Buckland Primary School
Alternative Participation in Meetings 2026-27

The Governing Board expects governors to be present at all meetings. Where this is not possible, members of the governing board of Buckland Primary School are able to participate and vote virtually at full governing board and committee meetings. Virtual participation includes, but is not limited to, telephone, MS Teams and video conference.

Alternative Participation Protocol

- A maximum of two governors may attend virtually for any single meeting.
  Note: In the event of an emergency such as Covid-19, where the majority or all governors are unable to attend a face-to-face-meeting an exception may be made.
- Notice of virtual participation must be given to the Clerk to the Governing Board by the governor who wishes to participate virtually, no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting, and the reason for their non-attendance in person.
- Virtual participation must only be requested through absolute necessity. It must not be utilised for convenience.
- It is the responsibility of individual governors, wishing to participate virtually, to ensure they are able to do so through a secure method in an environment conducive to confidential and private communication. **Anyone participating in a meeting using technology must declare that they are in an environment which is secure, and which protects confidentiality.**
- Virtual participation must be for the entire meeting and not just for specific agenda items or solely for voting purposes.
- It is the responsibility of those participating virtually to ensure they have a reliable connection.
- If the communication connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are unsuccessful virtual participation will no longer be possible and the agenda will not be delayed. The clerk will note the time that the connection was lost.
- Ensuring quorate meetings is the responsibility of the clerk who will monitor this throughout any meeting involving virtual participation and advise the board if a meeting becomes inquorate.
- If there is to be a vote, governors must have relevant documents seven days prior to the meeting.
- If there is to be a vote, by secret ballot, governors participating virtually will ***not*** be able to vote.
- Where there is no visual connection all meeting participants will always start their comments by stating their name.
- If there is no visual connection the outcome of any vote taken through a show of hands will be communicated to the individual attending virtually. The virtual attendee will need to cast their vote by stating if they wish to vote in favour or against.
- The chair and headteacher will always attend the meeting in person.
- The clerk will always attend the meeting in person.

  Note: In the event of an emergency such as Covid-19, an exception would be made for the chair, headteacher and clerk to also participate virtually.

This protocol does not apply to any formal hearings e.g. pupil exclusion, parental complaint, where all panel members must be physically present.

The Governing Board of Buckland Primary School reviewed the Alternative Participation Protocol:
September 2026