of Reference for the Safeguarding Governor:

- To ensure, in liaison with the Head teacher or designated teacher, that the school has a Child Protection policy
- To ensure that an annual item is placed on the Governing Body meeting agenda to report on any changes to the policy, any training undertaken by people responsible and any relevant issues relating to child protection matters
- To liaise (with due regard to confidentiality) with the Head teacher or designated teacher re allegations of child abuse
- To attend relevant training for governors
- To take appropriate action in the case of allegations being made against the Head teacher

Terms of Reference for the Link Governor:

- To encourage all governors to attend appropriate training courses
- To record training attended by governors
- To report on training matters at the full Governing Body meetings
- To assist with the induction of new governors on to the Governing Body
- To attend appropriate Link Governor meetings and training courses
- To work with the Clerk in keeping a copy of the governors' handbook up to date and to ensure that amendments are distributed to all governors.

8. GOVERNORS' AIDE MEMOIRE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

All complaints have to be handled with care.

There are separate procedures for dealing with complaints about the curriculum and for considering complaints about the way in which pupils' special educational needs are met.

Principles

The following principles apply for the handling of general complaints:

- Wherever possible differences should be settled informally,
- Formal mechanisms for dealing fairly and effectively with complaints should only be used where it is impossible to settle a complaint informally;
- Procedures should be made available to parents, staff and governors.

Procedures

1. Complaints in the first instance should generally be made to the class teacher and then as defined in the school prospectus.
2. The Chair of the Governing Body should be the first person to approach only in cases which could involve disciplinary or legal action against the Head teacher.
3. Any Governor approached by a complainant should refer him or her to the Head teacher, or the Chair according to 1 or 2 above.
4. If discussions between the Head teacher and the complainant prove fruitless, the complainant will be told of their right to make formal complaint and how it can be made.
5. Formal complaints to the Governing Body are made to the Chair, who should take care that no governor can be accused of prejudice by ensuring that:
 - an individual governor does not deal with the complaint;
 - the complaint is quickly referred to the relevant committee or to the Head teacher, if complaint procedures at that level have not been exhausted;
 - the complaint is not reported to the whole Governing Body until it is resolved and then not in detail;
 - all parties to the complaint are given a fair hearing;
 - the decision of the committee is given in writing to the complainant;
 - the complainant is told of any right of appeal if the decision is given against them.
6. Governors involved in a complaint by either an individual or a group cannot take part in any formal hearing of a complaint, or appeal against a decision made by the complaints committee.

7. Individual complaints cannot be raised at full meetings of the Governing Body, unless the meeting is part of the complaints procedure.

The Governing Body has adopted a detailed general complaints procedure – a copy of which is available on request.

This scheme is written and agreed by the Governing Body with reference to the schools Equal Opportunities and Race Equality policies

The Governing Body will monitor and evaluate this policy annually in conjunction with the school's Financial Manual.

9. GOVERNOR VISITS TO SCHOOL

All visits should be arranged, giving sufficient notice for such visits to be arranged so that the time available can be optimised.

PROCEDURE FOR GOVERNOR VISITS TO SCHOOL

1. The purpose of the visit will be clearly defined.
2. Monitoring will support the School Development Plan, i.e. it will concentrate on areas of the plan highlighted for development.
3. Dates and times for the visits will be arranged.
4. Preparation for the visits will be thorough:
5. Planning – governors will be expected to plan for their visit in advance (advice can be sought from the link governor)
6. The teacher or curriculum leader will provide the governor with the information and documents needed for them to gain an overview of the issue being considered.
7. Governors will produce a number of clear questions they wish to answer from their visit.
8. Governors will produce a written report in an agreed format to feedback information to the relevant Committee. The report will first be given to the Headteacher who will then return it to the governor. The report will then be given to the Clerk. The template report form is found on the following page and is also available in electronic form from the Clerk.
9. The policy and procedures for monitoring by governors of both schools is attached at Appendix A. An exemplar governor visit report is attached at Appendix B.
10. Reports of governor visits will be available as information prior to full Governing Body meetings or from the Clerk. Chairs of committees will ensure governor reports appear as agenda items.

KATHERINE SEMAR INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS



Our vision - “A nurturing school of exceptional quality”

Our core values: be kind, be confident, be curious, be positive, be respectful,
be resilient

Our curriculum aims are for our children to be able to question, challenge,
investigate, experience, communicate, create and understand

GOVERNOR VISIT REPORT

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident and happy citizens.

Date & time:	
Name of governor:	
Main co-ordinator of visit:	
Main purpose(s) of visit: (or key question to be answered)	

Other activities that took place during the visit (please tick):

Classroom visit(s)		Observing support staff	
Attending assembly		Talking to pupils	
Looking at pupil’s work		Looking at displays	
Talking to other staff		Meeting the headteacher	
Meeting with co-ordinators/staff responsible for area of focus		Looking at resources or documents related to focus of visit	
Attending lunchtime			

Main findings of visit:

Safeguarding monitoring:

Brief comment on your visit for parent newsletter:

ON COMPLETION OF THIS FORM PLEASE FORWARD IT TO THE JULIE
PUXLEY AND ROB AIKEN FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT COMMITTEE
AGENDA

head@katherinesemar.net, raiken@katherinesemar.net

Katherine Semar Schools Monitoring by Governors: Policy and Procedures

Governors' Responsibilities

The *Governors' Handbook* says:

We have high expectations of governing bodies. They are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. This is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'¹. In all types of schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a. **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;***
- b. **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and***
- c. **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.***

These functions are reflected in regulations for maintained schools and in the criteria Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of a school's governing body.

Monitoring visits are part of a larger process by which Governors carry out these "core strategic functions". Other important elements are:

- Establishment and approval of the School Development Plan
- Reports from the headteacher at LGB and sub-committees
- The headteacher's performance management
- Surveys of parent satisfaction
- External reports (e.g., Ofsted and external advisers)
- Familiarity with externally published data, including SATS results (available on the school dashboard, which also provides the opportunity to compare Katherine Semar schools with other local schools (www.dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk))

The Monitoring Visit

The *Governors' Handbook* says:

Governors need to know their school. Many governors find that visiting, particularly during the day, is a helpful way to find out about the school. Visits can also be an important part of robust school accountability. Through pre-arranged visits, governors can check that the school is implementing the 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 about what they think of the school and how it is changing.

The prime purpose of monitoring visits is to monitor the school's progress in implementing specific aspects of the School Development Plan. However, the visits also enable Governors to:

- See the school in action – gain first-hand information and understanding

- Talk and listen to pupils and staff
- Build relationships, show support and raise the profile of the governing body
- Celebrate the successes of pupils and staff
- Evaluate resources and discuss further requirements with staff
- Observe policies and decisions in action and develop an understanding of issues and challenges facing the school
- Draw successes, challenges and recommendations to the attention of sub-committees and the LGB

However, Governors making monitoring visits must recognise that their role is not to replicate that of the headteacher or the SLT. The *Governors' Handbook* makes this clear:

While it may be helpful to see classes at work, governors are not inspectors and it is not their role to assess the quality or method of teaching. They are also not school managers and should make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Both are the role of the headteacher.

Policy on Monitoring Visits.

1. Every governor will be expected to take responsibility for at least one monitoring visit during each academic year, and to produce a written report using the pro forma developed by the school (see Appendix). The report should normally be submitted within one week of the visit.
2. It will be the responsibility of the headteacher to liaise with the staff member responsible for the oversight and/or coordination of the areas to be monitored. The staff member in turn will be responsible for contacting the designated governor to agree a date and a schedule, and for providing copies of appropriate documentation (e.g., relevant sections of the School Development Plan).
3. During the monitoring visit, governors should not raise personal concerns about, e.g., their own children or other children known individually to them.
4. Where governors observe matters which raise concern during the visit, they should discuss these in the first instance with the headteacher. Specifically, they should not otherwise comment adversely on the performance of individual staff members or refer to individual staff members in their written reports without the prior approval of the headteacher.
5. Governors should observe the needs of confidentiality and child protection. For instance, they should not discuss externally their views of pupils or staff gained during the visit and should not take photographs within the school except with the prior approval of the headteacher.
6. While observing lessons governors may be welcomed by the teacher as participants, but they should avoid interfering in any way which hampers the performance of the teacher or distracts the pupils from their task. Governors should never involve themselves in disciplinary issues.
7. Reports should in the first instance be submitted to the headteacher, who may wish to discuss aspects or suggest corrections. They will then be referred to an appropriate sub-committee (in the case of subject-based monitoring, the Standards Committee). The sub-committee may then require some aspects to be referred to the LGB for further consideration and possible action.
8. The LGB should, as a matter of standard procedure, regularly review the effectiveness of the monitoring system.

General Advice and Procedures

1. Except for the monitoring of some specific areas such as financial management or health and safety, the monitoring visit will normally include:
 - An in-depth discussion with the staff member responsible for the oversight or coordination of the area to be monitored
 - Relevant observation, normally of one or more lessons (but could include, e.g., playground activity or lunchtime behaviour)
 - A meeting with a representative group of pupils (normally organised by the headteacher, who may choose to observe the meeting)
 - A short feedback session with the headteacher

Where appropriate, the visit may begin with attendance at an assembly dedicated to the subject area, enabling the governor to join in the recognition of the achievement of pupils.

2. Governors should observe a reasonable dress code – not so formal as to be intimidating nor so informal to suggest that the visit is of little importance.
3. Governors should ensure that they are introduced (or introduce themselves) to pupils and staff, and take pains to thank pupils and staff for their time and courtesy.
4. While it is important that governors should take notes to ensure the accuracy of their reports, during observation in particular they should avoid giving the impression that they are acting as inspectors (i.e., no clip-boards and tick lists).
5. Governors are welcome to ask a wide range of questions as to why things are done and how they are done, but they are not there to impose their own opinions of what and how things should be done. They should remember that the school has to work within the constraints of the National Curriculum and the Ofsted standards for assessing teacher performance and pupil progression. This does not mean that governors should be satisfied if pupils are merely offered efficient preparation for SATS: we should also look for creativity, innovation and the development of individual self-esteem in pupils.
6. Above all, don't be nervous – we are not there to be experts on pedagogic matters. We are fortunate in being responsible for a school in which the visit will almost certainly be an enjoyable reminder of why we think it is worthwhile being governors!

APPENDIX B

KATHERINE SEMAR INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS



Our vision - “A nurturing school of exceptional quality”

Our core values: be kind, be confident, be curious, be positive, be respectful, be resilient

Our curriculum aims are for our children to be able to question, challenge, investigate, experience, communicate, create and understand

GOVERNOR VISIT REPORT

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident and happy citizens.

Date & time:	04/07/2023 1-3pm
Name of governor:	Pamela Lochhead and Peta Torrance
Main co-ordinator of visit:	Mrs Julie Hall
Main purpose(s) of visit: (or key question to be answered)	Science monitoring across KS1 and KS2 with time spent in the Junior School during an afternoon of Science Week.

Other activities that took place during the visit (please tick):

Classroom visit(s)	X	Observing support staff	
Attending assembly		Talking to pupils	X
Looking at pupil's work	X	Looking at displays	
Talking to other staff		Meeting the headteacher	
Meeting with co-ordinators/staff responsible for area of focus	X	Looking at resources or documents related to focus of visit	
Attending lunchtime			

Background to the visit:

Every 3 years the schools run a Science week. This year's science week had sessions run by parents whom are secondary school science teachers and professionals from world leading science institutes which are based locally (Cambridge and London). There was also a talk from a charity that funds scientific research and promotes understanding of how our brains work, Alzheimer's UK, and

science focused trips for some year groups. Science was also promoted during PE and music lessons, and a science drawing/photography competition was concluded. The governor visit took place on the Tuesday afternoon of this week.

Main findings of the visit:

It was easy to see how the curriculum aims were met during this week - Question, Challenge, Investigate, Experience, Communicate, Create and Understand.

The workshop on **DNA extraction** from strawberries gave the pupils hands on experience in performing a scientific experiment. The stepwise process allowed them to investigate the components of the fruit from a scientific perspective and stimulated many questions. There was also a **talk about DNA**, again there were many insightful questions from the pupils as they formed their understanding of a very complex concept. During this parent led sessions there were many fun and thought provoking questions for the pupils to answer promoting great discussion in the class room.

Time was also spent with pupils from each year group. It was clear how scientific understanding and enquiry is built as the pupils progress through the school. The EY pupils brought the class books and confidently communicate about the process of ageing. The year 3 and 5 children brought their science workbooks and confidently talked about their favourite science topics showing how data was collected and displayed in graphs and tables as well as recording observations.

The end of the visit was spent in **discussion with subject leader** where they explained how the Science week was put together and how they are integrating understanding of different types of scientific enquiry into the curriculum. Medium term plans in science include limiting common misconceptions and using the correct vocabulary to ensure pupils have good building blocks when they enter secondary school.

Points to take forward:

The pupils were keen to have more hands on science experience through school trips and access to microscopes. It would also be nice to see more science work on the classroom walls. Perhaps Science Week could be run at a different time in the school calendar; the final half-term is very busy with end of term activities and the impact of it was slightly lost.

Conclusions:

It was a pleasure to come into the Schools and learn about what science is covered in the curriculum and how the pupils learn about and experience scientific enquiry. Science Week is an inclusive and inspiring event.

Safeguarding monitoring:

A member of the site team was asked about what they would do if they had safeguarding concerns about the headteacher and they said they would speak to a deputy head. Informed them they should contact the Chair of Governors if it was the Head they had concerns about. Spoke to the headteacher after this conversation and she will review the safeguarding training of support staff.

Brief comment on your visit for parent newsletter:

The end of Summer term was packed full of activities for the children. One of the highlights was Science Week, which I had the pleasure to come in and monitor for an afternoon. Pupil engagement with the workshops, that were provided by scientist

parents at the school, was exceptional. These were informative and thought provoking. It was also great to see that Science was linked with other subjects such as PE, Music and Art as well as Maths and Literacy.

ON COMPLETION OF THIS FORM PLEASE FORWARD IT TO THE JULIE
PUXLEY AND ROB AIKEN FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT COMMITTEE
AGENDA

head@katherinesemar.net, raiken@katherinesemar.net