

## School Governorship

### What does a school governor do?

Governors are responsible for overseeing the management side of a school, its strategy, policies, budgeting and staffing. 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 brings a commitment to attend governing body meetings where issues such as setting the school vision, mitigating financial risk and scrutinising educational outcomes are considered and related decisions are made. Governors are also involved in the school community, acting as critical friends to the headteacher and senior leaders.

Specifically, governors monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher. In action, this means:

- Appointing and performance reviewing the head teacher and senior leaders, including making decisions about pay
- Managing budgets and deciding how money is spent
- Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community
- Sitting on panels and making decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary issues
- Addressing a range of education issues within the school including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special needs, staff workload and teacher recruitment
- Looking at data and evidence to ask questions and have challenging conversations about the school

Governors can bring a wide range of skills and expertise from their professional and personal lives to the governing board and schools benefit greatly from working with such skilled volunteers. Examples include individuals with experience of finance, law, premises management or human resources but as important is the energy and passion for the school that a person has.

### Commitment involved

#### *Term of Office*

Our governor appointments are for a term of four years. However as a volunteer you can resign before your term is finished if your circumstances change.

#### *Time commitment*

Long Crendon's governors are expected to attend two full governing body meetings per term which usually take place in the early evening and last for around two hours.

In addition, governors may also be part of sub-committees set up to focus on specific areas such as the curriculum, finance, personnel, premises and so on.

The preparation for and participation in these meetings, plus training, will typically comprise from 5 hours a month during term time and most meetings are in the evenings.

#### *Liability*

Whilst the governor role has deep involvement in important decisions, governors are not individually liable. Liability is collective and held by the governing body as a whole.

## **Who can apply to become a school governor, what types of governor are there and what is the appointment process?**

There are different types of school governor and we currently have vacancies for Parent, Community (also known as Co-opted) and Staff positions.

- Parent governor will have school age (5 to 16 year old) children, ideally attending the school.
- Community governors are individuals from the wider community who have the skills and experience which the governing board requires. They are directly appointed by the governing body. Parents can also be community governors.
- Staff governors are elected by the staff to sit on the board as their representatives.

For all of these roles we encourage applications from all members of society, regardless of background, gender, ethnicity, disability or age (as long as you're over 18).

There is no requirement for you to have an understanding of the education system, just the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. There is plenty of training available to help you learn about education. You do not need to have experience of being on a board either. School governors are the largest volunteer force in education, with around 250,000 governors in the UK, and you will receive lots of training and support.

From time to time the school will carry out a recruitment campaign to attract new governors. There are a fixed number of parent governor roles on the governing board and it may be that such a campaign attracts more applicants than vacancies. In this instance, a ballot will take place among parents to identify those candidates with most support. However, in this event, unsuccessful applicants may be invited to become community governors. In practice, parent and community governors' roles are the same, and parent governors are not expected to speak 'on behalf' of the parent body.

### **Why Become A Governor**

Being a school governor allows you to put something back into one of the most important parts of your community.

School governance allows you to develop your skills, both personally and professionally. You will be involved in some or all of the following which will add to your CV and your life experience;

- Strategic planning
- Experience on a board
- Holding senior leaders to account
- Finance, and maintaining oversight of a budget approaching £1m
- Human resources and performance management
- Project management
- Marketing
- Communication and teamwork
- Decision making

You will also get to see things from the school's perspective and see how the school is managed. You will gain an in-depth understanding of how decisions are made and the pressures on schools and school leaders, while playing an integral part in deciding what happens.

## **Governor Behaviours**

Governors must be prepared to adopt the “Nolan Principles” of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. All governors will have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on appointment and this will be regularly updated to ensure continued validity.

Whilst we have a formal requirement and strong interest in having parent governors as part of the team, any aspects that relate to a governor’s own child or children should always be raised separately and with the relevant class teacher in the first instance.

## **In Summary...**

Don’t hold back in talking to us if you’re at all interested. Please don’t think that there will be a better candidate or that someone else will volunteer. In fact, the role is both important and in need of applicants with a national vacancy rate of about 10%. Your school needs you and you can really help make a difference!

## **Interested?**

We hope so! To talk more or to express your interest, please contact our chair of governors, Tim Kidd, via the school office or [chairofgovernors@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:chairofgovernors@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk)

The closing date for applications is Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021.