



Parent Governors: Frequently Asked Questions

What do governors do?

The Governing Body provides strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It has three key functions:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

What skills and experience do you need to be a Parent Governor?

The main requirement is that you are a parent or carer of a young person in the School and are able to give the necessary time to work with the Governing Body. Parent Governors bring a unique perspective and invaluable life experience.

As a Parent Governor, would I be expected to consult other parents and put their views forward to the Governing Body?

No, Parent Governors are not parent representatives. They are representative parents who are free to put their own views forward.

Do I need to know a lot about the education system to become a Parent Governor?

No, you do not need to be an educational expert as all new Governors are provided with an induction on joining the Governing Body. A range of training is also available. Support is also available for new Governors from experienced members of the Governing Body.

What time commitment is involved?

This will vary according to your level of involvement and availability. We would however expect you, at the minimum, to attend every Governing Body meeting (one per term, in an evening) and one or more Committees (one each per term at different times). Meetings are limited to 2- hours maximum. You will also need to commit to undertaking training which is provided within and outside school hours, and to attend some school events. We can give you more information when we speak.

Will I need to take time off work to fulfil the duties of a Governor?

Not necessarily, since some of our meetings and the events we attend take place in the early evening. However, a Governor's role is more fulfilling and you will work more effectively within the Governing Body if you can make the time to meet with staff and attend school events which take place during the school day.

What if my employer is not willing to release me?

Under employment law, employers must give employees who are school Governors "reasonable time off" to carry out their duties. However, they do not have to give time off with pay. Some

employers do however give time off with pay in recognition of the personal development benefits to the employee and, ultimately, to the employer's business.

What benefits will there be for me?

Becoming a Governor can bring you great personal and professional benefits, particularly if you have taken a career break to focus on your family. Being a Governor is a valuable addition to your CV, and shows future employers that you have remained committed to your own development despite taking time out of the working world. It can also enhance your experience and skills within your existing job.

Will becoming a Parent Governor give me greater access to the School so that I can be more involved in my daughter's or son's education?

No, this would not be appropriate. If you have concerns about your daughter's or son's education and hope to pursue this through the Governing Body, the role of Parent Governor is not for you. The Governing Body works at a strategic, not an operational level. If you do have concerns about your daughter or son, the correct procedure is to contact the School and follow the appropriate policies and procedures.

Will there have to be an election if I put myself forward as a Parent Governor?

Not on this occasion.

Will I have to undergo any checks to become a Parent Governor?

You will appreciate that checks have to be made on anyone fulfilling a voluntary role which brings them into contact with children and young people. New Governors are required to undertake a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check before they are appointed. The check is conducted through the School and is very straightforward.

Any other questions?

Please contact the Head Teacher's PA, Nicola Rogers, on 020 8303 1887 after the half term break. She will be able to arrange for you to speak with us either in person or over the phone. We look forward to hearing from you!