

What Do School Governors Do?

Governors play a vital role in the strategic direction of the school. Whilst the Head Teacher and school staff are responsible for day-to-day operation and management, the Governors work closely alongside the staff to ensure that the school provides the best possible conditions for learning for all children. Amongst other things this involves setting targets and monitoring achievement, deciding how the budget should be spent, recruiting the right staff, ensuring a sound management and organisational system, establishing policies which are fair, encourage good behaviour and motivate children and staff to do their best.

Governors are the 'Critical Friends' of the school – they are there to support the school and also to ask questions when and where appropriate to either increase their own understanding of the school, or to challenge the school to raise achievement. Governors are collectively responsible as a group; no one Governor has any more 'power' or responsibility than any other Governor. Whilst Governors are accountable to all school stakeholders, they have no individual liability, either financial or otherwise.

What sort of person becomes a Governor?

Our Governing Body represents the School community and is made up of Governors representing the school staff, the Local Authority, the Community and the Parents/Carers. All Governors are volunteers, who have the best interests of the school at heart and they are people just like **you!** No specialist skills or experience are required, just commitment and enthusiasm. The strength of a Governing Body lies in the diversity of its members – everyone is valued and a Parent/Carer who stays at home to care for children makes just as valuable a contribution to the Governing Body as a high powered professional business person.

Governors have access to lots of training, guidance and support from the local authority, so don't let any lack of experience deter you from joining our Governing Body!

What can you gain from being a Governor?

Being a Governor is extremely worthwhile, interesting and fulfilling. It is a great way to become more involved in your local community and to learn about and make a real difference to the education of our children. Governor meetings are friendly and professional and provide you with the opportunity to meet and work with people from many different backgrounds and develop your own skills. School governance is an important public duty and as such tends to be looked on favourably by employers.

What is required of you as a Governor?

What our school needs from our Governors is commitment, enthusiasm and a willingness to learn and play a full part in our Governing Body. We appreciate that at first everything is new, but we have an induction programme for all new Governors and during meetings we make sure that everyone in the room understands and feels able to take part in the discussion.

All agendas and paperwork are sent out seven days before meetings, and Governors are expected to read all pre-meeting paperwork and bring it with them to the meeting.

In terms of time, Governors are expected to commit to one evening of sub-committee meetings and one full Governing Body evening meeting per term (6 meetings a year). The sub-committee meetings last for about 1½ hours and a main meeting takes around two hours. It is important that Governors make attendance at meetings a high priority, as the meeting cannot take place if insufficient Governors are present. At times, Governors will also join smaller working groups to work on a specific project – these meetings are informal and arranged to suit the availability of the members of the group.

We also encourage Governors to make visits to school as and when they are available, so they get to know the school and see policies in action. Visits are arranged in advance at mutually convenient times and always have a focus, so we can pair the Governor up with the appropriate member of staff and make best use of everyone's time. You may find that your employer has an arrangement to allow employees time off for Governor duties.

Being a Governor is a voluntary post and it is important that people are not put off standing as Governors due to cost – all costs of training are paid by the school and we are also able to reimburse the cost of evening childcare to attend meetings where necessary.