



Virtual Meetings Policy

**Diocese of Coventry
Multi Academy Trust**

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Virtual Meetings Policy

Version	Date	Author	Changes
V1.0	April 2020	Louise Beale	Initial Issue

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy sets out the requirements for Virtual Attendance or Virtual Meetings where Face to Face attendance may not be possible.
- 1.2. These arrangements apply to meetings of the Multi Academy Trust Board and its committees, including Local Governing Bodies.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. A **Face to Face Meeting** is a meeting where the majority of attendees are physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda.
- 2.2. **Virtual Attendance** at a meeting is where an attendee is not physically present at the location listed on the meeting agenda but participates or votes as a **Virtual Attendee** at a meeting through virtual means including but not limited to telephone or video conference.
- 2.3. A **Virtual Meeting** is a meeting where the majority of attendees are not present at the same physical location and participate or vote at a meeting through **Virtual Attendance**.

3. SCHEDULING OF FACE TO FACE AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- 3.1. Statutory meetings such as Board meetings and Full Governing body meetings will normally be Face to Face meetings, except in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2. Additional or extraordinary meetings and committee meetings can take place as Virtual Meetings (as long as quorate).

4. VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE AT FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

- 4.1. Where an attendee wishes to attend a Face to Face Meeting through Virtual Attendance, the Chair and Clerk must be notified when possible at least 2 working days in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible.
- 4.2. At the start of a Face to Face meeting, an attendee who is participating by Virtual Attendance will be asked their reasons for not physically attending the meeting.
- 4.3. A Face to Face meeting must be chaired by an attendee who is physically present at the physical location listed in the meeting agenda.
- 4.4. An attendees Virtual Attendance may be subject to the approval of the meeting at the beginning of the meeting, however approval must not be withheld without good reason. Where approval is withheld, the reason for this must be minuted and the

Virtual Attendee informed immediately.

- 4.5. A Virtual Attendee will be entitled to a vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the Virtual Attendee sharing their vote verbally with the Clerk). Where facilitation is not possible, the Virtual Attendee will be asked to vote publicly or abstain.
- 4.6. Virtual Attendees will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.
- 4.7. If, after all reasonable effort, it does not prove possible for a Virtual Attendee to participate the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

5. VIRTUAL MEETINGS

- 5.1. When a Virtual Meeting is taking place, all reasonable efforts must be made to enable all attendees to access the meeting through Virtual Attendance.
- 5.2. When a virtual meeting is taking place, the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered must be circulated in the advance of the meeting at the normal required timescales, except where the Chair has exercised their right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.
- 5.3. Virtual Meetings must be quorate. If the technological link to an attendee is lost they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.
- 5.4. Virtual Attendees will be entitled to a vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (see 4.5).
- 5.5. Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as Face to Face meetings with either the Clerk or another Virtual Attendee taking the minutes which will be provided for approval at the next meeting or by virtual means in exceptional circumstances.