

## Governors FAQs

### **What does a governing body do?**

As a governor you will not be involved in the day to day running of the school, but the governing body does play a critical role in our school's success and the success of its pupils. School governors are responsible for providing clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. They recruit headteachers, hold them to account for the performance of the school and its pupils, and they make sure public money is well spent.

### **What makes a good governor?**

Skills and experience from all backgrounds can be used to make a valuable contribution. You should have a strong commitment to making sure there are high aspirations for the all the children in your school and a commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for all the pupils. If you are naturally inquisitive and have the ability to question and analyse, with good inter-personal skills you will likely make an excellent governor.

### **Do I need qualifications to be a school governor?**

There are no specific qualifications needed to be a governor.

### **What are the benefits of being a governor?**

You will develop your personal and professional skills, build relationships and networks, and support children in our community. There's no greater feeling than knowing that you've made a difference!

### **Can I be paid for being a governor?**

No, it is a voluntary position.

### **Will I need a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check?**

Yes. When you accept a position, the school will require an Enhanced DBS check and we will organise this for you. Volunteers will also be asked to supply references. We take safeguarding very seriously and have robust procedures to address safeguarding issues. If we receive a complaint or concern about any volunteer's or individual's conduct, we will follow our set procedures.

### **How does a governing body work?**

The Governing Body includes parents, staff members, and representatives of the community and the

local authority. Governors get to know the school through attending meetings and by visiting the school, teachers and children. The governing body is organised into sub-committees, which take responsibility for different areas such as safeguarding, curriculum, finance and premises.

### **How are governors appointed/elected?**

- The Chair and Vice Chairs are elected annually by governors.
- Parent governors are elected by the parents of Wootton Bassett Infants' School.
- Staff governors are elected by teaching staff and non-teaching staff respectively.
- Co-opted governors are elected onto the governing body by the governors themselves.

### **I work full-time. Will I still have time to be a school governor?**

Many school governors are in full-time work. Governors' meetings can take place during the working day but, very often, they are arranged for the evenings. There are six full governing body meetings a year and the same number of sub-committee meetings. Time is also required for reading documents and undertaking visits to the school to review different areas of the curriculum with teaching staff, but these visits can be done at a mutually convenient time. The average time commitment is 2-4 hours per month.

### **What if my employer won't give me time off?**

Many employers actually encourage their staff to become school governors. They realise that the skills gained through being a school governor are transferable to the workplace.

Employment law gives people the right to reasonable unpaid time off and some employers give paid leave for school governor duties.

### **Can anyone attend a governing body meeting?**

No one can attend a meeting of the governing body without the permission of the governing body.

### **Are the minutes of a governing body meeting confidential?**

No, they are public documents unless any section is marked as 'Confidential' and this is for the governors only.

### **What is the quorum for governing body meetings?**

The quorum for a meeting of the full governing body or a committee is one half of the membership,

excluding any vacancies, rounded up to the nearest whole number. For statutory committees the quorum is 3.

**Is it a requirement that governors attend training sessions?**

Mandatory training for newly appointed governors came into force in September 2013 and the Local Authority runs courses, free of charge, on a regular basis. We also have an induction process that will help you settle into your new role.

There is a variety of other training and support available to help you become an effective governor provided by the local authority, including specific training modules available for any further learning required i.e. health & safety, safeguarding responsibilities.