

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A PARENT GOVERNOR?

**We have two vacancies for parent governors on our governing body. Please consider standing for election! Volunteering as a governor can be very rewarding and is a great way to support the school.**

The governing body's main tasks are to ensure that pupils receive high quality education, to plan for future development and improvement, and to support the school.

The school always aims to work in partnership with parents, which brings great benefits to the children. One of the most significant ways that you can help to promote this aim is to volunteer as a parent governor. The Governing Body of every school includes a number of Parent Governors. Parent Governors have the same status, duties and responsibilities as the other members of the Governing Body. They help to ensure that all governors are kept in touch with the concerns and issues of most importance to parents and informed of the views of the local community. The parents and carers of children registered at the school elect them, and their term of office lasts for four years.

Every parent of a child registered at the school is eligible to serve as a Parent Governor. The definition of 'parent' includes natural parents of the child, whether or not they are living with them, and those who have legal or actual custody of the child.

Being a parent governor can be enjoyable and rewarding. If you would like to serve as a Parent Governor yourself, or would like to nominate another person as a Parent Governor, please complete the nomination form below. If you are nominating someone else please check first that they are willing to stand. They must sign the nomination form.

We are committed to promoting equality and celebrating diversity. We are actively seeking to reflect the diversity of our school community on the Governing Body. We strongly encourage parents from minority groups to consider standing for election. We also encourage dads and male carers to consider standing for election. The school will make any reasonable adjustment to allow candidates with disabilities to stand.

<b><i>The arrangements for the election will be as follows:</i></b>
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*Nomination forms together with personal statements of up to 300 words are to be returned to the school by 10 a.m. on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015. You may provide a photograph and contact details in addition to your statement. Nominations after this time will not be accepted. If there are no more than two nominees then those nominees will automatically be declared governors. If there are more than two nominations then an election will be held. If this is the case the names of the candidates and their personal statements will be sent out by to all parents on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015. A coffee morning where parents will have the opportunity to meet the candidates will be held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 9.15 – 10.15 am in the Parents' Room. Voting will take place in school on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October from 8.30 am to 4.00 pm. **Parents may request postal ballots.** The Head Teacher will conduct the count on the same day at 4.00 pm. Anyone may observe the count. In the event of any tie, the position shall fall to the parent with the youngest child currently in the school. Candidates who are not present for the count will be notified of the result by telephone. These elections are to fill an existing vacancy and a vacancy which will arise when a governor reaches the end of her term of office on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. The candidate with the most votes will become a governor with immediate effect, and the second successful candidate when the second vacancy arises. The Head Teacher will notify the names of the successful candidates to all parents on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.*

**If you would like to stand for election as a parent governor then you will need to complete the nomination form and return it to the office no later than 10 a.m. on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015. You may nominate yourself and you do not need a seconder. Candidates should attach a short personal statement of up to 300 words including something about yourself and what you feel you can bring to the school as a governor. You may also provide a photograph and contact details if you wish.**

**Candidates, parents and carers are reminded that all parents and carers of children at the school are eligible to vote and that postal ballots will be available from the school office in advance of the election date.**

**Governors will be available in the bottom hall on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September from 9.15 – 10.15 a.m. to answer any questions about standing for election or serving as a governor.**

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What do governors do?

The purpose school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school.' Their overriding responsibility is to work in partnership with the Head Teacher to promote continuous improvement in the performance of the school.

The governing body's three main roles are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Its responsibilities include:

- supporting the school
- seeing that the school is run effectively so that it provides the best possible education for its pupils
- helping to establish the values, ethos, aims and policies of the school
- planning for future development and improvement
- monitoring pupil achievement
- monitoring the progress of the school
- monitoring compliance with statutory requirements
- helping to decide how to spend the school's budget and monitoring the budget
- selecting the Head Teacher and undertaking the Head Teacher's performance management
- acting as a link between the local community and the school
- ensuring the buildings are properly maintained

## How much time is involved in being a parent governor?

This will vary, but the basic commitment is likely to be about 6 hours per month, including at least:

- 1 governing body meeting per term. These are two hour evening meetings.
- 1 or 2 committee meetings per term. Each governor also serves on one of the sub-committees of the Governing Body which discuss Finance and Staffing, the Curriculum, the Building and Health and Safety issues etc. These are 90 minute morning meetings
- Working groups. The Governing Body may also form working groups to address particular issues.
- Reading the agenda and other papers and preparing for the meetings.
- Training. The Induction Training for New Governors is a one-day training, usually on a Saturday. Thereafter, at least one training session a year. These training sessions are often in the evenings and generally last for a couple of hours.
- Visiting the school. Governors may expect to make at least one visit a year to the school during the school day and also to attend school events to show support for the school.

**However, we are continually engaged in succession planning and we need governors who are willing and able to take on leadership roles within the governing body as they arise, e.g. as Chair, Vice-Chair or Chair of a Committee, or as link governors with particular responsibility for areas of our work, e. g. SEN, Equalities, Safeguarding , Attendance and Health and Safety. These roles require a significant additional time commitment.**

## What support is available for governors?

There is lots of support available to help you to understand and carry out your role. Our current governors will provide advice, support and information (including an induction pack) and will be happy to answer your questions. Islington offers a welcome pack of information, an extensive program of training sessions, access to on-line training courses and resources and termly briefings, the notes of which are sent out to all governors to keep them informed of developments in education policy and current best practice. The school is able to cover child-care expenses for governors to attend regular meetings of the governing body and its sub-committees and to attend training courses. Employers should give employees who are school governors "reasonable time off" work to carry out their duties. All new governors are expected to attend the DFE Induction Programme during their first year. This is a one day training program delivered by Islington.

## How can I find out more about being a parent governor?

To find out more about the role, please contact the Clerk to the Governing Body, Amber Fitch, at 020 7527 5897 or at [Amber.Fitch@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Amber.Fitch@islington.gov.uk). Our present Parent Governors are Tamara Joseph, Nadya Mahdi and Ros Webb. Any of these people would be pleased to explain the role. Their contact details can be found on the governors' page of the school web-site.

**Governors will be available in the bottom hall on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September from 9.15 – 10.15 a.m. to answer your questions.**

## What skills and attributes do governors need?

No particular qualifications or experience are needed. The most important qualities for any governor are a commitment to the welfare and achievement of the children, a desire to make a positive contribution to the school, common sense and a willingness to commit time to the role. Many of the functions of the governing body are statutory, or have a legal framework, and they are accountable for large sums of public money. In order to carry out our core strategic roles, governors need to be able to think strategically and plan ahead, to interpret data, to scrutinise, challenge, monitor, and evaluate, and to account for decisions. With this in mind, we believe that the following skills and attributes are essential for all governors:

- Commitment to improving education for all pupils
- Commitment to the school's vision and ethos
- Ability to work in a professional manner as part of a team and take collective responsibility for decisions
- Willingness to learn
- Basic literacy and numeracy skills
- Basic IT skills (i.e. word processing and e-mail)

**We are continually engaged in succession planning and we need governors who are willing and able to take on leadership roles within the governing body as they arise, e.g. as Chair, Vice-Chair or Chair of a Committee, or as link governors with particular responsibility for areas of our work, e.g. SEN, Equalities, Safeguarding, Attendance and Health and Safety. These roles require a significant additional time commitment.**

## Guidance for the Conduct of Candidates for Election as Parent Governors

The school is providing this guidance to candidates with the objectives of:

- Having an election process which is fair to all candidates.
- Ensuring that all candidates receive the same information and guidance about the election process.
- Ensuring that parents are well informed about the candidates and are able to make informed choices in the election in the best interests of the school.

The school will provide opportunities for candidates to communicate with parents by:

- Distributing to all parents a document including candidates' 300 word statements, and for candidates who wish it, their photographs and contact details.
- Arranging a coffee morning at which parents can meet candidates before the election.

Candidates are encouraged to talk individually to other parents about their candidacy. No other form of canvassing within the school grounds is permitted.

Neither the school nor any other body has any authority to enforce guidance in relation to the conduct of candidates outside the school. However, we would ask candidates not to engage in canvassing activities other than talking to parents, and in particular not to solicit support by text messages or through social media, to produce or distribute any kind of leaflet or poster, or to carry or display any kind of placard or banner.

# Nomination Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS and PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PROPOSER if not proposing self: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## DECLARATION OF ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE ON A GOVERNING BODY

No person can serve as a Governor of more than two schools.

Parents who work at the school for 500 hours per year or are elected members of Islington Council are not eligible to be parent governors, but they are eligible to vote in parent governor elections.

Anyone who is prohibited by court order from contacting his or her child is not eligible to participate in the election.

In addition, a person may not serve as a governor if they

- are under the age of 18.
- can be compulsorily detained under the Mental Health Act 1983;
- are bankrupt or disqualified, or are subject to a disqualification undertaking, under the Company Directors Disqualification Act;
- are subject to a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, or disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002;
- are subject to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986;
- have been removed from a charity trusteeship by the Charity Commissioners or High Court on the grounds of misconduct or mismanagement;
- are included in the list of teachers or workers prohibited or restricted from working with children or young persons (currently named List 99);
- when screened by the Criminal Records Bureau are found to have a conviction which would result in them being unsuitable for working with children;
- have been disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee in any school by an Independent Schools Tribunal or the Secretary of State;
- have in the previous five years (or since becoming a governor) been sentenced to three months or more in prison (whether this was suspended or not) without the option of a fine;
- have in the previous 20 years been sentenced to imprisonment for two and a half years or more;
- have at any time been sentenced to imprisonment for five years or more;
- have been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the five years prior to, or since, appointment or election as a governor.

**Would you please confirm that you are willing and eligible to stand by signing the declaration below.**

**I declare that I am the parent or guardian of a pupil registered at the school and am not disqualified from serving on a school governing body. If I become disqualified I will give notice of the fact the clerk to the governing body.**

**I will agree to a full DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly Criminal Record Bureau) check.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_