

## **Annex A: Key principles when conducting meetings via the use of remote access**

### **Things to consider**

Headteachers and governing boards may advise the parent or pupil (if they are over 18 years old), within their written notification, to consider the following, before requesting a remote access meeting:

- the technology that will be used for the governing board or IRP
- Do the parent or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) have an appropriate space free from other distractions to enable them to participate fully with a remote access meeting
- Where the parent or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) have limited access to the Internet, intermittent service or slower speed internet, they should not request a remote meeting for a governing board or IRP
- Where the parent or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) initially ask for a meeting to be held via the use of remote access then decide to withdraw the request, they should inform the governing board or arranging authority without delay. The governing board or arranging authority should without delay, arrange the meeting to be held face to face.

It is important to note that headteachers and governing boards should not place undue pressure on the parent or excluded pupil (if they are over 18 years old) to request a meeting to be held via the use of remote access, even if doing so means that they will arrange a meeting any sooner.

### **Running the meeting via the use of remote access**

To ensure the meeting is capable of being held fairly and transparently, the governing board or arranging authority for IRPs should make every effort to check all participants understand the proceedings and be made aware of how to raise any issues that may prevent their effective engagement. If these conditions are not met, the meeting should not be held via remote access and must be arranged face to face without delay.

### **Things to consider**

To help meetings run smoothly and ensure they are accessible to any participants, governing boards and IRPs should:

- provide clear instructions about how to join the meeting virtually, and distribute the joining instructions in a timely manner ahead of the meeting
- indicate a named person who parents, excluded pupils (if they are over 18 years old) or any participant should contact, if they have any questions before the meeting takes place
- consider holding a 'test meeting' with any participant to check the available technology is suitable, and that all participants understand how to access the meeting
- ensure that the chair of governors or IRP is prepared to explain the agenda at the start and provide clear guidance on how the meeting will be run, for example:
  - how participants should indicate they wish to speak
  - how any 'chat' functions should be used
  - whether there will be any breaks in proceedings
  - how parents and excluded pupils can access advocacy services during the meeting

## Things to remember

The use of remote access does not alter other procedural requirements that apply to governing boards, arranging authorities or IRPs. For example, if a parent requests the appointment of a special educational needs expert to advise a review panel, the arranging authority must appoint one and cover the cost as normal. Parents or excluded pupils (if they are 18 years old or older) may be joined by a friend as normal.

The governing boards and IRPs must consider written representations if they are made. The law does not allow for solely paper based 'meetings', conducted in writing.

For the purposes of which information is recorded within minutes, the normal rules apply as per this guidance, and the governing board and IRP can instruct the clerk to record any information or instructions that they deem sensible to include so that the minutes provide a clear and sufficient record of all relevant parts of the meeting, for example, how chat functions or messages will be monitored.