Criteria for Substitute Ex-Officio Foundation Governors

The Role of the Ex-Officio Foundation Governor
The incumbent of the parish/benefice is a foundation governor by virtue of their office. This role is called the **ex-officio foundation governor**.

This provides a vital connection between church and school that the bishops in the Diocese of Gloucester recognise as pivotal, and the expectation is that all incumbents would take up the role of ex-officio foundation governor in at least one Church of England school within their parish/benefice.

As a result of their training and role, the ex-officio brings connection to the local parish and theological insight as their primary contribution to the governing body. Both of these contributions are critical to the life and flourishing of a Church school. Given the wider responsibilities of the ex-officio to their parish ministry and the prioritisation of these, there should be less of an expectation than for other foundation governors that they undertake membership of sub-committees and other additional governance duties. That said, some ex-officio foundation governors do have the capacity to offer to take on such additional duties, and this is really valuable and welcomed.

The incumbent holds the responsibilities and accountabilities of the role of ex-officio foundation governor unless and until a **substitute ex-officio foundation governor** has been appointed.

The circumstances in which a substitute ex-officio foundation governor may need to be put in place are likely to be:

- Incumbent vacancy (where a substitute will be appointed for the period of the vacancy, with the intention of a new incumbent fulfilling the role)
- The capacity of the incumbent to fulfil the role – this generally occurs in a situation where a benefice has more Church schools than an incumbent can give due attention to in an ex-officio foundation governor capacity.

The decision for appointment of a substitute ex-officio foundation governor rests with the relevant archdeacon. An application, for consideration by the archdeacon, would ordinarily be endorsed by one or more of the following:

- The incumbent
- The PCC
- The school's governing body

Suitability for the Role of Substitute Ex-Officio Foundation Governor
An ex-officio foundation governor would, by nature of their incumbency, be a practising, regularly worshipping and communicant member of the Church of England.

Because the substitute ex-officio foundation governor fulfils the role ordinarily taken by the incumbent, there are more stringent faith requirements for them than for other foundation governors. In addition to the requirements for all foundation governors detailed in the document *Diocese of Gloucester Foundation Governors in Church of England Schools* (which can be found on the diocesan schools' governance webpage), it is expected that a substitute ex-officio foundation governor will:

- Be a practising and communicant member of the Church of England, or of a church in communion with the Church of England
- Regularly worship at the parish/benefice church or another church
- If they do not regularly worship at the parish/benefice church, they will have sufficient connections with that church to act as an effective supporter of connections between the life of the church and school

It is not a requirement for a substitute ex-officio foundation governor to be ordained.

These additional criteria will ensure that the substitute ex-officio foundation governor has sufficient depth of knowledge of and connection to the Church of England to fulfil the primary responsibilities usually undertaken by an incumbent ex-officio.