

THE
ROLE OF A PARENT
GOVERNOR

The Role of a Parent Governor

Who are school governors and what do they do?

School governors are people who want to make a positive contribution to children's education. They are the link between the school and the community and representatives of all those with an interest in the well being and reputation of the school are needed.

Governors are the largest volunteer force in the country and have an important part to play in raising school standards through their three key roles of:

- setting strategic direction,
- ensuring accountability and
- monitoring and evaluating school performance.

Governors at The Whitby High School work as a team. As all decisions are made with the consensus of the full governing body, which provides the opportunity to utilise the softer skills of teamwork, communication and tolerance.

The role of the governing body is a strategic one; its key functions are to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- be a source of challenge and support to the Headteacher (a critical friend)

The Headteacher is responsible for day to day management and control of the school, internal organisation and implementation of the strategic framework established by the Governing Body.

School governors provide strategic leadership and accountability in schools. Governors appoint the head teacher and are involved in the appointment of other staff. It is governors who hold the main responsibility for finance in schools, and it is governors who work with the head teacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

We want a Parent Governor who:

- Currently has child or children in our school
- Has an open and enquiring mind
- Shows a willingness to listen and make informed judgements
- Is able to work well with others
- Is interested in education generally and our school in particular
- Has a desire to play a part in improving our school
- Is willing to give about 20 hours per term to attend meetings and training
- Has the skills/experience that can be applied to the role of governor

If you match the above description, you could be the very person to become a parent governor. Everyone has something to offer and we want people from as many backgrounds and interests as possible.

Representing Parents

As a parent governor, you would be a representative of the parents, but you would not be mandated to vote on their behalf. It may be useful to get the general feelings from parents on various issues from time to time, but in seeking to fill the post of parent governor, the governing body is looking for some who will help it see the school from the widest possible viewpoint. Parents are vital to the work of the governing body. As a parent governor you will be a governor in your own right with the same responsibilities as everyone else to work together as part of the governing body for the good of the school.

The personal benefits of being a governor

Being a governor is an enormously challenging and rewarding opportunity. The personal benefits can be summarised as;

- An insight into the wider perspective of the school through long term planning
- The opportunity to develop new skills through training in strategic management
- The opportunity to work with our team of governors and staff in developing our school
- The opportunity to gain understanding in key areas such as finance, personnel, and strategic planning
- A sense of achievement in making a difference to our school

Through solving problems ranging from finance to site management, human resources to marketing, pupil welfare to curriculum development, every governor is guaranteed to broaden their skills and knowledge in some way, and this can be enhanced through training offered by Local Authorities.

What makes a good School Governor

The most important quality is the desire to make a difference to the lives of children, and then:

- The ability to work in a team
- A desire to help the community
- An external perspective
- A willingness to challenge assumptions
- The time to get involved

Making a difference

Being a governor can be enjoyable, stimulating and rewarding. Governors can make a real difference to the performance of the school and have a real part to play in making the school successful. If you are interested in joining us and need further information please contact dfields@whitbyhs.cheshire.sch.uk

School Governor Person Specification

| | Essential Criteria | Desirable Criteria |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Key Skills & Abilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical skills and the ability to understand and question written and numerical information; The ability to establish good working relationships with Governors, Parents and Staff at all levels within the school | <p>Any of the following skills will also add value;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Strategic Planning Communications Project Management Decision Making Problem Solving Finance HR Legal Knowledge |
| Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of the role of School Governors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of how schools performance is measured An understanding of schools finance An understanding of the key issues and priorities An understanding of the key issues and priorities facing schools. |
| Experience | | <p>At least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business planning and monitoring of progress against targets Effective performance management of staff Budget analysis in order to understand the costs associated with particular services, projects and programmes. Analysing complex performance data and information and forming recommendations for action; Health and Safety management Premises management Understanding or experience of publicity and marketing |
| Personal Attributes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interest in the education of children An enquiring mind and desire to understand how the school is impacting the performance of pupils Self motivated and dependable Effective team worker, able to share ideas and make best use of resources; Able to understand and interpret sensitive information and apply appropriate levels of confidentiality | |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A commitment to the demands of the role A commitment to developing skills and knowledge through training and taking up briefings and networking opportunities | |

Qualifications and Disqualifications to Serve as a School Governor

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election or appointment and cannot hold more than one governorship at the same school.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor or associate member if he or she:

- is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order;
- has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to:
 - a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Act 1986
 - a disqualification order under the Companies Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a county court administration order);
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of anybody;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children;
- is disqualified from working with children or subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002;
- is disqualified from working with children under sections 28,29, or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 2 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 for child minding or providing day care;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- has received a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before or since becoming a governor;
- has received a prison sentence of 2½ years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
- has at any time received a prison sentence of 5 years or more;
- has been convicted under section 547 of EA 1996 (nuisance or disturbance on school premises) or under section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (nuisance or disturbance on educational premise) during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor;
- is employed at the school for more than 500 hours per academic year if wishing to stand for parent governor at the same school;
- is an elected member of the Local Authority (applies to parent and community governors only);
- has refused a request by the clerk to the governing body to make an application under section 113B of the Police Act 1997 for a criminal records certificate
- has been disqualified from holding office as a governor of this school due to failure to attend governing body meetings for a continuous period of six months

