

# Become a School Governor

## Who Are Governors?

School governors play a key role in helping Headteachers and their staff to secure the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in our schools.

School governors come from every walk of life. We are looking to recruit people with skills that can be used to strengthen the work of the governing body.

## What is the Role of a School Governor?

Governors work as part of a team. They are responsible for making sure the school provides good quality education. Governors govern rather than manage. They are there to give direction and focus by performing a strategic role. The day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher. Governors will support and, at the same time, challenge Headteachers by gathering views, asking questions and deciding what is best for the school.

Governors are required to play an active part in the decision making process of the school, getting involved in real issues. Governors make important decisions together on policies and strategies.

There are several different categories of governor, each appointed in different ways. In LA maintained schools these are:

**Parent:** Parent governors are usually parents (or have parental responsibility) of children at the school, or, at the very least, parents of children of compulsory school age. Most are elected by parents of the school in question, if not enough parents stand for election then the governing body can appoint an individual to the position.

**Staff:** Staff governors are elected by those who are paid to work at the school.

**Co-opted:** Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body. In LA maintained schools, this is on the basis of the skills they can bring to support the effective governance and success of the school. Only in governing bodies constituted under the 2012 regulations.

**Foundation:** These are governors appointed by a foundation body. In schools with a faith ethos, in addition to their other responsibilities as governors, they are tasked with ensuring that the religious character of the school is upheld. If the school does not have a religious character then they must ensure that the foundation is conducted in accordance with the governing documents.

**Partnership:** Where the school has a religious character, they must be appointed with the purpose of preserving this. In non-faith schools, partnership governors are similar to community governors. Under the 2012 regulations, governing bodies can reject nominees if they do not have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.

**Local Authority (LA):** Governors are appointed by the LA. Under the 2012 regulations, your governing body can set eligibility criteria which appointees must meet.

**Associate Members:** Are not governors, but can be invited to sit on one of the committees of the governing body, usually because they have specific skills. They can be given the right to vote at committee meetings. They can be appointed for between one and four years.

Being a governor can be a demanding but fulfilling role. Some of the things Governors can expect to be involved in include:

- Governing Body Meetings
- Committee Meetings
- Classroom/school visits to monitor and evaluate provision
- Training and development activities in order to improve the functioning and impact of the governing body
- Appointment of Headteacher and senior staff
- Making strategic financial decisions
- Gathering views from pupils, staff and parents

## **What Skills do you need to be a School Governor?**

Experience has shown that all governors need a strong commitment to the role, the inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and the willingness to learn. They need good inter-personal skills, a basic level of literacy in English (unless a governing body is prepared to make special arrangements), and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data.

## How much time do Governors give?

All schools are different and have individual needs. The normal term of office for a governor is 4 years. Full governing body meetings usually take place once a term. Governors are expected to be involved in interim activities to promote school improvement. The time committed by each governor to these activities would be negotiable with the school.

Those governors, who are employed within business, may find employers will support their role as a governor by letting them have time off work to fulfil these duties.

## Governor Training

The School Governance Service offer a varied training programme for governors and governing bodies to assist them in becoming more effective in their role and keep them updated on current issues. The School Governance Service also offers governing bodies bespoke training within their school on relevant topics of their own choice to meet any specific needs

If you are interested in becoming a school governor in Telford and Wrekin then please contact **01952 380808/380868** or e-mail [school.governance@telford.gov.uk](mailto:school.governance@telford.gov.uk)

## Useful Websites

Torch – this website provides up to date information on Telford & Wrekin School Governance Service:

<https://torch.taw.org.uk/CorporateInformation/SchoolGovernanceService/SitePages/Home.aspx>

National Governors' Association: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

DfE: [www.education.gov.uk/](http://www.education.gov.uk/)

School Governance One Stop Shop: [www.sgoss.org.uk](http://www.sgoss.org.uk)

Governor's Handbook:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/270398/Governors-Handbook-January-2014.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270398/Governors-Handbook-January-2014.pdf)