

4 November 2019

Dear Parent

**PARENT GOVERNORS ON THE GOVERNING
BODY OF HOLMFIRTH J I & N SCHOOL**



I am writing to you as the Returning Officer for the election of parent governor. We currently have a vacancy for a parent governor.

The law now requires that all governors are appointed on the basis of the skills they have to contribute to effective governance. Therefore, parent elections now undertaken by schools need to have due regard to the new statutory guidance. Schools must promote informed and effective elections in which the electorate understands the role of a governor; the skills required by the governing body; and the extent to which candidates possess those skills. More information about becoming a School Governor can be found by following this link <http://kirkleesbusinesssolutions.uk/Page/13264> to the Kirklees Business Solutions website.

The governing body conducted a skills audit recently and identified the following areas where it would be beneficial to strengthen our current skillset.

- 1) Experience of charity law and governance
- 2) Experience of property and estate-management
- 3) Experience of HR policy and processes, including employment legislation, recruitment, performance management and pay
- 4) Experience of school sector HR policy and processes
- 5) Experience of change management

Please note that possessing these skills is not mandatory, and not having experience in any of these areas should not deter you from standing, but we would therefore ask that any parent who does possess these particular skills please consider standing in this election. For the purpose of an election the term 'parent' includes a person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) or has care of the child. To stand, propose, support or vote in the election a parent must be the parent of a pupil on roll at the school, at the date of election. Within a family each parent may vote but parents do not have extra votes because they have more than one child in the school.

I propose to hold an election of one parent governor to serve for a period of four years starting in the Autumn term, 2019. On the reverse of this letter is the nomination form and contains all relevant details. Nominations should be received by me personally by 11.30am on Tuesday 12 November 2019. If more than the required number of candidates are nominated ballot papers will be sent to parents on Wednesday 13 November 2019. I shall let you know the result of the election in due course.

I have to draw your attention to the following restriction which applies to school governors:
A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of the election and must complete a DBS disclosure application form.

The full details of disqualifications which apply to the role of school governor are to be found in the current School Governance (Procedures) Regulations. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1624/contents/made>

Staff in the School Governor Service at 2nd Floor, Kirkgate Buildings, will be happy to advise on disqualification, if need be (Tel 01484 225010).

A copy of the Authority's procedure for this election is available for inspection at School.

Yours sincerely

Julian Rose
Head Teacher and Returning Officer



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The Governing Body of Holmfirth Junior, Infant & Nursery School

THE ELECTION OF ONE PARENT GOVERNORS TO SERVE FOR A PERIOD OF 4 YEARS STARTING IN THE AUTUMN 2019.

NOMINATION FORM

NAME OF CANDIDATE.....

NAME OF CANDIDATE'S CHILD WHO IS A PUPIL AT THE SCHOOL:-

.....

ADDRESS

(of candidate)

.....

Email address:

Telephone Work.....Home.....

Signature of Proposer.....(Pupil's Name)
Parent of

Signature of Seconder(Pupil's Name)
Parent of

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE: (please tick as appropriate)

Are you paid to work at the School? **Yes** **No** (See Legal Background, Section 1.4)

Are you related to any current employed staff or governor at the School? **Yes** **No**

I agree to stand in the above-named election, have read the expectations on being a school governor and have completed and returned with this form the skills analysis

In the event I am unsuccessful in this election, I am willing to consider another school

Signed Date

To be valid the fully completed nomination form must reach the Returning Officer **personally** by 11.30am on Tuesday 12 November 2019.

In this election the Returning Officer is: Julian Rose

The tellers/scrutineers are: Alexandra Sykes & Sharon Brown

The candidate is asked to provide the Returning Officer with not more than half a side of A4 paper with information about him/herself which shall be published on the ballot paper, e.g. information about the candidate's residence, interests and feelings about any particular aspect of the school. If the candidate fails to do so the Returning Officer is obliged to note the fact on or with the ballot papers.

If there is to be a ballot, pupils will be asked to take the ballot papers to their parents on 13 November 2019 and then return them to school.

Date of Issue 4 November 2019



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What does a governor do?

Role of a school governor: To contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Activities: As part of the governing body team, a governor is expected to

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing body meetings which determine:
 - the vision and ethos of the school;
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school;
 - that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
 - the school's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation;
 - the school's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
 - the principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies.
2. Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance; this includes:
 - agreeing the outcomes from the school's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school development plan;
 - considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance;
 - asking challenging questions of school leaders;
 - ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits;
 - ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies;
 - acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on the progress on the relevant school priority; and
 - listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders : pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers.
3. Ensure the school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:
 - appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders;
 - appraise the headteacher;
 - set the headteacher's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff;
 - hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
 - hear appeals about pupil exclusions.



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The role of governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does NOT:

- Write school policies;
- Undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience;
- Spend much time with the pupils of the school – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the school;
- Fundraise – this is the role of the PTA – the governing body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks;
- Undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the governing body monitors the quality of teaching in the school by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources;
- Do the job of the school staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing body need to consider and rectify this.

As you become more experienced as a governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g as a chair of a committee). This document does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair and chairs of committees.

In order to perform this role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the school, including by visiting the school occasionally during school hours, and gain a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses;
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events;
- attend meetings (full governing body meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting;
- act in the best interest of all the pupils of the school; and
- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the governing body's code of conduct, including acting in strict confidence.

Time commitment: Under usual circumstances, you should expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on your governing responsibilities; the top end of this commitment, which equates to about half a day per week in term time, is most relevant to the chair and others with key roles, such as chairs of committees. Initially, we would expect your commitment to be nearer 10 days a year. However, there may be periods when the time commitment may increase, for example when recruiting a headteacher. Some longstanding governors may tell you that they spend far more time than this on school business; however, it is fairly common for governors to undertake additional volunteering roles over and above governance.

Under Section 50 of the *Employment Rights Act 1996*, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.

Expenses: Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor, and NGA recommends that a governing body should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.

The DfE recently updated the Governance Handbook and Competency framework for school governors. The 'Competency framework for governance' sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours that school and academy governing boards need to be effective. For further information please have a look at the link below: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>



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SKILLS ANALYSIS

In order to carry out its statutory duties effectively the Governing Body requires range of skills and expertise. No single governor is expected to have all of these skills but they should appear across the team of governors.

Please indicate your level of confidence and expertise in the areas listed below:

- 1 = none
- 2 = basic/limited
- 3 =average
- 4 =experienced

PR/Marketing		Legal Knowledge		Experience of Property & Estate Management	
Strategic Planning		Decision Making		Communications	
Finance		ICT		Health & Safety	
Problem Solving		Performance Management		Project Management	
Human Resources		Risk Assessments		Handling complaints, grievances, appeals	
Staff Recruitment		Self-Evaluation		School Improvement	
Leadership		Chairing		Coaching/mentoring or CPD	
Team Working		Experience of Governance and Charity Law		Special Educational Needs	
Data Analysis		Experience of school sector HR policy and processes		Experience of Change Management	

Please expand on how your experiences in the above areas will help you be an effective governor, including any relevant training you have attended through work, sports clubs etc that would be relevant. Please use a continuation sheet if required.



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The role of a governor requires a level of personal commitment, if appointed would you undertake to:

	Yes	No
Attend governing body meetings regularly?		
Visit the school(s) occasionally during school hours by prior arrangement with the school?		
Attend induction training and other ongoing training?		
Attend briefings/networks for governors?		

Personal data relating to pupils at Holmfirth J I & N School and their families is stored in line with the school's Data Protection Policy which can be found on the school website (click [here](#)). The school will keep personal data for the minimum amount of time necessary for the school to remain in compliance with its legal and regulatory obligations. This document will be destroyed when the election process is completed and a new Parent Governor has been elected.



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