

PARENT GOVERNOR ROLE INFORMATION

What Do Governors Do?

Governors work together to carry out their core functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding headteachers to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

They enable their school to run as effectively as possible, working alongside senior leaders and supporting teachers to provide excellent education to children.

Being a school governor is a commitment to attending governing body meetings which consider issues such as setting the school vision, mitigating financial risk and scrutinising educational outcomes. They are also involved in the school community, acting as critical friends to the headteacher and senior leaders.

Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise from their professional lives to the governing body and schools benefit greatly from working with parents and skilled volunteers, such as people with experience of finance, law, premises management or human resources. A governor with business know-how can help transform the running of a school.

The term “parent” includes any parent or person with parental responsibility, or a carer, of a registered pupil at the school

What is the Role of a Governing Body?

Governing bodies work closely with headteachers and senior leaders. Headteachers are responsible for day-to-day management whereas the role of the governing body is strategic. As such, governors are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the school
- deciding the principles that guide school policies and approving key policies
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- setting the school’s budget and ensuring it is managed effectively together with premises and other resources
- agreeing the school’s staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

What are the Governing Body Strategic Responsibilities?

Governors must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the school’s impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the school is operating effectively in line with these policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external reporting on all aspects of school performance
- asking challenging questions of school leaders in order to hold them to account
- holding the headteacher to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies

- visiting the school to monitor implementation of the strategy and reporting back to the body (this could be in a link governor capacity)
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

Panels and Committees

When required, governors are expected to serve on panels or committees in order to:

- appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the headteacher and make pay recommendations
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

What Contribution do Governors give to the Governing Body

Governors should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the governing body by:

- attending meetings (a minimum of 3 full governing board meetings and possibly a number of committee meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior leaders and colleagues on the governing body
- getting to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

Do Parent Governors have Special Responsibilities?

No. Parent Governors do not have “extra” duties. All governors are equally responsible and discharge their responsibilities as a body, not individually. The Parent Governors speak as parents: they can’t speak for all parents.

Closing Statement

Although this is a very delicate role, there is ample support and training available. Effective parent governors will find working alongside the other members of the governing body both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the governing body fulfils its duties to all children.