



Be the best you can be...

Dear Parent or Guardian

Election of Parent Governors at Fir-Ends Primary School

A vacancy has arisen for two parent governors on the governing body at Fir-Ends Primary School. Schools need enthusiastic and committed people to become governors. Being a governor is not easy, but it is important, interesting and satisfying. Governors have the opportunity to express their own views, to listen to the views of others representing the school and its community and to help to improve pupils' educational experiences.

As a school governor you would be part of a team (the governing body) with a range of important responsibilities. Governors work in partnership with school staff to shape the future of the school, to decide the key issues that will help staff to raise standards and to determine how the school will best spend its money to achieve these aims.

Although parent governors are elected by the parents of the school, they are not delegates of the parent community, nor do they always have to act as a spokesperson for the parents. In our school the term of office for parent governors is 4 years, as laid down in our Instrument of Government. Parent governors are not required to resign once their children have left the school, but they may serve out the rest of their term of office.

The role of a Governor

There are 3 core functions of a governor –

1. Ensuring there is clarity in the vision and ethos of the school and its strategic direction.
2. Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school.
3. Making sure that the school spends its money effectively.

The role of a governor will be one of “thinking and questioning” rather than “doing” - the head and staff are employed to do this.

As a governor you will be expected to:

- Get to know the school by becoming aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Commit to the time required to undertake the role.
- Always act in the best interests of the pupils in the school to better their outcomes.

The expectations of governors have increased, and it is important to understand that, in order to contribute effectively, all governors will be expected to:

- Be committed to upholding the values and ethos of the school
- Attend & contribute to meetings of the Governing Body and, when appropriate, the sub-committees
- Make visit to a link class during the day on at least 2 occasions through the year when this is viable
- Be available, if possible, to meet with Ofsted in the event of an inspection

- Analyse information, make observations and be proactive in seeking ways in which the school could further enhance outcomes for all pupils
- Engage in constructive discussions that will involve questioning and challenging points of view.
- Review and agree policies & guidance, ensuring that the school is working effectively within legal frameworks.

The school is following government and local authority guidelines in respect of COVID safety. Future meetings may, therefore, take place virtually or face-to-face.

Further Information regarding school governor roles and responsibilities has been attached.

You may find it useful to contact our Chair of Governors, Catherine Carroll, for a further discussion regarding the role.

If you would like to be a candidate, please complete the attached form and return it to the Clerk to the Governors at Fir-Ends School, or by email- clerk@fir-ends.cumbria.sch.uk **by midday on 21 September 2021.**

It would be helpful if you could include some factual details about yourself and why you wish to become a governor. This will be circulated to parents in advance of an election. You will be notified of the election period in due course.

- If the number of candidates **exceeds** the current vacancy/vacancies, an election will be required and voting slips and details of how to vote will be brought home to you by your child/children.
- If the number of candidates is **equal** to the current vacancy/vacancies, the candidates are deemed to be “elected unopposed” and no election will be held.
- If the number of candidates is **less** than the current vacancies, the remaining vacancy/vacancies can be filled by persons APPOINTED by other members of the governing body. These persons must be parents of school-age children but not, necessarily, from this school.

A notice giving the name of the new parent governor will be placed outside the main school entrance. All enquiries about this election should be made to the Clerk at the e-mail address shown above.

The attached sheet lists the situations which would disqualify you from serving as a school governor. In addition, you are disqualified from election or appointment as a Parent Governor if you are an elected member of the local education authority, or if you work at our school for more than 500 hours in a school year at the time of your election or appointment.

All governor appointments are subject to an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Clearance which is handled by the local authority following election.

We look forward to receiving applications from interested parents!

Yours faithfully,

Daryl Spencer & Catherine Carroll

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors



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PARENT GOVERNOR APPLICATION FORM

To the Returning Officer Fir-Ends Primary School

I, (Full name in block capitals)
of (full postal address):

.....

.....

wish to stand for election as a **parent governor** of the above school.

Signed: Date:

This nomination is **proposed** by: (name)

(Proposer's signature)

and **seconded** by (name)

(Seconder's signature)

both of whom are parents/guardians of pupils registered at the school

Brief summary outlining your suitability for the role which will be shared with parents of Fir Ends School in the event of an election taking place:

See overleaf for details of eligibility for governance and how to submit your application.

A person is disqualified from holding or from continuing to hold office as a governor of a school at any time when they:

- Are a registered pupil at the school
- Are under 18 years old
- Fail to attend their meetings for 6 consecutive months
- Are the subject of:
 - A bankruptcy restrictions order, or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order
 - A debt relief restrictions order, or an interim debt relief restrictions order
 - An undischarged sequestration
- Are disqualified from being a company director and/or a charity trustee
- Have been removed from office as an elected governor within the last 5 years
- Are included in the list of those unsuitable to work with children
- Are disqualified from working with children, barred from regulated activity and/or disqualified from registering for childminding or providing day care
- Have been sentenced to 3 months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before becoming a governor or since becoming a governor
- Have received a prison sentence of 2 and a half years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor
- Have at any time received a prison sentence of 5 years or more
- Have been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor
- Refuse a request by the clerk to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

This is set out in schedule 4 of The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 and statutory guidance on these regulations.

Failure to attend meetings

Governors who fail to attend meetings without the consent of the governing board for a **continuous** period of 6 months are disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor at that school.

This applies from the date of the first meeting which the governor failed to attend.

With the exception of ex-officio governors, such as the headteacher, all governors and all associate members are subject to this regulation and may be disqualified through non-attendance.

Please return this form either:

- By post/hand to the school office marked 'For the attention of the Clerk to Governors'
- As a digital copy* (scan or document) by email to clerk@fir-ends.cumbria.sch.uk

*If returning a digital copy, confirmation of support for your application from the proposer and seconder should also be sent, by them, via email to the same email address.



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GOVERNORS IN MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

School governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in the UK. They provide schools with strategic leadership and accountability for educational and financial performance.

The three core functions of a school governing board are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - This means that you need to make sure your school has a clear idea of what it wants to achieve, and a plan for how to achieve it
 - Your role is to help set and embed your school's vision, ethos and strategy, and use these to monitor how the school is doing
- Hold executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
 - This means you need to make sure that school leaders are using their professional judgement properly and managing the performance of staff and pupils effectively
 - You also need to make sure that the information you get from your school leaders is accurate
- Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and make sure money is well spent
 - Your role here is to monitor your school's finances and make sure the school is achieving value for money
 - Ultimately, you need to be sure that public money is spent correctly in the best interests of your pupils

Responsibilities

- Develop the school's vision and strategy
- Set a culture of high educational standards, which promotes staff and pupil wellbeing
- Set the school's strategic aims and objectives
- Ensure the school follows the National Curriculum, and that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), can access the curriculum
- Monitor provision for pupils with SEND
- Monitor the school's educational performance, using a range of data sources
- Ensure stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff, the local community) are informed and consulted as appropriate
- Approve the school budget
- Monitor and evaluate the school's financial performance
- Approve and review school policies, and hold staff to account for their implementation

- Ensure the school is compliant with legal requirements, including that all statutory policies and documents are in place
- Carry out the appointment and performance management of the headteacher
- Be a source of challenge and support to the headteacher
- Monitor and evaluate the school's staffing structure(s)
- Monitor health and safety in the school
- Work in co-operation with the local authority, having regard to any guidance it issues

Skills and experience

Essential:

- Critical listening and ability to ask effective questions
- Strategic thinking
- Excellent communication
- Problem-solving and analysis

Desirable:

- Understanding of data
- Finance and/or accounting knowledge
- HR experience
- Knowledge of education
- Leadership and management skills
- Risk management skills
- Legal expertise
- Marketing and communications skills

Benefits to you

New skills you'll gain:

- Strategic planning
- Experience on a board
- Holding senior leaders to account and ability to provide challenge
- Finance, and maintaining oversight of potentially multi-million pound budgets
- Analysing data
- Human resources and performance management
- Project management
- Marketing
- Communication and teamwork
- Decision making
- Problem solving

Time commitment

The time commitment for school governors will vary. However, all governors will be required to attend meetings of the full board during the school year. The term of office is 4 years.

Preparation for meetings includes reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders.

You will also be expected to undertake any training required to enable you to discharge your role effectively.

Governors are also expected to visit the school while it is open to pupils on at least two occasions per year.