

Virtual Meeting Attendance Policy

Date Prepared:	December 2020
Author:	A Moon - Trust Business Manager
Checked by (Trustee)	G Bristow & S Smith
Date ratified	30.3.21
Review date	February 2022

1. Introduction

The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing boards of maintained schools in England to: “approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference”.

In relation to this Veritas MAT board has determined the following arrangements will apply. These arrangements only apply to meetings of the full MAT board but may also apply to the RGB should this become a requirement.

2. Virtual Attendance at Face to Face Meetings

- a. Where a trustee/governor wishes to attend a meeting of the MAT board/RGB by either telephone or video link, the Chair and Clerk must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible.
- b. The trustee/governor will be asked their reasons for not attending the meeting in person. Their attendance virtually will be subject to (a) their appropriate location to ensure suitable privacy and (b) to the approval of the MAT board/RGB at the beginning of the meeting, although this approval will not be withheld without good reason.
- c. Where approval is withheld, the reason for this will be minuted and the trustee/governor informed immediately.
- d. Trustees/governors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been ‘present’ for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to.
- e. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the trustee/governor sharing their vote verbally with the clerk). Where this is not possible the trustee/governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.

Virtual Meeting Attendance Policy

- f. Trustees/governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting.
- g. If the technological link is lost, they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.
- h. If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a trustee/governor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

3. Virtual Meetings

- a. The scheduled full MAT board meetings will be face to face meetings where possible. However additional and extraordinary meetings can take place via telephone or video conference call as long as the usual quorum of trustees/governors is 'present' on the call.
- b. Where a meeting is taking place virtually, every effort will be made to enable all trustees/governors to access the meeting.
- c. Where a meeting is taking place virtually, the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the Chair has exercised his/her right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.
- d. Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a trustee/governor who is present (other than the CEO/Headteacher) taking the minutes and these will be presented to the next meeting of the full MAT board/RGB.
- e. Virtual meetings should not be recorded by any trustee/governor or the clerk without the approval of the governing board and for a specified purpose. If the meeting is recorded the following statement will be read out at the start of the recorded meeting / section of the meeting: 'This meeting is being recorded and may be used for minute taking purposes.'