



# Service Children's Education

## Terms of Reference for

### **School Governance Committees**

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## **SCE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **1. Role of the School Governance Committee**

1.1 The purpose of the School Governance Committee (SGC) is to enable the community and parent body to contribute to the strategic direction and governance of the school. The aim of this involvement is to improve educational provision and outcomes for pupils and families.

1.2 The School Governance Committee has three main roles:

i. To provide a strategic view

The SGC should help to set, and keep under review, the broad framework within which the headteacher and staff should run the school. It should focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations, and promoting effective teaching and learning.

ii. To act as critical friend

The SGC also provides the headteacher and staff with support, advice and information, drawing on its members' knowledge and experience. In these ways the SGC acts as a critical friend to the school.

iii. To ensure accountability

The headteacher reports to the SGC on the school's performance and on other matters. The SGC has a right to discuss and question such matters, while always respecting the professional roles of the headteacher and other staff, and their responsibilities for the management of the school.

1.3 The specific roles of the School Governance Committee are as follows:

i. To agree on an annual basis the priorities for the school's improvement and development; to approve appropriate plans and targets to meet these priorities; and to ensure that sufficient progress is made towards the achievement of these plans and targets;

ii. To monitor the outcomes achieved by the school and provide a forum for accountability;

iii. To approve and keep under review school policies;

iv. To approve the school budget and monitor expenditure;

v. To ensure that the school provides a safe and healthy environment for pupils, staff and visitors;

vi. To act as a channel for communication between the school, parents, and the community served by the school, and to promote ways of developing and improving that communication;

- vii. To develop and strengthen the school's role as a resource for learning and development within the community, including the use of school facilities for extended learning;
- viii. To promote the school's role in the provision of integrated children's services and in the improvement of the outcomes for children and young people in accordance with the aims of the Children Act 2004 and "Every Child Matters", the Government's vision for children's services;
- ix. To provide support to the headteacher and staff in achieving the plans and targets set for the school, and to encourage the involvement of parents and the community in support of the school;
- x. To keep under review the management structure of the school, and to provide community representation on selection boards for the appointment of the headteacher and other senior staff;
- xi. To assist in the resolution of parental complaints, to hear parental appeals against school exclusions, and to monitor the school complaints procedure;
- xii. To represent to the Garrison Schools' Advisory Committee any issues which affect the ability of the school to meet its targets or the school's day-to-day operation.

- 1.4 The roles outlined above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The SGC may involve itself in other matters consistent with the overall aim of improving educational provision and outcomes for pupils and families. The headteacher remains responsible for the internal management of the school and, as budget holder, for the management of the school's delegated budget.

## **2. Membership of the School Governance Committee**

- 2.1 The SGC will normally comprise a minimum of nine persons.
- 2.2 The headteacher will be an ex officio member of the SGC. The school staff will also be represented by one teacher, and one member of the support staff, elected from these groups of staff respectively. Where the school has responsibility for an associated Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) setting or settings, the SGC will include one member of the FS1 staff, elected from the staff of the setting(s).
- 2.3 There will normally be a minimum of three parent representatives, who may include parents of children attending any associated FS1 setting. The SGC may determine that there should be a higher number of parent representatives. Elections for parent representatives will be held where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies.
- 2.4 The SGC will normally include an ETS representative and, where possible, a padre.

- 2.5 There will normally be a minimum of two members who are unit representatives other than parents. Unit representatives may include the Chair. The SGC may determine that there should be a higher number of unit representatives, if appropriate.
- 2.6 The SGC should include at least one community representative (e.g. Padre, Youth Service Officer, Service Families Association representative, Welfare Services representative). However, the SGC may determine that there should be a higher number. The SGC will determine who shall be invited to serve as community representative(s).
- 2.7 The composition of the SGC should be reviewed annually, and this will usually be an agenda item for the first SGC meeting in each school year. The outcome, including any decision to increase the number of parent, unit or community representatives, will be recorded in the minutes.
- 2.8 With the agreement of the Chair, other persons may attend as observers or to make any contribution to the meeting requested by the Chair
- 2.9 A representative of the Chief Executive, HQ SCE, is entitled to attend any SGC meeting.
- 2.10 Where the headteacher is unavoidably absent, his/her place may be taken by the deputy headteacher. Substitutions for the elected teacher, support staff and FS1 representatives are not possible.

### **3. Meetings**

- 3.1 A full meeting of the SGC must be held every term. The SGC may decide that additional meetings are necessary, including sub-committee meetings. The headteacher will present a written report to each termly meeting and, where necessary, to other meetings.
- 3.2 For meetings of the full SGC, the quorum will be one half of the membership, rounded up where the total membership is an odd number. The total membership will be as last determined by the SGC and recorded in the minutes.

### **4. Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk**

- 4.1 Each SGC will have a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Clerk.
- 4.2 The Chair of the SGC will be nominated by the local Garrison Commander. The nominee will usually be a senior officer, normally the Commanding Officer, of the major unit, or one of the major units, served by the school. The nominee should be in a position to attend meetings and to fulfil the responsibilities associated with the position of Chair of the SGC. It is advantageous for the Chair either to have first hand knowledge as a parent of a child attending the school or of current educational practice in the United Kingdom, for example through experience as a school governor. The choice of nominee should also take account of the Chair's ability to further the interests of the school and the school community and to take forward, where relevant, the decisions of the SGC.

- 4.3 The Garrison Commander's decision regarding the nomination of the Chair should be confirmed in writing to AEO (Schools) at HQ SCE or, from 1 Sep 06, to the relevant SCE Area Education Officer. The nomination may be either of a named individual or a postholder, for example the CO of a particular unit.
- 4.4 Each SGC will have a Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair should be selected from and by the membership of the SGC. The Vice-Chair should be in a position to chair the meetings if the Chair is absent. It will therefore be advantageous if the Vice-Chair is a person in a non-deployable position.
- 4.5 The Chair should determine who will act as Clerk as to the SGC. The Clerk need not be a member of the SGC.
- 4.6 The responsibilities of the Clerk are as follows:
- a) to liaise with the Chair and with the headteacher to determine the agenda for SGC meetings;
  - b) to send a calling notice for each meeting confirming the date, time and venue of the meeting, and to ensure that accommodation is booked;
  - c) to distribute the agenda and associated papers for SGC meetings, including the headteacher's report;
  - d) to take the minutes of SGC meetings;
  - e) to submit the draft minutes of each meeting to the Chair for approval prior to distribution;
  - f) to distribute the minutes of each meeting to all SGC members, to HQ SCE, and to other relevant persons as determined by the SGC;
  - g) to maintain an archive of the agenda, reports and minutes of previous SGC meetings.

## **5. Agenda, reports and minutes**

- 5.1 Items for discussion at SGC meetings may be proposed by any member of the SGC or by HQ SCE by notification to the Clerk, Chair or headteacher. A standing item on the agenda for the main termly meeting will be the headteacher's report. Standing items for the summer and autumn term meetings will be the school budget and school results respectively. HQ SCE will propose other agenda items as necessary.
- 5.2 The agenda and any supporting papers, including the headteacher's termly report, should be issued so that they may be received at least 10 working days before the meeting.
- 5.3 The Clerk should send copies of the draft minutes to the Chair and headteacher for approval within 10 working days of the meeting. Following approval or any necessary amendment, copies of the minutes should be issued to SGC members and copied to AEO (S) at HQ SCE or, from 1 Sep 06, to the relevant SCE Area Education Officer and AEO Policy Development at HQ SCE. In addition, for schools in BFG and Cyprus, a copy should be sent to:

For schools in BFG:

SO2 ETS, UKSC (G)

For schools in Cyprus:

Comd ETS, BFC

- 5.4 The headteacher should ensure that minutes of SGC meetings are readily available to parents, staff, and other interested parties, for example by publication on the school website and/or notice boards for parents and staff.

## **6. Sub-Committees**

- 6.1 Each SGC will have a Finance Sub-Committee. The Finance Sub-Committee will have responsibility for approving the headteacher's annual budget plan, for ensuring that this is consistent with the school's priorities, and for monitoring budget expenditure.
- 6.2 Further details regarding the role and responsibilities of the Finance Sub-Committee are at Annex A.
- 6.3 The SGC should also establish a Complaints Appeal Panel to consider appeals from parents in accordance with the SCE complaints policy. The Appeal Panel comprises two members of the SGC, determined by the SGC, and a third person, who will be a member of HQ SCE staff nominated by the Chief Executive. The Appeal Panel will be chaired by one of the two SGC members. School staff members of the SGC may not serve on the Appeal Panel. Similarly, SGC members who have had any involvement in the matter complained of may not be chosen as Panel members.
- 6.4 The SGC may determine that other sub-committees should be established for specific purposes. In such cases, the SGC must determine the membership and terms of reference of the sub-committee. The sub-committee must have a chair, who is either appointed by the SGC or elected by the sub-committee. The SGC must review the establishment, terms of reference and membership of any sub-committee annually.

## **7. Procedure for resolution of disagreements**

- 7.1 If the SGC or its sub-committees are unable to reach agreement with the headteacher concerning his/her budget proposals or on any other matter, the chair of the SGC should refer the matter to the relevant Area Education Officer for resolution. If a resolution is not reached at this level, the matter will be referred to the SCE Chief Executive, whose decision will be final.

## **8. Annual parents' meeting and school profile**

- 8.1 SCE School Governance Committees are currently required to publish an annual report to parents and to hold an annual meeting with parents. These requirements will be replaced from school year 2006-07 by the publication of a School Profile. This will provide statistical and other information about the school, giving details of its context and performance.

## **9. Training**

- 9.1 A training pack for School Governance Committee members has been published by SCE. Headteachers should provide new SGC members with copies of the training pack. The pack includes a set of modules which can be worked through at SGC meetings. In addition, the annual SCE professional development programme includes training sessions for SGC members. Bespoke training for whole SGCs can be arranged on request.
- 9.2 Separate training will be provided for Finance Sub-Committee members by SCE budget support staff.



## **ANNEX A**

### **SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE**

#### **1. Role**

- 1.1 Each School Governance Committee (SGC) will have a Finance Sub-Committee (FSC). The FSC will have responsibility for recommending to the SGC that the headteacher's annual budget plan be agreed, for ensuring that it is consistent with the school's priorities, and for monitoring budget expenditure to ensure that value for money (VfM) is achieved.
- 1.2 Membership of the FSC will be determined by the SGC. There should be a minimum of two members other than the headteacher. The headteacher is a member of the FSC but may not chair the Sub-Committee.
- 1.3 The FSC will meet at least termly. The Chair of the FSC should provide a financial update to each full meeting of the SGC, which will be used to inform the school's three mandated forecasts of expenditure to HQ SCE. The report will include any FSC recommendations which must be presented to the SGC.
- 1.4 If the SGC is unable to reach agreement with the headteacher on the proposed spending priorities, or has concerns about the level of proposed expenditure against budget allocation which cannot be assuaged by the headteacher, the Chair of the SGC should raise these issues with the Area Education Officer.

#### **2. Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The financial issues with which the FSC is likely to become involved and recommended responsibilities are as set out overleaf:
- 2.2 In the same way that UK school governors do not incur any personal liability in respect of anything done in good faith in exercising their power to spend a school's budget share, or delegating that power to the Headteacher, this limitation on liability applies equally to SGC members.

ISSUE	TASKS	WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY <sup>1</sup> ?
<b>Planning the Budget</b>	<p>To identify budget priorities with reference to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).</p> <p>To review proposals and make recommendations to the SGC on the Budget and SIP.</p> <p>To ensure the School Expenditure Plan (SEP) is linked to the SIP.</p>	<b><i>FSC with the headteacher (HT), who will produce recommendations for the FSC to consider</i></b>
<b>Agreeing the Budget</b>	To decide upon the allocation of the annual school budget.	<b>SGC</b>
<b>Monitoring the Budget</b>	<p>Regular Reviews (at least termly).</p> <p>Collating information and presenting reports to the SGC.</p> <p>To monitor the financial performance, including resource spend analysis to date, of the School and make recommendations thereon to the SGC <u>to ensure VfM is achieved</u>.</p>	<p><b><i>HT to provide monthly print out to FSC after reconciliation and checking by HQ SCE support staff</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Chair of FSC to provide</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Chair of FSC to provide</i></b></p>
<b>Virement</b>	<p>Deciding on major virement in connection with annual allocations.</p> <p>Deciding upon major virement in response to in-year budget variations.</p> <p>Deciding on minor virement in response to need during course of year.</p>	<p><b><i>FSC with HT</i></b></p> <p><b><i>FSC with HT</i></b></p> <p><b><i>HT with Chair of FSC if necessary. (Emergency only. Limit £1,000).</i></b></p>
<b>Reconciliation of Information</b>	<p>Checking elements of budget information received from HQ SCE.</p> <p>Seeking clarification and initiating queries.</p>	<p><b><i>HT</i></b></p> <p><b><i>HT</i></b></p>

<b>Carry-in/Carry-out effect on the Budget</b>	<b>Monitoring and identification areas of over/under spends in course of, or at end of, Financial Year, taking into account accruals.</b>  <b>Considering implications for budget planning.</b>	<b>To be discussed at regular reviews by FSC</b>  <b>To be discussed at regular reviews by FSC</b>
<b>Income Generation</b>	<b>Planning and initiating activities</b>  <b>Incorporating planned income and budget planning</b>	<b>HT, having sought advice from HQ SCE Support staff</b>  <b>FSC with the HT</b>
<b>School Fund</b>	<b>Maintain School Fund Income and Expenditure account with appropriate receipts and documentation.</b>  <b>Audit School Fund Account.</b>	<b>HT responsible for ensuring the accuracy and transparency of the account</b>  <b>FSC to ensure that the account is audited in accordance with non-public funds regulations policy and is audited at least annually</b>

<sup>1</sup>The above responsibilities should be subject to continuous review by the FSC and HT in the light of experience.