

CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. This policy is also publically available on the school website

Legal Status

- Complies with Part 8 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher.
- The Trustees undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher



Kirstine Boon
Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Trustee

Date Reviewed: May 2024
Date of Next Review: May 2026
Version No. 4

City of Rochester School (registered charity Magic (UK) Ltd, Charity No. 1163885: Company Ltd by Guarantee No 8045437) is an Independent School and a company limited by guarantee. The trustees are expected to carry out, or to have carried out, the functions of governance, and should describe clearly and succinctly the structure of the school and its component parts, and the system by which it is governed and managed. This should include the Trustee structure of City of Rochester School.

In broad terms, governance can be taken to mean the practices and structures which underpin the operation and management of a school. The governance must ensure that a balance is struck between the interests of all stakeholders in the enterprise, and that this should facilitate the sustained provision of high-quality education.

Aims and objectives need to be specified by the trustees as well as the structures in place to monitor performance and enable appropriate interventions to improve it. Good governance will be reflected in the quality of the school as a single entity, and therefore will be reflected in the assessments of different aspects of the school's operation such as the quality of teaching and curricula, and the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff.

1. The role of the Trustees includes:

- Ensuring compliance with statutory duties;
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Creating robust accountability;
- Ensuring financial probity;
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the quality of teaching;
- Understanding and taking sufficient account of pupil data, particularly the understanding and use of the school data dashboard;
- Being aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups;
- Having a challenging and supportive leadership in equal measure;

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- Providing support for an effective Headteacher, rather than hindering school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns;
- Being transparent and accountable, including in terms of governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers;
- Understanding how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression;
- Performance managing the Headteacher rigorously;
- Performing well and contributing to weaknesses in leadership and management and
- Ensuring that the governing body is managing the school's finances.

At its core, the continuance of a charitable school as a sustainable business is dependent on its continuing compliance with the ISSR, as set out in Section 162A of the Education Act, 2005, and as interpreted by the different inspection bodies, as well as developing and applying accepted best practice to every aspect of the school's business.

The governance of a charitable school must ensure the provision of education which is compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements. A key area is the management of risk. It is important that a governance structure should be in place to ensure that the level of risk in any transaction should not be so high as to put at risk the continuing functioning of the school as a provider of education. There is a higher duty of care, and clear moral, social and ethical responsibilities which are accepted when undertaking to provide education to school age pupils. These must be respected and incorporated into the governing principles of any school.

It is also important for a governance structure to ensure that risk is minimized in the operation of a school. This can be seen in having clear policies regarding safeguarding of pupils' interests in all aspects of the running of a school. It is also important to have a clear governance structure to minimize the risk of legal action against the school or its Trustees. In cases of accidental injury or other potential disputes an accountable, transparent and effective structure of governance will protect the school, as it will demonstrate that the school was operating within the law and in keeping with current regulatory practices.

Governance structures should reflect the legitimate public interest in the way a school is managed. Not only parents, but all members of a society have a stake in ensuring that school age children receive a good education in safe and supportive circumstances.

The ISSR reflect what is expected of a fee-paying school. These both determine the minimum standards that need to be met, but are also intended to facilitate improvements in standards. It is therefore important for any governance structure to be able to reflect and promote these intentions in the way it determines the operation of a school.

2. Issues for the Trustees:

The Trustees needs to understand, review and question the school's pupil performance data as follows:

- Does your understanding of this data extend to the groups that make up your school community and whether there are gaps between them?
- Are you confident that you know the strengths, weaknesses and trends for your school?
- If there are any issues in your school, are they clearly identified in your plan for school improvement?

The Trustees needs to monitor the overall effectiveness of the school as follows:

- Do you know what the profile of teaching is in your school?
- Do you build in resources to buy in expertise to work with your leadership team? Do you see the reports?
- Does your development plan demonstrate how CPD will improve the quality of teaching and learning? How is the impact evaluated?
- Does your Headteacher and leadership team refresh their understanding of good or better teaching?

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The Trustees needs to evaluate the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school as follows:

- Are your policies for behaviour and attendance up to date?
- What is your perception of behaviour in your school? What evidence do you have to support that view?
- What is the impact of your school's strategies to improve behaviour and attendance?
- How robust is your complaints procedure?
- Do your leaders and managers create a positive ethos?

It is the duty of the Trustees to have a clear view with regard to the following questions:

- How effective are the Trustees? Is there evidence to demonstrate their effectiveness?
- How well do the Trustees ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction?
- Do the Trustees act as a critical friend to the Headteacher and leadership team?
- Do the Trustees hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance?
- What evidence do the Trustees have that supports and strengthens school leadership?
- What evidence do the Trustees have that provides challenges to school leaders, particularly with regard to improving the quality of teaching?
- How do the Trustees use performance management systems, including the performance management of the Headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management?
- Do the Trustees have a well-focused school improvement plan? Is there a separate section for the Trustees?
- Are policies and procedures applied consistently by the Trustees?
- How do the Trustees ensure financial probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively?
- Is the Trustees' equality policy available online?
- How accurate is the Trustees' monitoring and evaluation of your school's performance?
- Are staff, pupils, parents and carers engaged?
- Are the Trustees' safeguarding arrangements up to date?
- Are the Trustees operating in a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved?
- Are the Trustees ensuring the school's finances are properly managed?

3. Quality of leadership in and management of the school:

When evaluating the quality of leadership in and management of the school, the Trustees will need to consider whether the school's leadership:

- Demonstrates an ambitious vision for the school and high expectations of all pupils and teachers;
- Improves the school and develops its capacity for sustained improvement by developing high quality teaching, leadership capacity and high professional standards among all staff;
- Ensures that all teaching staff benefit from appropriate professional development and that performance is rigorously managed;
- Accurately evaluates the school's strengths and weaknesses and uses the findings to promote improvement;
- Provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils' learning, and promotes their good behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Promotes pupils' learning and progress in literacy;
- Engages parents in supporting pupil's achievement, behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Takes steps to promote the safety of all pupils and ensures that they are safe in school.

4. The duty of the Headteacher in relation to the Trustees:

With reference to the effectiveness of the school, the Headteacher needs to provide evidence for the Trustees concerning:

- The quality of education provided in the school;
- Achievement of pupils at the school;
- Quality of teaching in the school;
- The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school and
- Quality of leadership in, and management of the school.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school
- The extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school, and in particular the needs of:
 - pupils who have a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010
 - pupils who have special educational needs as identified in their EHCP.

5. The quality of education provided in the school:

The Headteacher needs to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of the quality of education provided in the school as follows:

- Teaching together with a rich and relevant curriculum, contributes to learning and achievement, significant growth in pupils' knowledge, and excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have excellent educational experiences at school and these ensure that they are well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment;
- There is good practice which ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age;
- The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils.
- Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical wellbeing enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

6. Achievement of pupils at the school:

The Headteacher needs to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of the achievement at the school as follows:

- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress throughout year groups across many subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils read widely, and often across all subjects to a high standard.
- Pupils develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

7. Quality of teaching in the school:

The Headteacher needs to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of the quality of teaching at the school as follows:

- Much of the teaching in all key stages and most subjects is good. As a result, almost all pupils are making rapid and sustained progress.
- All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn and achieve across the curriculum.
- Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene with notable impact on the quality of learning.
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.

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- Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure students are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school.
- Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately.

8. The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school:

The Headteacher needs to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school as follows:

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are of an equally high standard across subjects, years, classes and with different staff.
- Parents, staff and pupils are positive about both behaviour and safety. Pupils are aware how good attitudes and behaviour contribute to school life, adult life and work.
- Pupils' behaviour outside lessons is almost always impeccable. Pupils' pride in the school is shown by their excellent conduct, manners and punctuality.
- Pupils are fully aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, and actively try to prevent it from occurring. Bullying and derogatory or aggressive language in all their forms are rare and dealt with highly effectively.
- Skilled and highly consistent behaviour management by all staff makes a strong contribution to a positive climate for learning. There are improvements in behaviour over time.
- All groups of pupils are safe and feel safe at school and at outside provision placements at all times. They understand very clearly what constitutes unsafe situations and are highly aware of how to keep themselves and others safe in different situations, including in relation to e-safety.

9. Planning, Development and Improvement

Trustees should have access to:

- Outcomes of the analysis of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work;
- Analyses of the progress and attainment of pupils currently on roll.
- Analysis of the pupils' past progress and attainment;
- Analysis of data and information related to pupils' behaviour and safety, including exclusions, rewards and sanctions, incident logs and attendance;
- Analysis of the effectiveness of specific interventions to improve, for example, the achievement and/or behaviour of particular groups of pupils;
- The views of parents and carers as shown by Parent View and
- Any external evaluations such as those carried out by the ISS, Ofsted and the local authority.

It is the duty of the Trustees to both challenge and hold the senior leaders of the school to account for all aspects of the school's performance and to ensure financial stability.

10. Board Meetings

The Board meets at least 5 times a year and there should be a minimum quorum of 3 which includes the Headteacher and trustees. We operate a circle model whereby all members are present for discussions on the Headteacher's Report, finance, H and S, academic outcomes and safeguarding. A finance champion meets with the SBM monthly ahead of reports being shared. The safeguarding lead meets with the DSL termly ahead of reports being shared.

Finance

Function: To have oversight of general financial matters relating to the school.

Tasks: The meeting will:

- review the monthly management accounts (Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet);
- consider financial out-turn figures for the previous financial year and to draw up a plan for the forthcoming financial year;
- monitor the budget, and expenditure;
- during the Summer Term, to receive the provisional budget allocation for the forthcoming year and set a provisional budget;
- prepare a finance report for the Annual General Meeting and respond to its recommendations.
- annually review those policies relevant to the meeting, which are then taken by the Headteacher to the Board for their consideration/discussion before final ratification.

Academic

Function: To put in place procedures to assist the Headteacher in ensuring effective delivery of the curriculum along regular monitoring and review procedures.

Tasks:

- To be familiar with the school's curriculum.
- To focus on areas of the curriculum in accordance with the School Development Plan (SDP).
- To support the Headteacher in active monitoring of curriculum policy.
- To make recommendations regarding continuous staff development.
- To monitor the impact of the curriculum through outcomes including qualifications gained
- To ensure the pupils can access a range of relevant courses to gain qualifications that will help them to live independently when they leave school
- To monitor how effective the careers provision is across the school
- To ensure Alternative Provision is high quality, well managed and impact is measured by school leaders
- To continue to support the school mission statement and ethos and promote the highest standard of pastoral care.
- To annually review those policies relevant to the meeting, which are then taken by the Headteacher to the Board for their consideration/discussion before final ratification.

Safeguarding Meetings

Membership: Any member is welcome to attend by the Trustees with responsibility for Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Lead are always present.

Meetings: One per term.

Terms of Reference

Background and Overview: The Trustees have a collective responsibility for safeguarding at the School. The purpose of the meeting is to assist the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities for the Nominated Safeguarding Lead and Trustees..

Objectives: The objective of the meeting is to ensure that the school has effective safeguarding policies which are properly implemented, and that the Trustees are provided with sufficient information to exercise their collective responsibility for safeguarding. The Trustees have a duty to ensure that policies are compliant with published legislation and regulations.

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Duties and Responsibilities: Review of Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The meeting will:

- Monitor the Single Central Record
- Monitor the agreed safeguarding audit tool
- Discuss recent regulatory changes;
- Review the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at least once a year and report to the Trustees;
- Confirm that measures have been taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware of the policy and that it is published on the intranet and website;
- Review effective implementation of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The meeting will review implementation of the safeguarding policy looking at evidence to demonstrate:
 - Training
 - Reporting lines;
 - Review of any relevant complaints;
 - Working with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (feedback from meetings);
 - Reflection and learning from recent cases or sector guidance.
- To annually review those policies relevant to the meeting, which are then taken by the Headteacher to the Board for their consideration/discussion before final ratification.

The meeting will:

- Question the DSL about recent safeguarding cases (copies of DSL termly meetings) and identify any new trends and elicit views on what the school is doing to mitigate the risk;
- Review case notes on a sample of cases to identify learning points;
- Annually review and recommend changes to its terms of reference.

The agenda for meetings shall be determined by the Chairman of the meeting in consultation with other members of the meeting as appropriate and shall wherever possible be circulated in advance to persons attending the meeting.

Health and Safety Meeting (HSM)

The Headteacher is responsible for the management and safe operation of the School and its associated facilities on behalf of the Trustees. The HSC reports directly to the Trustees through the Head. It is specifically charged with ensuring the full implementation of the Trustees Health and Safety Management System.

Meetings: Twice a year

The HSC will provide an opportunity for representatives to confer with senior management on health and safety issues. It will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Health and Safety at Work Policy and will keep under review measures taken to ensure the health and safety of employees.

Tasks:

- Review Safeguarding arrangements
- Review statistics with a view to recommending corrective action;
- Examine safety audits, inspections and assessments;
- Consider legislation, reports and information in order to determine necessary action;
- Keep a watch on the effectiveness of rules, systems of work, training and communication;
- Identify and prioritise safety issues;
- Identify training requirements for employees;
- Review safety records including accidents and incidents;
- Agree changes in working practices, if required; and
- Review the implications of any changes in Health and Safety Legislation.

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- To annually review those policies relevant to the meeting, which are then taken by the Headteacher to the Board for their consideration/discussion before final ratification.

Meeting representatives are selected from a wide cross-section of the Proprietor's operations and therefore have a wide practical knowledge of the processes and activities undertaken within the School.

In addition to the following, membership is open to any Trustee:

- The HSM and EVC (who is managed by the Headteacher), invited members of the school staff as agreed by the Chair of Trustees;
- Other specialists will be co-opted as necessary and the meeting will meet termly and the minutes will be displayed on the staff room notice board.

Safety Education: The DfE has published guidance for Schools on Safety Education. This guidance shows how the curriculum for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship can address the issue of accidental injury and death in children and young people. One of the aims of PSHEE and Citizenship is to enable children to apply personal and social skills to a range of contexts in their lives. Skills in risk assessment learned in relation to preventing accidents are transferable to other issues. This DfE guidance also sets out the general teaching requirement for health and safety in relation to science, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education, off-site activities, art and design.