Guidance for Prospective Governors

Being a school governor is both a rewarding and challenging experience. Governors provide strategic leadership and work in partnership with the head teacher and senior leaders in schools to ensure that every child gets the best possible education.

The demands on governors and governing bodies have changed dramatically in recent years and this guidance has been written to help aspiring governors understand the expectations and demands of the role.

Becoming a Governor

This guidance is particularly directed at parents and staff members who are thinking of becoming a governor. Hopefully this provides you with a good overview, the commitment required and the expectations of the role. If after reading this you would like to find out any more information please contact our current Chair of Governors Mr Mark Eydman via the school's email address.

The Role of the Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for the conduct of the school and must promote high standards of educational achievement at the school. In all types of schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;

b) Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and

c) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

In order to do this, governors need to gain knowledge of how their school operates through attending meetings, reading school documentation, analysing data and engaging in regular visits to the school.

The role of the governing body is one of oversight and it is not involved in the day to day management of the school. The headteacher role includes the educational performance of the school and operational responsibility lies with them.

How the Governing Body Works

Different governing bodies operate in different ways, but governors will be expected to do far more than merely attend meetings. Effective governors attend the school regularly to see and understand how the school operates. They undertake governor visits for a particular purpose and produce reports for their governor colleagues. Governors will be expected to receive and understand reports from the headteacher and senior leaders so that they can question, challenge and support, thereby improving the quality of the whole educational provision.

The governing body operates a code of conduct which sets an ethos of professionalism and high expectations of governors. You will be provided with this as part of your induction into the school and will be expected to work within it, since a governing body operates as a corporate entity with corporate responsibility.

Skills and Experience

Governing bodies rely on a range of skills and experiences. You will need a strong commitment to the role, the inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and the willingness to learn. Good inter-personal skills, a basic level of literacy in English and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data are essential.

What is equally important to us is that you have a willingness to learn and undertake whatever training or development activity is needed to fill any gaps in the skills you have to contribute to effective governance.

Training and Support

The governing body is committed to developing the skills and experience of governors to promote success in the role. As a new governor you will attend induction training and a programme of further training to help you fulfil the role.