



## School Governors Information Sheet: Parent Governors

### What does the governing body do?

The governing body ...

- sets the strategic direction, objectives, targets and policies;
- reviews progress against plans and targets;
- acts as a critical friend to the head teacher by providing support and challenge.

The governing body has a *strategic role* as opposed to operational role. This helps the governing body focus on their key roles of setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability, and monitoring and evaluation to promote school improvement and raise standards and achievement.

### Why are parents needed on the governing body?

The governing body is made up from governors who represent the community served by the school, especially the families who use it, but also the wider public who pay for it and whose quality of life is affected by it. To achieve the right balance on a governing body, there are different categories of governors representing different groups of the school's community (also known as 'stakeholders') and each category is either appointed or elected onto the governing body. Parent governors are needed on all schools governing bodies, as parents play a major part in the school's community.

### The categories of governor are:

- Parent Governor (elected by parents of the school)
- Co-opted Governors – Appointed by the school
- Staff governors
- Associate members – Non voting Governors who are invited to attend meetings for their knowledge, skills or expertise.

## What does being a governor actually involve?

### *Time*

Each school has its own needs and the amount of time that governors spend on their governing body will vary. Prospective governors should consider that they must be able to take time to attend meetings and read necessary papers beforehand. As a governor you can expect to spend between three and five hours per month on governance overall, although this will vary.

### *Training*

Free training and development opportunities are offered to support school governors in their role and governors are highly recommended to attend.

### *Visiting School*

Governors will need to see the school in action and therefore scheduled visits are made with the school. Governors do not make unannounced visits.

## Am I eligible to stand as a parent governor?

Only parents of pupils registered at the school are entitled to stand or vote in the election. A parent includes:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not (including those who do not live with their child);
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has 'parental responsibility' for a child or young person;
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person in the sense that the child lives with them and they look after that child.

Parents who are employed at the school and work more than 500 hours in a school year are not eligible to stand for parent governorship as they qualify to stand as staff governors. However, they may still cast a vote. Parents who are elected members of the local authority are not eligible to stand as parent governors.

## Do I need any particular qualifications or skills?

No special qualifications are required, although enthusiasm, commitment and an interest in education are helpful qualities to bring to a governor post. It also helps to be a good listener, taking time to understand the views of different people.

## I would like to stand for election, what do I do next?

To stand as a candidate in the election, you will need to complete the nomination form below, and return it to the school before the deadline specified in the letter from the Head teacher.

## Where can I get further information about school governors?

Visit [Become a school governor or academy trustee - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/become-a-school-governor)