

## **Parent Governors information**

Parent governors are elected by the parent body from parents and are vital to our governing body. They share equally with other governors the responsibility for carrying out the governing body's wide range of responsibilities. Governors do not run the school day to day, as their role is strategic and policy-making levels in the school.

You do not have to be an expert on education to be a school governor, your role would be as a typical parent bringing a parent's perspective to the running of the governing body and the school. We value the experience that all governors bring to the role.

If you join our governing body, you will serve for a **four**-year term and you can continue to the end of the term of office even if your child/children leave the school.

Being a governor does take up time. There are **three** governing body meetings each year, and governors usually serve on a committee or committees which meet **once** a term.

You will need to set aside time to be able to be an effective governor, including time to prepare for meetings, for visiting the school and undertaking training.

### **Who can be a parent governor?**

All those who have parental responsibility and are over the age of 18 are eligible to stand for election, including parents who work at the school provided that they work for less than 500 hours per year when they are elected.

A "Parent" is defined as including "any individual who has or has had parental responsibility for, or cares or has cared for, a child or young person under the age of 18".

This includes a person who the child lives with and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. This must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child on a settled basis.

There are some circumstances that disqualify an individual from serving as a school governor, please read the list of disqualifications.

### **How to nominate yourself**

If you would like to put your name forward, complete the nomination form and in addition write a brief personal statement (*50 words maximum*) to support your nomination. The statements of all candidates will be typed in a standard format and circulated to all parents with ballot papers.

- If the number of nominations is the same as or less than the number of vacancies, all candidates will be elected unopposed.
- If there are more nominations than vacancies, an election will take place.

**Parent Governor Election: Template nomination form**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**Election for a parent governor for Primary Advantage Federation**

Name: .....

Address: .....

Email: .....

Children in Year(s): .....

Name of School children are attending: .....

**Why I would like to be a parent governor:**

**What I can offer as a parent governor:**

**I have read the list of disqualifications and am willing and eligible to stand for election as a parent governor at Primary Advantage Federation**

**Full name:** ..... **Signed:** .....

**Dated:** .....

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS**

Schedule 4 (*regulation 17*) of the Constitution Regulations covers the qualifications and disqualifications of governors.

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his or her election or appointment and cannot be a registered pupil at the school.

A person cannot hold more than one governorship at the same school.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a school if, in summary, that person:

- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order; an interim bankruptcy restrictions order; a debt relief restrictions order; an interim debt relief restrictions order; or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; a disqualification order under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; or an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (*failure to pay under county court administration order*);
- has been removed from the office of trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- is disqualified from working with children or from registering for child-minding or providing day care
- is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (*without the option of a fine*) in the five years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a governor or since becoming a governor
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has received a prison sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20

years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a governor

- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- has been convicted and fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school or educational premises during the five years ending with the date immediately preceding appointment/election or since appointment or election as a governor
- refuses a request by the Governance Professional to the governing body or other officer of the school, to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a criminal records certificate
- has been removed as an elected governor from the governing body during their term of office; they are disqualified from serving or continuing to serve as a school governor for five years from the date of their removal – not just at the school they have been removed from, but any school.

**Note:** From 1st May 2017 any person who was elected as a parent or staff governor and was removed during their term of office will be disqualified from becoming or continuing to serve as a governor for five years from the date of their removal.

**Anyone proposed or serving as a governor who is disqualified for one of these reasons must immediately notify the Governance Professional to the governing body.**

## Appendix 1: What does a governor do?

**Role of a school governor:** To contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the federation's schools by:

- setting the federation's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding the executive principal and headteachers to account for the educational performance of the federation, its schools and its pupils;
- overseeing the financial performance of the federation and making sure its money is well spent.

**Activities: As part of the governing body team, a governor is expected to:**

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing body meetings which determine:

- the vision and ethos of the federation;
- clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the federation;
- that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- the federation's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation;
- the federation's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
- the principles to be used by school leaders to set other federation policies.

2. Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the federation's performance. This includes:

- agreeing the outcomes from the schools' self-evaluations and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in school development plans;
- considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of federation and school performance;
- asking challenging questions of federation and school leaders;
- ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits;
- ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the federation and its schools are operating effectively according to those policies;
- acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on the progress on the relevant priority;
- listening to and reporting to the federation's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.

3. Ensure federation and school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.

4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:

- appoint the executive principal, headteachers and other senior leaders;
- appraise the executive principal (with the exception of the staff governor);
- set the executive principal's and headteachers' pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff (with the exception of the staff governor);
- hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
- hear appeals about pupil exclusions.

**The role of governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.**

**A governor does NOT:**

- write federation policies;
- undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience;
- spend much time with the pupils of the federation – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the federation;
- fundraise – this is the role of the parent-teacher association (PTA) – the governing body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks;
- undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the governing body monitors the quality of teaching in the federation by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources;
- do the job of the federation staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing body need to consider and rectify this.

**Additional roles:** As you become more experienced as a governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g. as a chair of a committee). This document does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair and chairs of committees. The staff governor cannot be the chair or vice-chair of the Central Governing Board but s/he can chair committees.

In order to perform this role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the federation and its schools, including by visiting schools occasionally during school hours, and gain a good understanding of schools' strengths and weaknesses;
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events;
- attend meetings (full governing body meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting;
- act in the best interest of all the pupils of the federation;
- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the governing body's code of conduct, including acting in strict confidence.

**Time commitment:** Under usual circumstances, you should expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on your governing responsibilities. The top end of this commitment, which equates to about half a day per week in term time, is most relevant to the chair and others with key roles, such as chairs of committees. Initially, we would expect your commitment to be nearer 10 days a year. However, there may be periods when the time commitment may increase, for example when recruiting a headteacher. Some longstanding governors may tell you that they spend far more time than this on school business; however, it is fairly common for governors to undertake additional volunteering roles over and above governance.

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.

**Expenses:** Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.