

# Barnburgh Primary Academy



## GOVERNOR VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY

VERSION	AUTHOR	SUMMARY OF CHANGES	DATE PUBLISHED	DATE OF REVIEW
1.0	JR	Updated and new format	October 2023	Annually

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1.0	12 Nov 2020	J Potts/J Reid	First Published Version due to COVID-19
2.0	22 Oct 2024	J Reid	Amended to reflect Academy conversion

## CONTEXT

- 1.1. Virtual attendance will only be used through necessity; it is not to be used as the default position for attendance unless agreed in advance by the board.
- 1.2. The board accept that, in line with Regulations, the Board members of Barnburgh Primary Academy will be able to participate and vote at full board and committee meetings virtually including, but not limited to, by telephone and Microsoft Teams, Facetime, or video and telephone conference.
- 1.3. Board meetings inc Formal proceedings, such as staff grievance and discipline, considerations of exclusion, admission or complaints or appeal hearings, may be conducted virtually provided the **Confidentiality Statement for Virtual Committee Hearings or Confidentiality Statement for Virtual Committee/Board Meetings** included as an Appendix is signed by all parties and returned to the Clerk or Chair ahead of the meeting. Where this is not possible, governors will be required to state their agreement at the start of the meeting, and this will be minuted.
- 1.4. All Governors are bound by the Governor code of conduct including confidentiality and are required to respect the Seven Principles of Public Life.

## PROTOCOL

1. For any formal hearings, the Chair must ensure that signed Confidentiality Statements are returned in advance of the meeting. Advance notice of meetings will be in line with the specific policy and guidance relating to the reason for the meeting and must include notification of a virtual meeting. All parties should be notified of the relevant Codes of Conduct in advance of the meeting.
2. The Chair will send a meeting invite via Microsoft Teams for the Governor to 'Join' at the nominated time, the meeting will be scheduled on the Academy calendar. Acceptance/Apologies must be given to the Chair no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.
3. Any recording of the meeting must be agreed by all parties at the beginning of the meeting and be minuted by the Clerk, or the recording must not take place.

4. Virtual attendance will be for the whole of the meeting not just for specific agenda items, or solely for voting purposes excluding staff members attending to deliver a presentation.
5. Camera access must be maintained at all times.
6. Please ensure you have a drink to hand and should a comfort break be required the meeting will be halted.
7. Attendees will be muted, Chair/Vice Chair will mute/unmute where appropriate.
8. Attendees wishing to comment will be required to raise an electronic hand or any agreed indicator as per the meeting application.
9. Attendees will be required to dress appropriately for meetings.
10. Attendees will be informed of the contact person and contact number for the meeting, in case of emergency, issues with connectivity etc
11. In the case of the Chair of the meeting losing connectivity, as long as the meeting remains quorate, the Headteacher or Vice-Chair will continue the meeting until the Chair can re-join.
12. Mobile phones should be muted excluding the meeting contact person.
13. Voting may be by a show of hands or by stating if they wish to vote in favour, or against, this will be recorded by the Clerk.
14. If an urgent document is to be tabled at the meeting, then the governors attending virtually will not be able to participate or vote for that agenda item unless it is possible for them to access the document electronically. Good practice guidelines for all Clerks and governing bodies will ensure that electronic folders are created **in an agreed secure platform eg** SharePoint or similar for all meetings and associated documents will be created therein, to reduce the need for emailing documents.
15. If the connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are not successful, the virtual attendees will no longer be able to participate in the meeting. The agenda will not be delayed due to a technical failure.
16. Where any of the points above render a meeting inquorate the relevant agenda item(s) will be deferred to the next meeting
17. **Any governor attending virtually will consider confidentiality and will not participate from a setting where their conversation can be overheard. They will contribute from a quiet location giving their full attention to the meeting. If a person enters the room, governors must indicate this, and the meeting will be paused.**
18. If there is no visual connection all attendees will start their comments by stating their name. Governors attending virtually will show courtesy to other members of the board and the clerk, speaking in turn and repeating comments as requested.
19. The governor attending virtually must be able to hear all discussions during the meeting clearly and **wherever possible to use suitable headphones** to ensure confidentiality.
20. Where the majority of governors are physically present the chair will be permitted to attend virtually.
21. Any meeting where the majority of governors are attending virtually will be limited to not more than 90 minutes in length.

## GUIDANCE

### Guide to joining Remote/Virtual Governing Body meetings

Microsoft Teams is an online facility by which you can conduct conference calls. You need to use

Microsoft Teams so that you can 'meet' other Governors virtually, rather than physically. Below is a guide on how to use Microsoft Teams.

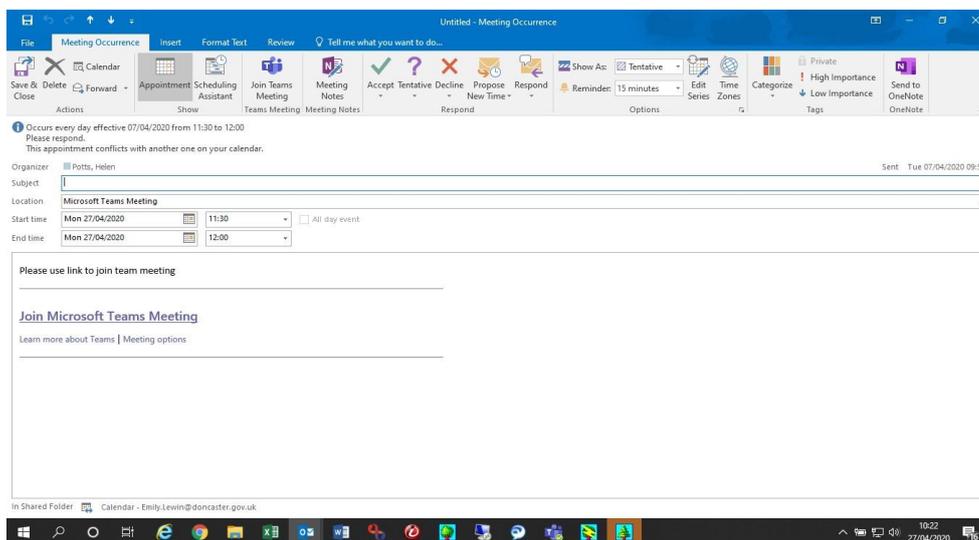
1. Download Microsoft Teams on your smartphone/laptop – Please do this a few days in advance of your first meeting

Smartphone – go to your App Store/Play Store, search for 'Microsoft Teams' and download/install the app.

Computer – Click this link <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/microsoftteams/download-app> and then click 'Download for Desktop' > 'Download Teams' > Open the file you have just downloaded > Click 'Run' > Let the app load > You do not need to log in when prompted. You not need to do anything further.

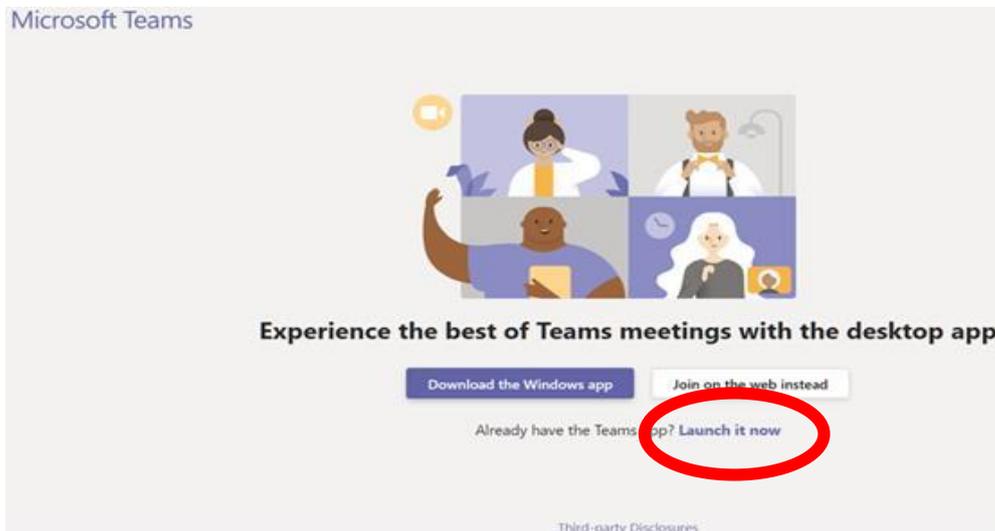
2. Wait for email inviting you to the meeting

An email will arrive which looks like this:

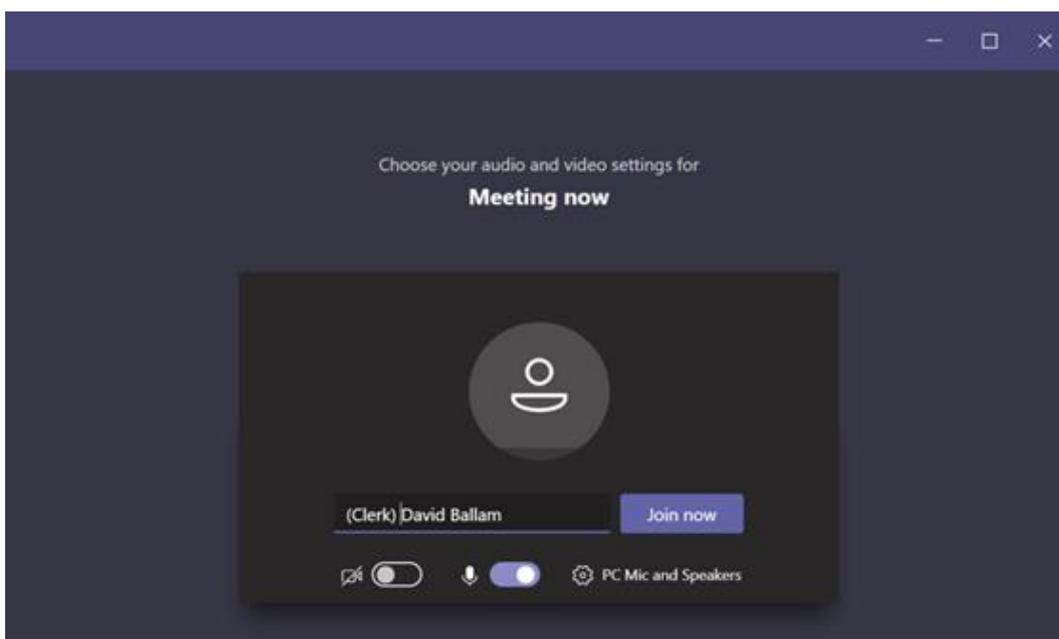


3. At least 15 minutes before the start time, click 'Join Microsoft Teams Meeting' in the email mentioned above

This screen will appear, click 'Launch it now'



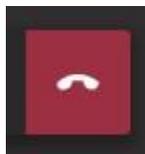
The Microsoft Teams app should then launch and you should see the below



Type your full name, however if Microsoft Teams does not allow this, use your First Name followed by your Surname initial. Select whether you would like your webcam to be on using the icon that looks like a camera, make sure your microphone icon switch is on (which will be indicated in blue, as shown in the above image, and press 'Join Now' when you are ready.

4. You will now be waiting in a virtual "Lobby". When the Clerk/host is ready to start the meeting, he or she will let you into the session.

5. You should now be in the meeting, and be able to hear and see (if they have turned their webcam on) others in the meeting.
6. At the end of the meeting, you can leave the session by clicking the red button to hang up.



## APPENDICES – CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT FOR VIRTUAL COMMITTEE HEARINGS

**For all persons participating in:**

**First Committees (Staff Disciplinary), Nominations Committees, Appeal Committees (Staff Dismissal / Permanent Exclusion)**

Any information provided and/or discussions undertaken / advice given during the course of this hearing must remain strictly confidential.

In advance of attending a committee hearing in a virtual setting, in any capacity, attendees must sign (electronically or physically) this undertaking of confidentiality, and confirm the following:

1. I am able to participate in this meeting in a state of confidentiality, situated where no other person can overhear or observe any part of proceedings unless they are formally involved in the meeting and minuted as attending.
2. I undertake to ensure that no form of electronic recording of proceedings, audio or visual, will take place, unless by prior consent of all parties and by one nominated person
3. I undertake to ensure that any physical notes I make whilst participating in the meeting, will be afterwards destroyed or (in the case of Governors) returned securely to the Academy Administration team for retention / destruction.
4. I undertake to ensure that any documentation relating to proceedings will be destroyed or (in the case of Governors) returned securely to the Academy Administration team for retention / destruction.

**I, the undersigned understand the level of confidentiality required for this hearing. I confirm my compliance with the undertaking listed above. I confirm that any information I have in relation to this hearing is retained only in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR and the policies of Barnburgh Primary Academy and/or Leger Education Trust. I also understand that the outcome can only be reported to the full Board under Part 2 confidentiality.**

Role	Name	Signature	Date of Hearing

Note: This form must be signed and returned to the Chair before the start of any formal virtual committee hearing. Failure to do so may result in a block to joining the meeting.

**APPENDICES – CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT FOR VIRTUAL COMMITTEE/ BOARD MEETINGS**

**For all persons participating**

Any information provided and/or discussions undertaken / advice given during the course of this meeting must remain strictly confidential.

In advance of attending a meeting in a virtual setting, in any capacity, attendees must sign (electronically or physically) this undertaking of confidentiality, and confirm the following:

1. I am able to participate in this meeting in a state of confidentiality, situated where no other person can overhear or observe any part of proceedings unless they are formally involved in the meeting and minuted as attending.
2. I undertake to ensure that no form of electronic recording of proceedings, audio or visual, will take place, unless by prior consent of all parties and by one nominated person
3. I undertake to ensure that any physical notes I make whilst participating in the meeting, will be afterwards destroyed or (in the case of Governors) returned securely to the Academy Administration team for retention / destruction.
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**I, the undersigned understand the level of confidentiality required for this meeting. I confirm my compliance with the undertaking listed above. I confirm that any information I have in relation to this meeting is retained only in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR and the policies of Barnburgh Primary Academy and/or Leger Education Trust. I also understand that the outcome can only be reported to the full Board under Part 2 confidentiality.**

Role	Name	Signature	Date of Meeting

Note: This form must be signed and returned to the Chair before the start of any formal virtual meeting. Failure to do so may result in a block to joining the meeting.