Terms of Reference

People and Development Committee

Forest Edge Federation Governing Board

Academic year	2026/27
Approved by the Governing Board	05/10/2026
Chair of Committee	Dr Marion Evans
Review date	September 2027

1. Status and authority

1. The People and Development Committee is a committee of the Governing Board of Forest Edge Federation
2. The committee has authority to undertake the functions and make decisions specifically delegated to it by the Governing Board through these Terms of Reference and the Governing Board's Scheme of Delegation.
3. The Governing Board retains overall accountability for the strategic leadership and governance of the school. The delegation of responsibilities to this committee does not remove that accountability.

The committee will:

- act only within the powers delegated to it;
- comply with the Governing Board's code of conduct, standing orders, financial procedures and agreed policies;
- operate in accordance with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, local authority requirements and the school's instrument of government;
- liaise with other committees and link governors where responsibilities overlap;
- report its decisions, recommendations, risks and areas of concern to the Governing Board; and
- refer any matter outside its delegated authority to the Governing Board.

In conducting all its business, the committee will consider:

- safeguarding and safer working practice;
- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- the needs of pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups;
- staff wellbeing and workload;
- financial sustainability;
- confidentiality and data protection;
- the school's values, ethos and strategic priorities; and
- the impact of decisions on pupils' outcomes and life opportunities.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the People and Development Committee is to provide strategic oversight, support and challenge in relation to the school's people, culture and organisational development.

The committee will seek assurance that:

- the school has the leadership capacity and appropriately skilled workforce required to deliver its vision and School Development Plan;
- recruitment, deployment, retention and succession planning support high-quality education and improved outcomes for all pupils;
- staff are supported, developed and held to account through fair and effective appraisal processes;

- pay decisions are lawful, fair, affordable, evidence-based and consistent with the school's Pay Policy;
- staff wellbeing, workload, attendance, engagement and professional development are monitored effectively;
- safeguarding and safer recruitment expectations are consistently met;
- employment policies and procedures are lawful, fair and applied consistently;
- equality and inclusion are embedded in employment practice and organisational culture; and
- communication with staff, parents, carers and the wider community is clear, accessible and effective.

3. Membership

4. The committee will consist of a minimum of three governors, including the Executive Headteacher.
5. The membership of the committee will be determined by the Governing Board at its first meeting of the academic year.
6. The Governing Board will appoint the Chair of the committee. The Chair should not be a member of school staff.
7. In the absence of the appointed Chair, the committee will elect a governor member to chair that meeting.

The committee may invite:

- members of the senior leadership team;
- the school business manager;
- the SENDCo or designated safeguarding lead;
- human resources advisers;
- representatives of the local authority or diocese;
- staff representatives; or
- other professional advisers

Invited attendees may attend all or part of a meeting where their expertise is required. They will not have voting rights.

8. Associate members may be appointed to the committee by the Governing Board. Any voting rights given to associate members must be explicitly agreed and recorded by the Governing Board.
9. Associate members may not vote on matters from which they are legally excluded.
10. The Governance Professional or Clerk to the Governing Board will normally act as Clerk to the committee.

Committee membership should be reviewed annually to ensure that the committee collectively possesses, or can access, appropriate knowledge of:

- school leadership and governance;
- human resources and employment practice;
- finance and workforce planning;
- safeguarding and safer recruitment;
- equality and inclusion;
- staff development and organisational improvement; and
- primary education.

4. Quorum and voting

11. The quorum will be three governor members or half of the current governor membership of the committee, rounded up to the nearest whole number, whichever is greater.
12. The Executive Headteacher's attendance will not be required for the committee to be quorate, provided that the minimum number of eligible governors is present.
13. Only governors and associate members who have been granted voting rights by the Governing Board may vote.
14. No vote may be taken where associate members outnumber governors.
15. Decisions will be made by a majority of eligible members present and voting.
16. Each eligible member will have one vote.

17. If votes are equally divided, the Chair of the meeting will have a second or casting vote, provided that the Chair is eligible to vote on that matter.
18. Decisions may only be made when the meeting is quorate.
19. Committee decisions taken under delegated authority must be clearly distinguished in the minutes from recommendations requiring Governing Board approval.

5. Meetings

20. The committee will meet at least once in each long term, normally three times during the academic year, and more frequently when required.
21. The annual schedule of meetings will be agreed at the beginning of the academic year.

Additional meetings may be called by:

- the Chair of the committee;
- the Chair of the Governing Board; or
- any two members of the committee.

22. Meetings may be held in person, remotely or through a hybrid arrangement, subject to the Governing Board's standing orders.
23. The agenda, supporting papers and previous minutes should normally be circulated at least seven calendar days before the meeting.
24. Late or urgent items may be considered at the discretion of the Chair, provided that committee members have sufficient information to make an informed decision.

The committee will receive information in a form that enables governors to identify:

- significant workforce trends;
- progress against strategic priorities;
- emerging risks;
- financial implications;
- equality and safeguarding considerations;
- the impact of actions taken; and
- matters requiring escalation to the Governing Board.

6. Minutes and reporting

Minutes will record:

- the date, time and format of the meeting;
- the names of those present and absent;
- declarations of interest;
- the principal points discussed;
- questions and challenges raised by governors;
- the evidence and assurances received;
- decisions made under delegated authority;
- recommendations to the Governing Board;
- actions, responsible persons and timescales; and
- any confidential items.

25. Draft minutes will be shared with the Chair of the committee as soon as reasonably practicable after the meeting.
26. Approved or draft minutes, as appropriate, will be made available to all governors before the next Governing Board meeting.

The Chair of the committee will report to the Governing Board on:

- decisions taken;
- recommendations requiring approval;
- progress against strategic priorities;
- significant risks or concerns;
- matters that could affect the school's finances or reputation; and
- areas in which further assurance is required.

27. Confidential minutes and papers will be handled in accordance with data protection requirements and the Governing Board's confidentiality arrangements.
28. Where the Governance Professional is unable to attend, the committee will appoint a suitably competent person to clerk the meeting. The Executive Headteacher may not act as Clerk.

7. Responsibilities of the committee

7.1 Strategic workforce planning

The committee will:

- scrutinise the school's current and projected staffing structure;
- ensure staffing arrangements support the school's vision, curriculum and development priorities;
- consider staff-to-pupil ratios, leadership capacity, areas of specialist expertise and operational resilience;
- evaluate whether staffing is affordable and sustainable;
- monitor recruitment, retention and turnover;
- oversee succession and continuity planning for key roles;
- consider the workforce implications of changes in pupil numbers, funding, curriculum provision or identified pupil need;
- consider the effective deployment of teachers, teaching assistants and support staff;
- seek assurance that deployment promotes pupil independence and improved outcomes;
- work with the Finance Committee when proposed staffing changes have budgetary implications; and
- recommend significant changes to the staffing structure to the Governing Board where these have not been delegated to the committee.

7.2 Recruitment and safer recruitment

The committee will:

- oversee fair, transparent and effective recruitment arrangements;
- ensure recruitment procedures comply with safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements;
- monitor whether recruitment practices promote equality and widen access to employment opportunities;
- ensure appropriate governors have completed safer recruitment training;
- seek assurance that all required pre-employment checks have been completed;
- oversee arrangements for recruiting senior leaders where authority has been delegated by the Governing Board;
- ensure recruitment decisions remain the responsibility of properly constituted appointment panels;
- monitor the effectiveness of staff induction, probation and support for employees new to the school; and
- periodically review recruitment outcomes, including recruitment difficulties and retention risks.

The committee will not routinely receive identifiable information from the Single Central Record. It will receive appropriate assurance that the record is complete, accurate and regularly checked.

7.3 Performance management and appraisal

The committee will:

- recommend the Staff Appraisal Policy to the Governing Board;
- monitor the implementation and effectiveness of appraisal arrangements;
- seek assurance that objectives are fair, measurable and aligned with school improvement priorities;
- ensure appraisal supports professional growth, accountability and improved pupil outcomes;
- monitor whether staff who require additional support receive appropriate objectives, guidance and development;
- oversee the arrangements for the Executive Headteacher's appraisal;
- recommend suitable external advice for the Executive Headteacher's appraisal process;
- appoint an appropriate governor panel to undertake the Executive Headteacher's appraisal;
- ensure that Executive Headteacher objectives reflect the school's strategic priorities; and
- receive an appropriately anonymised overview of appraisal completion and impact.

Governors involved in the Executive Headteacher's appraisal must maintain confidentiality and report only the information necessary to provide assurance to the Governing Board.

7.4 Pay and conditions

The committee will:

- review and recommend the school's Pay Policy;
- ensure the policy reflects relevant statutory requirements and locally adopted arrangements;
- oversee the fair and consistent application of the Pay Policy;
- consider recommendations relating to pay progression where this function has been delegated;
- ensure pay decisions are supported by appropriate evidence;
- monitor the equality impact and consistency of pay decisions;
- consider affordability in consultation with the Finance Committee;
- ensure employees are informed of decisions affecting their pay;
- ensure appropriate appeal arrangements are in place; and
- maintain confidentiality in relation to individual pay matters.

No person may participate in a decision concerning their own pay. A person who has participated in the original pay decision must not serve on any appeal panel considering that decision.

7.5 Professional learning and leadership development

The committee will:

- oversee the school's strategy for continuing professional development;
- monitor whether professional development is linked to identified pupil needs, staff needs and school priorities;
- seek assurance that staff have the knowledge and expertise required to deliver the curriculum;
- monitor the development of subject and phase leadership;
- scrutinise professional development for teachers, teaching assistants and support staff;
- monitor access to statutory and mandatory training;
- seek assurance that early career teachers and staff new to leadership receive appropriate support;
- evaluate the impact of significant professional development expenditure;
- monitor talent development and succession planning; and
- promote a culture of reflection, professional learning, collaboration and ambition.

7.6 Staff wellbeing, workload and attendance

The committee will:

- monitor staff wellbeing, morale, workload and engagement;
- scrutinise anonymised workforce information, including absence, turnover, vacancies and exit information;

- seek assurance that staff absence is managed consistently and sensitively;
- monitor the impact of staff absence on pupils, colleagues and school operations;
- ensure appropriate occupational health and employee support arrangements are available;
- consider relevant findings from staff surveys and consultations;
- monitor actions taken to reduce unnecessary workload;
- consider the impact of organisational change on staff wellbeing;
- oversee the school's approach to preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination; and
- ensure wellbeing initiatives address causes and risks rather than relying solely on individual resilience.

Individual cases will only be considered by the committee where this is permitted by policy and does not compromise the independence of a future panel.

7.7 Equality, diversity and inclusion

The committee will:

- promote an inclusive organisational culture in which all staff are treated with dignity and respect;
- ensure employment policies and practices comply with equality duties;
- consider equality implications when scrutinising recruitment, pay, promotion, professional development, attendance and disciplinary data;
- seek assurance that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled employees;
- monitor actions designed to address any identified inequality or under-representation;
- ensure the school's values are reflected in its employment practices; and
- report significant equality risks or concerns to the Governing Board.

7.8 Employee relations

The committee will:

- oversee policies relating to staff conduct, grievance, capability, attendance and employment;
- seek assurance that policies are applied fairly, consistently and promptly;
- monitor patterns and themes arising from employee relations cases without becoming involved in operational management;
- ensure that appropriate professional human resources advice is obtained;
- oversee consultation arrangements for significant workforce changes;
- seek assurance that staff and recognised trade unions are consulted where required; and
- monitor the organisational learning arising from complaints, grievances, exit interviews and employment cases.

The committee will not investigate or determine individual employee cases unless formally convened as a separate panel under the relevant policy.

7.9 Safeguarding and safer working culture

The committee will:

- consider safeguarding implications in all workforce decisions;
- seek assurance that staff and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training;
- oversee policies relating to staff conduct, allegations, concerns and safer working practice;
- seek assurance that low-level concerns are managed in accordance with agreed procedures;
- ensure safeguarding responsibilities are reflected in job descriptions, induction, appraisal and professional development;
- monitor whether staff understand how to report concerns;
- seek assurance that allegations against staff are managed appropriately; and
- liaise with the Safeguarding Governor and any other relevant committee.

Operational oversight of individual safeguarding cases remains with the Executive Headteacher, designated safeguarding lead and relevant statutory agencies.

7.10 Communication and engagement

The committee will:

- oversee the school's strategic approach to internal and external communication;
- monitor the quality, accessibility, consistency and timeliness of communications;
- seek assurance that staff understand the school's strategic priorities and key policies;
- review feedback from staff, parents, carers and the wider community;
- promote constructive engagement with parents and carers;
- consider whether communication is accessible to families with different needs;
- oversee the communication and consultation arrangements for significant organisational changes;
- ensure complaints, concerns and feedback are used to support improvement; and
- monitor the school's reputation and relationships with its community.

7.11 Organisational culture and values

The committee will:

- monitor how effectively the school's vision and values are reflected in leadership and employment practice;
- promote a culture of high expectations, professional trust and collective responsibility;
- ensure leaders model ethical, inclusive and respectful behaviour;
- seek assurance that staff feel able to raise concerns and offer constructive challenge;
- monitor the effectiveness of staff voice and engagement;
- consider the culture revealed through surveys, absence patterns, complaints, grievances and staff turnover; and
- support the Governing Board in creating a positive culture focused on excellent outcomes and improved life opportunities for all pupils.

7.12 Policies

The committee will:

- review policies delegated to it in accordance with the policy schedule;
- monitor the implementation and impact of those policies;
- ensure appropriate staff and professional consultation has taken place;
- identify safeguarding, equality, financial and workload implications;
- approve policies where authority has been delegated; and
- recommend policies to the Governing Board where full-board approval is required.

8. Delegated authority

Subject to the Governing Board's Scheme of Delegation, the committee may:

- approve policies specifically delegated to it;
- approve routine changes to the staffing structure within an agreed budget;
- approve workforce development priorities and associated expenditure within its delegated financial limit;
- make pay decisions where this authority has been delegated;
- establish working groups and recommend the membership of formal panels;
- commission appropriate professional advice within the agreed budget; and
- require reports and assurances from school leaders concerning matters within its remit.

The committee must refer to the Governing Board:

- any proposed action outside the approved budget;
- significant changes to the senior leadership structure;
- matters presenting a substantial financial, legal, safeguarding or reputational risk;
- proposals for redundancy or significant restructuring, unless specific authority has been delegated;
- changes to the Executive Headteacher's pay range;
- policies reserved for approval by the Governing Board;
- matters affecting the school's instrument of government or governance structure; and
- any matter which the committee believes requires full-board consideration.

In an urgent situation, the Chair of the Governing Board may exercise only those powers available under the Governing Board's approved arrangements and applicable regulations. Urgency should not be used to avoid appropriate committee or board scrutiny.

9. Matters excluded from the committee's general business

To protect impartiality and the rights of employees, the committee will not routinely consider the detail of individual:

- disciplinary cases;
- grievance cases;
- capability procedures;
- sickness absence cases;
- pay appeals;
- complaints against staff;
- safeguarding allegations;
- redundancy selections; or
- employment appeals.

Such matters will be considered by separately constituted first-stage or appeal panels in accordance with the relevant policy. Governors who may be required to sit on a later panel should not be given unnecessary details of an individual case beforehand.

10. Panels

29. The Governing Board or committee may establish panels as required by the relevant policy and Scheme of Delegation.

Panels may include:

- staff disciplinary panels;
- grievance panels;
- capability panels;
- pay panels;
- pay appeal panels;
- redundancy or dismissal panels; and
- appeal panels.

Panel members must:

- have no conflict of interest;
- have had no prior involvement that could compromise impartiality;
- possess appropriate knowledge or undertake relevant training;
- respect confidentiality; and
- act in accordance with the relevant policy and professional advice.

30. A governor who sits on the original decision-making panel must not sit on the appeal panel for the same matter.
31. The Executive Headteacher will not serve as a governor member of a panel reviewing or appealing a decision made by the Executive Headteacher.

11. Information and monitoring

The committee will normally receive an anonymised and proportionate workforce report covering:

- staffing establishment and vacancies;
- recruitment and retention;
- staff turnover;
- staff absence and attendance trends;
- appraisal completion;
- professional development;
- mandatory training;
- staff wellbeing and workload;
- employee relations themes;
- equality considerations;
- use and deployment of teaching assistants and support staff;
- progress against workforce priorities;
- workforce expenditure and budget implications; and
- key risks and planned actions.

Data must be sufficiently detailed to support effective challenge while protecting personal information and confidentiality. The committee will focus on patterns, risks, actions and impact rather than the operational management of individual employees.

12. Conflicts of interest and confidentiality

32. Members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest at the beginning of each meeting and whenever a relevant matter arises.

The Chair will determine, with advice from the Governance Professional where necessary, whether the member:

- may remain and participate;
- may remain but not vote;
- may provide relevant information and then withdraw; or
- must withdraw for the whole item.

A member must not participate in decisions concerning:

- their own pay or employment;
- the pay or employment of a close relative;
- a complaint or case in which they have been directly involved; or
- any matter where their impartiality could reasonably be questioned.

33. Confidential papers and discussions must not be disclosed outside authorised governance arrangements.
34. Confidential information must be stored and disposed of securely.

13. Relationship with other committees

The committee will work collaboratively with other committees and link governors.

Finance Committee

The People and Development Committee will consult the Finance Committee on:

- staffing budgets;
- pay awards;
- restructuring costs;
- redundancy liabilities;
- professional development expenditure; and
- long-term workforce affordability.

Curriculum and Standards Committee

The committee will exchange information concerning:

- staff expertise and subject knowledge;
- deployment of teachers and teaching assistants;
- professional development priorities;
- leadership capacity;
- curriculum implementation; and
- the workforce implications of provision for pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding Governor or Committee

The committee will liaise on:

- safer recruitment;
- staff safeguarding training;
- allegations and low-level concerns;
- safer working practice;
- staff conduct; and
- safeguarding culture.

Committee Chairs should communicate between meetings when an issue affects more than one committee.

14. Committee effectiveness

The committee will review its effectiveness annually. This will include consideration of:

- attendance and participation;
- the quality and timeliness of information;
- the level of support and challenge provided;
- completion of agreed actions;
- the impact of committee decisions;
- members' knowledge and development needs;
- the effectiveness of reporting to the Governing Board;
- whether the committee's remit remains appropriate; and
- whether the committee has sufficient time and capacity to fulfil its responsibilities.

The Chair will identify any training or development needs and report these to the Governing Board.

15. Review of the Terms of Reference

35. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the committee.
36. Any proposed amendments will be recommended to the Governing Board.
37. The Terms of Reference will take effect only when approved by the Governing Board.

38. Where a conflict exists between these Terms of Reference and the Governing Board's Scheme of Delegation or standing orders, the matter must be referred to the Governance Professional and Chair of the Governing Board for resolution.

Appendix 1: Suggested delegated policies

The Governing Board should confirm the final list annually. Suggested policies include:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Appraisal and Capability
- Pay
- Safer Recruitment
- Staff Disciplinary
- Staff Grievance
- Staff Attendance or Managing Sickness Absence
- Leave of Absence and Special Leave
- Flexible Working
- Whistleblowing
- Staff Wellbeing
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Dignity at Work
- Staff Induction
- Early Career Teacher Induction
- Professional Development
- Redundancy and Restructure
- Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Low-Level Concerns
- Safer Working Practice
- Data Protection and Staff Confidentiality
- Gifts, Hospitality and Bribery
- Communications
- Managing Abusive, Persistent or Vexatious Behaviour
- Educational Visits, if allocated to this committee
- Intimate Care, if allocated to this committee

Safeguarding and other statutory policies may be reviewed by the committee, but final approval should remain with the Governing Board where required by law, statutory guidance or the board's Scheme of Delegation.

Appendix 2: Suggested annual work programme

Autumn term

- Confirm membership, Chair, quorum and meeting dates
- Review Terms of Reference
- Review committee skills and training needs
- Consider workforce priorities within the School Development Plan
- Review staffing structure and workforce budget
- Receive recruitment, retention and absence information
- Review appraisal arrangements and completion
- Review professional development priorities

- Consider staff survey or staff voice findings
- Review scheduled policies

Spring term

- Monitor progress against workforce priorities
- Review staffing projections for the following academic year
- Receive an update on staff wellbeing, workload and attendance
- Review the impact of professional development
- Consider leadership and succession planning
- Review recruitment and retention risks
- Monitor communication and engagement priorities
- Review scheduled policies

Summer term

- Review the effectiveness of the staffing structure
- Consider workforce requirements for the next academic year
- Review professional development impact and future priorities
- Receive an annual equality and workforce overview
- Review committee effectiveness
- Recommend changes to the Terms of Reference
- Agree priorities for the next academic year
- Review scheduled policies

Approval

These Terms of Reference were approved by the Governing Board of [Name of Primary School].

Chair of Governing Board: ___Marion Evans_____

Signature: _____

Date: _5/10/2026_____

Chair of People and Development Committee: ___Marion Evans_____

Signature: _____

Next review date: ___September 2027_____