

Why Do Schools Need Governors

1. Through their representation of the wider school community (this includes the parents, school staff and other members of that community), governors help their school improve and provide the best possible education for the pupils.

A good governor has many skills and qualities including:

- An ability to respect confidentiality.
- An interest in education.
- Communication skills.
- An ability to absorb information.
- Tact and diplomacy.
- An ability to work as part of a team.
- A willingness to give your time.
- A commitment to equal opportunities.
- An open mind.
- A willingness to undertake training.

What Governors Do

2. Governing bodies are expected to play three key roles - they provide a strategic overview, they act as a critical friend to the school and they ensure accountability.

3. By working strategically, the governing body helps to provide the best possible education for the pupils of the school. Through working as a corporate body with a clearly defined division of responsibilities between the headteacher and the governors, the governing body:

- Helps to set standards and targets for performance for the school.
- Has an overview of the curriculum.
- Helps to set policies for itself and the school.
- Delivers effective planning including planning the delivery of financial, personnel and post-inspection duties.

4. By being a critical friend, the governing body establishes an effective working relationship with the headteacher through having clear division of duties delivered through effective meetings. This will help the governing body to:

- Know the school.
- Have an effective scheme of delegation between the governing body and the headteacher and the governing body and its committees.
- Monitor and evaluate attainment, achievement and the delivery of policies and plans.

5. To ensure accountability, the governing body will receive regular reports from the headteacher and will provide information to the EFA and the parents on a regular basis by:

- Publishing a school prospectus.
- Producing a post-inspection action plan.
- Publishing audited Company Accounts

A Governor's Commitments

6. As a governor you will be expected to:

- Support the aims and objectives of your school and promote the interests of the school and its pupils within the local community.
- Attend meetings of the governing body and its committees.
- Attend the school on a regular basis through a planned programme of visits.
- Recognise that you and the governing body are accountable for your actions.
- Act as a member of the governing body and not as an individual with personal interests.
- Keep informed about developments within the school.
- Attend training to increase your knowledge, skills and ability to deliver your duties and responsibilities.

Who cannot be a governor?

7. You are unable to be appointed as a governor if you:

- Are under 18 years of age.
- Are a pupil at the Academy.
- Have been discharged bankrupt.
- Are disqualified from acting as a charity trustee under Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993
 - *Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 provide a person will be disqualified as a charity trustee for:-*
 - *conviction of any offence involving dishonesty or deception (unless the conviction is spent);*
 - *being adjudged bankrupt or having his/her property made available to creditors and (in either case) he/she has not been discharged;*
 - *making a formal arrangement with his/her creditors which has not been discharged;*

- *removal from the office of charity trustee by an order of the Charity Commissioners or of the High Court;*
- *removal under Section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 from being concerned in the management or control of any body; or*
- *being subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under Section 429 (2) (b) of the Insolvency Act 1986.*
- Are included in the list kept by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999.
- Are disqualified from working with children in accordance with Section 35 Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.
- Are barred from regulated activity relation to children (within the meaning of Section 3(2) of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Are the subject of a direction under Section 142 Education Act 2002 or subject to any prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction.
- Have been convicted of any criminal offence, including any offence that is spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence.
- Have not provided to the Chairman a DBS at an enhanced disclosure level under Section 113B of the Police Act 1997.
- Are under a disqualification order made by a Court under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
 - *A disqualification order **must** be made against a director if he/she is or has been a director of a company which has at any time become insolvent and his/her conduct as a director of that company (taken alone or together with his/her conduct as a director of any other company or companies) makes him/her unfit to be concerned in the management of a company.*
 - *A disqualification order **may** be made against a director for:-*
 - *conviction of an offence in connection with the promotion, formation, management, liquidation or striking off of a company or with the receivership or management of a company's property;*
 - *persistent breaches of companies legislation (eg failure to file accounts and annual returns);*

- *fraudulent trading or of any other fraud in relation to the company;*
- *conviction for contravention of or failure to comply with any provision in companies legislation requiring the filing of documents with the registrar of companies; or*
- *participation in wrongful trading.*

8. Please note that all governors have to undergo a DBS check. This check will also take place each time an existing governor seeks re-appointment, re-election or re-co-option.

What help is available to Governors?

9. The headteacher and colleagues on the governing body are best placed to support fellow governors and provide them with essential information about the school and the governing body's role within the school. This should include:

- Details of the school, its staff and its recent performance and assessment information.
- Details of the governing body including minutes, dates of meetings, committee structure and terms of reference.
- The most recent school profile (annual parents' report for maintained nursery schools only), school development plan, Ofsted inspection report and school prospectus.
- Details of training opportunities.
- Trustees and Governance – The Essential Trustee
- Internal Financial Controls for Charities
- Funding Agreement
- Responsibilities and Liabilities
- Articles of Association
- Code of Conduct