

## What does a Governor at Oaklands Community Primary School do?

**Role of a school governor:** To contribute to the work of the governing board in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children in the school by:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the head teacher and senior leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
- By monitoring safeguarding and security to ensure children, staff and visitors work within a culture where all feel safe and secure and confident to raise any concerns.

### **Activities: As part of the governing board team, a governor is expected to:**

Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing board 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;
- Monitor and approve the school's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation;
- Approve the school's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
- The principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies.

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 monitoring to be carried out and receiving the results of that monitoring;
- Ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies;

Experienced Governors will act as a lead governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing board on the progress on the relevant school priority. 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.

When required, serve on panels of governors to:

- Appoint the head teacher
- Serve on recruitment panels to appoint other senior leaders, teachers and support staff;
- Appraise the head teacher;
- Set the head teacher'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.
- Hear the second stage of complaints

## 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 voluntary 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 board may join a learning walk, however governors monitor 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.
- Manage staff, premises or finance outside that of their monitoring or strategic role.

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 or take a lead role e.g. SEND, Health & Safety or Safeguarding Governor).

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

- Get to know the school, including by visiting the school occasionally during school hours (in accordance with the governor visits policy or as part of a learning walk), to 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 where applicable) 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:** Full Board Meetings are usually held 3 times per year, in addition you may also act on a committee which are shorter meetings and held 4 times a year (if urgent business arises an additional or extraordinary meeting may be called). Occasionally you may be asked to sit on a panel to hear an appeal. Governors with a key responsibility may commit more time to the role and there may be periods when the time commitment may increase, for example when recruiting a head teacher. We currently hold our meetings during the school day and can offer blended meetings if agreed under extenuating circumstances with the Chair.

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.

And finally enjoy the role! We have an experienced and incredibly friendly board of governors from all different backgrounds who contribute a valued and diverse range of experience and opinions.