

NORTH LONDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE

Mission of Governance

We are rated as a good school with some outstanding features in our previous Ofsted inspection in 2013 and yearning to achieve outstanding status in all areas. We are a committed employer and endeavour to ensure that we comply with all the expectations and requirements that legislation and the best practice demand. We also work with a range of local, national and international organisations to ensure our school continues to thrive and deliver best education in all areas. The school is governed by a Governing Body (abbreviated as GB from now on) who are supported by Trustees. The leadership and management of the school is delegated by the Governors to the Head, Mr Hakan Gokce. North London Grammar School (will be referred as NLGS) is owned and established by Wisdom School Ltd, a limited company and a registered charity. It is routinely inspected by Ofsted.

Our governors come from a range of industries, sectors and backgrounds. They are a team of highly committed and experienced individuals whose determination to deliver outstanding educational opportunities to our students. If you wish to contact our governors, please e-mail to governor@northlondongrammar.com OR write to The Chair of Governors at the school address as published on the school website. Please see the list of trustees and governors below.

To achieve this, we:

- Offer a personalised, flexible and individual learning experience full of academic opportunities and the largest range of extra-curricular activities, clubs, societies, trips, international expeditions and sport tours of any independent and state school in the area.
- Work with students as individuals to ensure their curriculum is right for them.
- Know and support every one of our students. We know that a challenging education requires a supportive, caring environment.

For us, education is not just about academic achievement, it's about making a difference. Every member of our school community has a belief that we can all make a difference. We will all play a part in equipping students to develop a love of learning.

North London Grammar School is known for its human dimension we bring to teaching. All our students are treated warmly as individuals. Their opinions are valued – this is because we know that our school thrives on the relationship between our students, their parents and our staff and the active role that we all play.

Structure

NLGS has an additional layer of governance compared to many maintained schools, known as the trustees. In reality the trustees will be responsible only for fundamental decisions such as changing the constitution of Wisdom School Ltd and it is the governing body which remains the body responsible for making strategic decisions and not involved with the day to day running of NLGS. NLGS is also a charitable company limited by guarantee, the governors have duties as governing body members under company law and trustees under charity law. These duties are similar to those they have as governors of the school.

A summary of responsibilities as charitable trustee

- Duty of Compliance;
- Duty of Prudence; and
- Duty of Care.

A summary of responsibilities as governing body members

- Duty to act within powers;

- Duty to promote success of the company;
- Duty to exercise independent judgement;
- Duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence;
- Duty to avoid conflicts of interest;
- Duty not to accept benefits from third parties; and
- Duty to declare an interest in a proposed transaction or arrangement.

Meetings and Proceedings

The trustees are the safeguards of the mission and the activities of the school. However, they are not directly required to be involved in the day to day running of the school. In its inception, trustees are to set out school's mission and key policies. After the settlement, the GBs have flexibility to create their own policies and procedures that ensure orderly, productive meetings within the given framework.

Inaugural Meeting for the Organisation of the GB and its activities

Organisational meetings must be held in the summer term of each year. At the inaugural meeting, and at subsequent organisational meetings of the GB, the GB must elect a chair. The GB may also elect a vice-chair, organise itself into a committee structure, and adopt a meeting schedule of regular GB and committee meetings for the following 12-month period. If a committee structure is adopted, the GB usually at this time also appoints governors to those committees depending on their areas of interest and skills. The chairs for committees are usually elected at their first meeting of the new term.

Regular and Special Meetings

Most GBs adopt a regular meeting schedule. The chair, or the secretary of the GB if a majority of the Governors make a written request, may also call special meetings. Special meetings are usually called for the GB to consider time-sensitive matters or weighty matters that require a separate meeting. Trustees who are not also Governors are not expected to attend all regular meetings of the GB. Trustees are also expected to attend all meetings of any committee of which they are a member. A trustee may not be absent from three consecutive regular meetings of the GB without the permission of the GB.

Quorum

A meeting of the GB can't be convened to make decisions until a quorum is present. A quorum is "a majority of all the governors constituting a GB. A meeting may continue without the members who have declared conflicts of interest as long as there are at least two members remaining. The treasurer is required to receive and account for all money of the GB and produce, when required by the GB or auditors or other competent authority, Papers and money in his or her possession, power or control that belong to the GB. The chair of GB shall act as the secretary of the GB however, if the GB has no more than five members it may appoint one of its members to act as secretary. Normally, the head teacher is appointed as treasurer and secretary of the GB and therefore ensures that qualified staff are employed to carry out the duties of treasurer and secretary.

Agendas

The GB may satisfy the requirement for giving trustees proper notice of a meeting and provide the order of business for that meeting by distributing one document, commonly referred to as the agenda. The document should indicate that it serves as both official notice of meeting and agenda (or order of business) for the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes are the official record of the GB. They include:

- when and where the meeting took place;
- who was present;
- all matters considered at the meeting;
- all decisions made including the steps taken to reach those decisions; this establishes that the appropriate rules of order were followed.

The votes of individual members are not in the minutes unless a recorded vote has been requested. The secretary of the GB is responsible for keeping a full and accurate record of the proceedings of every meeting of the GB and for ensuring that the minutes, when confirmed, are signed by the chair of the meeting.

Chair and Vice-Chair

The GB chair and vice-chair (if a GB chooses) are appointed for one-year terms. The Act does not indicate the number of years or terms that the same person may continue as chair. Individual GBs may have rules of procedure or a policy or bylaw regarding the number of years or terms that a chair or vice-chair may serve.

Attendance

The chair of a meeting must be physically present in the meeting room and may not participate in meetings by electronic means.

Responsibilities

The chair has the following responsibilities:

- preside over meetings of the GB
- conduct the meetings in accordance with the Governors' procedures and practices for the conduct of GB meetings
- establish agendas for GB meetings, in consultation with the Governors' head teacher or the supervisory officer acting as the Governors' head teacher
- ensure that members of the GB have the information needed for informed discussion of the agenda items
- act as spokesperson to the public on behalf of the GB, unless otherwise determined by the GB
- convey the decisions of the GB to the head teacher or the supervisory officer acting as the head teacher
- provide leadership to the GB in maintaining the Governors' focus on the multi-year strategic plan
- provide leadership to the GB in maintaining their focus on the governors' mission and vision
- assume such other responsibilities as may be specified by the GB

The Chair

The chair may vote on all matters. As the legislated role description suggests, the position of chair of the GB involves responsibilities that extend beyond presiding over GB meetings. The GB may also determine that their spokesperson on specific issues be another member of the GB or other person approved by the GB.

The chair, in consultation with the head teacher, sets the agenda for meetings and a process is established whereby individual trustees can request that a matter be considered for inclusion on an agenda. The chair works closely with the head teacher to ensure that the Governors' wishes are understood, and works with the GB to present and clarify any concerns of the administration. The chair may call special meetings of the GB and, as the presiding officer, may, at his or her discretion, have people removed from meetings for improper conduct.

Rules of Order

School GB meetings are run according to parliamentary procedure. These rules of procedure are designed to allow trustees to introduce motions and proceed with debate, dissent, and decision making in an orderly way.

Knowledge of basic procedures and terminology will result in more efficient and productive meetings. Some GBs conduct orientation sessions for new Governors that include the basic rules of parliamentary procedure. Others may have a staff member present at meetings who can answer procedural questions.

Committees

The Education Act permits GBs to establish committees of governors to deal with the broad areas of “education, finance, personnel and premises”. GBs may also establish other committees and sub-committees that include people who are neither governors nor trustees. NLGS is in the process of establishing an advisory committee. This committees will be established on either a short- or long-term basis, provide input into policy development or other areas where the GB would benefit from the experience and expertise of other participants. Non-GB members might include teachers, students, parents, members of the community or local business-people.

Committees can ensure that the GB has the necessary information to make decisions. They can do fact finding, involve members of the community, and hear delegations from the public without using limited GB time. Committee meetings generally follow the same parliamentary procedure adopted by the GB, and follow the terms of reference set by the GB. Committees should record the minutes of their meetings, and/or make a report to the GB following every meeting. Committees may include recommendations for consideration by the GB; however, the GB, as a whole, makes the final decision. Serving on committees has several advantages for GB members. Committee work allows new trustees to become familiar with the conduct of GB business at a less formal level and to learn more about a specific topic. Trustees also have opportunities in committees to provide input in areas in which they have special interest or expertise. This allows matters to be discussed in a less formal setting. Some GBs will hold committee of the whole meetings to deal with matters that fall outside the purview of other committees or to hear from representatives of other levels of government.

Issues Beyond the Governing Body

Complaints can be taken to the Secretary of State for Education under Education Act 2002 on the grounds that a governing body is acting or proposing to act unreasonably or has failed to discharge its duties under the Act. In such case, complaints should be written to:

DfE

Independent Schools,

Mowden Hall

Staindrop Bridge

Darlington, DL3 9BG

The complainant can contact on OFSTED on 0300 1234 234.

Email:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 1234 234

Monitoring and Review

The governing body will monitor the complaints procedure, in order to ensure that all complaints are handled properly. The head teacher will log all stage 2 complaints received by the school, and record how they were resolved. These will be reported as part of the head teachers report to the governing body. The governing body will review this policy in January 2017 to reflect on the impact of latest practice.

Review Date:
2 September 2016
Next Review Date:
5 January 2017