The Local Committee Parent Member Election Process

(Rules and Procedures)

September 2026

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Note: Throughout this document, the term "parent" includes step parent, foster parents, grandparents, guardians and carers with parental responsibility, as well as the child's natural parents.

A copy of this process will be made clearly available on the Trust website at all times.

General

1) A parent local committee member election has two stages:

Stage 1: Notice of Election

> All parents are advised of the parent local committee member vacancy or vacancies and asked to nominate themselves for the position(s), should they wish, and provide a brief personal statement. If the number of candidates does not exceed the number of vacancies, there is no need for a ballot to take place and the candidate(s) can apply for the local committee role unopposed.

Stage 2: Notice of Ballot

> If the number of candidates nominated exceeds the number of vacancies, a Notice of Ballot is sent to parents asking them to vote in a ballot. The Notice of Ballot will include the names and personal statements of all candidates.

2) The Trust will make every reasonable effort to fill parent local committee member vacancies through parent ballots.

3) In liaison with the Headteacher, the Head of Governance is responsible for supervising the whole election process and shall act as the Returning Officer.

4) The election will normally be held at any time a vacancy occurs or at the beginning of the autumn term but may be held at any time as required.

5) Any parent who has a child registered at the school on the first day of the election can stand for election and vote in the ballot. Throughout this document, the term "parent" includes foster parents, guardians and carers with parental responsibility, as well as the child's natural parents.

6) The Trust will make every reasonable effort to give adequate notice to parents of how and when they can nominate themselves for election, and how and when they can vote in a ballot.

7) A person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent local committee member if they do not meet the 'Eligibility - Qualifications and Disqualifications' criteria (see Appendix 1).

8) The term of office for a parent local committee member is 4 years. The period of office begins once an applicant has passed safeguarding checks, compliance tasks and has been appointed by the Trust Board.

9) Parent local committee members may continue to serve out their term of office when their child leaves the school, if they so wish.

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Timeline for Parent Local Committee Member Elections

Approximate timeline (to be agreed between Headteacher and Head of Governance)

Stage 1

Day 1 Notice of Election (inc. call for nominations)
Day 7 Closing date for nominations

If there are more nominations than vacancies, go to Stage 2

Stage 2

Day 8 Notice of Ballot (inc. call for votes)
Day 15 Closing date for voting.
Day 22 Circulation of election results

(Not including Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays and if possible avoiding school holidays)

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Stage 1: Notice of Election

1) The Notice of Election, stating the number of vacancies and inviting nominations, will be emailed to parents at least 7 school days before the nomination closing date.

2) The Notice of Election will be given electronically (via email).
The email Notice of Election will include instructions on how to self-nominate using the online self-nomination form, brief details of the procedures, the timetable for the election, a copy of 'Eligibility – Disqualifications and Qualifications', and a hyperlink to find these Rules and Procedures on the Trust website.

Nominations for Election

1) Nominations are made online and need to be completed by the closing time and date stated in the Notice of Election. Late nominations will be excluded from the election. The Trust is partnering with Choice Voting, a specialist platform for school elections.
2) A proposer and a seconder are **not** required. A nomination must be completed by the candidate.
3) Nominations must include a brief personal statement of no more than 300 words, giving any relevant information as the candidate wishes. Candidates should be aware that personal statements are not confidential and will be visible to all parents in the event of a ballot.
4) The Trust may, at their absolute discretion, exclude material from a personal statement if they deem it inappropriate or for reasons of data protection or indeed exclude nominations.

Should the school not have an email address for a pupil's parents all reasonable efforts will be made to provide the Notice of Election by paper letter and nominations can be submitted in paper format to the school office. However email addresses cannot be added to elections, once the process has begun.

Uncontested Election

If the number of candidate nominations does not exceed the number of vacancies, there is no need for a ballot to take place and the candidate(s) can apply for the role unopposed.

The parents and wider school community will be notified within one week.

Stage 2: Notice of Ballot (in the case of a contested election)

1) If the number of candidate nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, a Notice of Ballot will be sent to parents within one week of the closing date for nominations.
2) The Notice of Ballot will be sent electronically (via email).
The email Notice of Ballot will provide a hyperlink to Choice Voting online platform which will state the number of vacancies, the names and personal statements of the nominated candidates, the deadline for voting, brief details of the procedures, and provide a hyperlink to vote using the online voting form.

Should the school not have an email address for a pupil's parents all reasonable efforts will be made to provide the Notice of Ballot in paper form. However email addresses cannot be added to elections, once the process has begun.

Issue of Ballot Papers and Voting

1) The preferred method of ballot will be online.
2) Each parent will be sent instructions with a link to the online voting form, using the parents' email addresses held by the school.
3) The names of the candidates will be clearly stated, in random order.
4) Parents will have an equal number of votes to vacancies i.e., one vacancy allows one vote and two vacancies allows two votes.
5) Each parent has one vote for each vacancy to be filled, irrespective of the number of children they have at the school; no parent can cast more than one vote for any one candidate.
6) For the avoidance of doubt, where a child has two registered parents both are eligible to vote (e.g., the mother and the father of a child each have one vote for each vacancy).
7) A period of not less than 5 school days will be allowed for the completion of online voting.
8) The Trust has chosen to partner with Choice Voting to ensure online voting is secure and anonymous.
9) For those parents who can't vote online, the school will make a paper-based system available for voting in person at the school. In this case parent's votes will be anonymous, but the names of who has voted will be recorded to allow the detection of double-voting via on-line and in person (if this happens, the person's paper vote will be discounted).
10) Choice Voting keeps a record of the return of the online votes and ballot papers.

Secrecy of the Ballot

All persons concerned in the administration of the ballot will maintain the secrecy of the ballot and will not disclose details of how individual parents have voted.

Counting of Votes

1) Should any paper votes be used, they will be kept secret and held in a secure place until the closure of the online ballot.

2) The headteacher will supervise the counting of any paper votes received and may appoint colleagues to assist.
3) The headteacher will decide upon the admissibility of any questionable paper votes.
4) Upon closure of the ballot, the Head of Governance will liaise with the headteacher to satisfy themselves as to the integrity of the final vote count.
5) The candidate(s) with the highest number(s) of votes will be declared to be elected i.e. the decision will be by a simple majority of the votes cast.
6) In the highly unlikely event of equality of votes, the headteacher, will decide the result.

Publication of the Results

1) At the earliest opportunity after the count, the Head of Governance in liaison with the Headteacher will inform the winning candidate(s), the losing candidate(s) and the chair of local committee.
2) Any paper files concerning the election will be kept in a safe place by the headteacher for a period of one month after the election.
3) The winning candidate(s) will then be required to complete an online application and undergo an enhanced DBS check and provide two references.
4) Upon receipt of a complete application, the candidate will be reviewed by the Trust Board for appointment.
5) Once appointed the results of the election will be shared via email to parents and on the school website.

Resignation and Termination of Office

Where a parent local committee member resigns during the term of office, an election will normally be held within twenty five school days of that resignation or, where the resignation occurs within twenty five school days prior to the end of a school term, within twenty five school days following the beginning of the next term.
Any local committee member elected to take the place of another local committee member who has resigned early is elected for a full term of office.

Publication of Rules

1) A copy of these Rules and Procedures will be published on the Trust website.
2) Parents will be informed in the Notice of Election where to find these Rules and Procedures.

Interpretation and Rulings

Any matter relating to the election of parent local committee members not covered in these procedures and rules will be decided by the Head of Governance with reference, to the Chair of the Trust Board. If there is a breach of these procedures and rules in conducting the election, the Head of Governance will decide, in conjunction with the headteacher, if the overall integrity and fairness of the process is compromised and whether the result should stand.

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Appendix 1: Eligibility - Qualifications and Disqualifications

Regulation requires that all local committee members have to be eligible and the criteria is listed below. You must read, understand and confirm your eligibility before becoming a local committee member.

Qualifications and disqualifications to serve as a Local Committee Parent Member:

- A person must be aged 18 or over at the date of their election or appointment.
- No current pupil of the school, or of any school in the Good Shepherd Trust, shall be a local committee member.
- A local committee member must not also be a clerk (local governance professional) to the local committee at which they are a local committee member.
- A parent/carer cannot stand for election if they work at the school for more than 500 hours in a twelve-month period.
- A person cannot hold more than one local committee member post at the same school at the same time.
- A person shall be disqualified from holding office or continuing to hold office as a local committee member if:
- s/he becomes incapable by reason of illness or injury of managing or administering his/her own affairs;
- s/he is absent without the permission of the local committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months, and the Trust board resolve that his/her office be vacated;
- s/he has been declared bankrupt and/or his estate has been seized from his/her possession for the benefit of his creditors and the declaration or seizure has not been discharged, annulled or reduced; or
- s/he is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order;
- s/he is subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; or
- s/he is subject to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order);
- s/he ceases to be a trustee/governor by virtue of any provision in the Companies Act 2006;
- s/he is disqualified from acting as a trustee/governor by virtue of section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); or
- s/he is otherwise found to be unsuitable by the Secretary of State;
- s/he has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which (s)he was responsible; or to which (s)he was privy; or which (s)he, by his/her conduct, contributed to or facilitated;
- s/he has, at any time, been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of any offence which falls under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011;
- -s/he has not completed an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (organised by the Trust shortly after someone joins as a local committee member.
- Any other reason the Trust Board deems appropriate.