



The Governing Council is a decision making body and is responsible for planning, policy, review and accountability. Governing bodies are given power under the "Education Act" to govern the school. They are legal bodies with legal obligations to govern the school in accordance with the Acts and the Regulations of Parliament.

ROLE STATEMENT

The Governing Council is accountable for the governance of the school by making sure that the school achieves its Site Learning Plan goals through good management practices. In practice, the Governing Council is responsible for: setting strategic goals/directions, Department for Education determining school policy, delegating powers and reviewing how well these goals/directions are being achieved. The Governing Council is accountable to the Minister for developing, negotiating and meeting the objectives and targets of the Site Learning Plan and Services Agreement by: strategic planning and the allocation of resources, monitoring key indicators and levels of client satisfaction, and reporting to the department and the community.

The Governing Council will:

- Involve the school community in the governance of the school by providing a focus and forum for parents and the school community.
- Set the broad direction and vision of the school through strategic planning
- Ratify whole school policies
- Oversee financial resources available to the school including regular review of the budget
- Report to the school community and the Minister as required
- Arrange for the conduct of facilities and services to enhance the education, development, care, safety, health or welfare of children and students
- Provide advice to the Governing Council and Executive Leadership on parent issues and concerns
- Promote interest and understanding about the school in the wider community
- Assist in providing some services and resources to benefit parents, students and staff
- Raise money for school related purposes as required.

MEMBERSHIP

The Governing Council will consist of a minimum of five and a maximum of 23 members. With the Minister's approval, it may be possible to vary the size and composition of the Governing Council, under its constitution. The membership categories of the Governing Council include:

- Principal
- Parents and caregivers, who must constitute a majority (14)
- Staff, with the provision for increased representation and within the proviso that departmental employees do not make up the majority of members (3)
- Students who may be nominated by their representative body (2)
- Community members who may be co-opted by the Governing Council (3)

The members of the Governing Council are elected to represent the school. They bring with them a particular perspective, but are responsible to the whole school community, with whom they are expected to consult. The Chairperson cannot be the Principal of a school or director. The members of the Governing Council will be elected at the Annual General Meeting prior to the end of March each year.

LEGAL POSITION

Legislation will provide an indemnity that protects individual Governing School management committees against liability for acts carried out in the lawful exercise of their responsibilities.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL AND GOVERNING COUNCIL

This is best described as "symbiotic" - both the Principal and the Governing body depend on each other and one cannot do without the other. The Principal and governing body each have significant but complementary roles and depend on each other.

GOVERNING BODY

It has a particular role in the following:

- Maintaining and improving the buildings and grounds
- Reporting annually to the school community and to the Department for Education
- Making recommendations to the Department for Education on the appointment of the Principal and other leadership positions
- Authorising the employment of non-teaching and any staff for short-term projects where additional budget support is required
- Developing the school's student Uniform Policy
- Developing the school's Code of Conduct.

In order to perform these roles, Governing Council needs to establish:

- Code of Practice
- Equity Principles
- Processes for consulting stakeholders
- Meeting procedures and standing orders
- Decision Making policy
- A process for handling conflict
- Appropriate Council structures
- Processes for asking the right questions.

An effective Council:

- Works well together
- Consults all stakeholders on significant issues
- Follows standing orders and council protocols
- Delegates appropriate tasks to smaller groups for research
- Seeks appropriate information before finalising decisions without unnecessary procrastination
- Recognises its responsibility to represent all stakeholders
- Speaks with one voice.

A good Governing Councillor should support the Governing Council by:

- Presence and punctuality, so as to ensure a quorum (ie that is one more than half the total membership) and to enable a prompt start
- Constructive thought in the framing of motions and the debate that follows
- Alert watchfulness - to ensure the Council is a truly representative body and not an instrument of a few strong personalities
- Energetic example to avoid the Council becoming apathetic and futile
- Interest in advancing the quality of education in their school
- Preparedness to ask questions about matters they do not understand and be prepared to express their point of view - even if it is an opposing point of view
- Exercising a vote on all matters, but not until they fully understand the matter being discussed
- Willingness not to disclose to anybody confidential matters raised at a Council meeting particularly relating to individual personalities - the media should be handled by the Principal or the Chairperson only.

Meetings

The Governing Council must meet **at least twice each school term**. Extraordinary meetings may be called at the discretion of the Principal or Chairperson.

Agenda

Will be the responsibility of the Chairperson (or the person to whom it is delegated) but any member of the school community may add an item via their representatives. The agenda along with the minutes of the previous meeting should be distributed to the Councillors at least two school days prior to the scheduled meeting date.