



School Governor Information

Introduction

Effective governance relies on active participation and curiosity and all Governors bring an important voice to the board. They play a key part in helping the Governing Board fulfil its various responsibilities. The role, like all governance roles, is unpaid.

Governors bring wider knowledge to the board e.g. they often have knowledge of the school from the perspective of a parent, and they can sometimes bring knowledge and advice from other sectors on how policies are being applied in the school.

A School Governor can be a parent at the school but they are not a representative for the parents. This is an important distinction and this briefing note offers some guidelines. It is also hoped that governors will use their personal knowledge, skills and experience which they bring to the role to assist in moving the school forward.

Expectations as a School Governor

All governors sit on at least one of the sub committees i.e. Curriculum, Finance, Staffing or Premises (including Health & Safety). Each subcommittee meets once in a half term, usually before the full governing body meeting date.

The term of office for a governor is 4 years.

The Full Governing Body meets every half term (5 meetings per year). Meetings take place on a Monday at 5:30pm.

Subcommittee meetings are every full term. These take place on a Tuesday at 5:00pm.

It is hoped that all governors can also attend school community events throughout the year.

Role Responsibilities

If parents are represented on the Governing Body, they cannot lobby the governing board but bring a range of viewpoints to the discussions and activities undertaken by the Governing Board.

All Governors need to:

- be fully cognisant of the School Code of Conduct,
- respect confidentiality,
- have undertaken governance and other governance training and
- commit to attending meetings which are mostly after school hours.

All training is provided through the Governor Induction, and it is expected that all governors will take part in this training.

Governors at Whitley Lodge First School:

- Must respect confidentiality at all times.
- Should never discuss their own child(ren) or their friends at the board meetings.
- Have equal rights with all other Governors – each vote has equal weight and value.
- Are expected to sign a Code of Conduct (based on the Seven Principles of Public Life¹) and should follow the appropriate rules of protocol and confidentiality as set out by the board the school and the Trust.
- Are encouraged to speak freely and without prejudice.
- Never promise to ‘solve a problem’ alone – always seek the advice of the headteacher and/or chair if they are unsure.
- Avoid participating in discussions where they have a personal interest (eg if a business that is run by a family member is being considered); when in doubt take guidance from the chair, headteacher. In this situation, they may be asked to withdraw from certain conversations or meetings.
- Should follow the agreed procedure for putting items on the agenda.
- Should feel free to express their own personal views, even if it is recognised that this is not necessarily the view of the majority of the Governing or parent body.
- Do not have a mandate to express any views other than their own.
- Should try to attend governance training sessions both in school and outside.
- Should be aware of the sensitivity of meeting discussions and always be clear about what information can be shared with parents.
- Should play an active part in meetings, and always try to submit apologies in advance if they cannot attend.
- Need to fully understand the school’s Complaints Policy and when and how to escalate any issues. It is not their role to resolve issues, to promise to resolve issues or to make comment about how the school has discharged its functions. The role of Parent Governor is one of a ‘*sign post*’ not a ‘*conduit*’.
- Can hold the office of chair or vice-chair.
- Should not be asked to take minutes unless it is an emergency because when taking minutes they may not be able to fully participate in discussions.
- Can take part in the headteacher’s appraisal as a member of the panel approved by the board.
- Will be asked to sign the School’s Acceptable Use Policy and whilst being active on social media is not a restricting factor in being a member of the board they must be mindful about what they write or ‘like’.
- Should try to keep as up to date as possible with the training opportunities on offer.
- Should not be part of any panels which involve children known to them. If in doubt please seek advice.
- Are required to declare any business and pecuniary interests and interests in items on the agenda at every meeting and this applies to all Governors. If for example they have a family member working in school, it is appropriate to bring this to the attention of the board as appropriate and to complete the annual Declarations of Business Interests. This is to ensure transparency.

Date: 1.10.25

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>