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School governors

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School governors are part of the largest voluntary body in England, and work in our schools and academies to help improve the life chances for all of our children.

Every school and academy has its own tailored governing board to suit its needs. Governing boards come in all shapes and sizes and are made up of people from all walks of life which ensures there is a wide range of skills and experiences available to support the school.

Whether in an academy or school, the governing board role is a strategic one, being responsible for the conduct of the school and promoting high standards of educational achievement.

Governing board core functions

In all types of schools, governing boards should have a strong focus on 3 core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

Full roles and responsibilities and legal duties for governors are outlined in the DfE documents [Governance Handbook and Competency Framework](#).

Apply to be a school governor

If you are interested in becoming a school governor there are several ways to apply

- If you have a child of school age you could enquire at the school about the possibility of standing for election as a parent governor
- If you are interested in serving as a governor at a particular school you can approach the school directly about becoming a co-opted governor or online through [Inspiring Governance](#)
- You can approach your local church to see if they are looking to appoint a foundation governor to the local school
- Complete an [online application form](#)

Commitment

Under usual circumstances, governors should expect to spend the equivalent of 10 days per year by:

- Attending at least one full governing board meeting each term
- Serving on at least one committee, meeting each term
- Getting to know their school well preferably by visiting via agreed procedures, when the school is in session and pupils are in school
- Taking part in training to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively

Under section 50 of the Employment Right's Act, if you are employed then you are entitled to "reasonable time off" to undertake

public duties; this includes school governance.

“Reasonable time off” though is not defined in law and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed, and whether or not this will be paid.

Governing board meetings usually last about 2 hours and take place at a time to suit the majority of its members, although any appeals panels relating to staff or pupils are likely to be held during the day.

Contact

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