

Northamptonshire County Council
Local Authority Governor Nomination Process

Standards and Expectations

1. Purpose of Governors

Governors have a vital role to play as the link between schools, the local community and the Local Authority (LA).

The strength of a governing body lies in the collective knowledge, experience and expertise of its members. The governing body has important powers and duties:-

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction to decide the school's strategy for improvement by setting, and keeping under review, the broad framework within which the head teacher and staff run the school;
- It provides the head teacher and staff with support, advice and information, drawing on its members' knowledge and experience;
- It oversees the financial performance of the organization and making sure its money is well spent;
- It has responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness through receiving reports from the head teacher, staff, governing body committees and external agencies and holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organization and its pupils and the performance management of the staff.

The individual governor has a responsibility, working alongside other members of the governing body, to the staff and pupils of the school and the school's wider community.

Although some governors e.g. parents may represent particular constituencies they are not delegates of that group. It is important that LA governors understand that their role does not require them to undertake a stance on behalf of the LA or indeed to report back to them. As with all governors whoever they represent, they are there to bring their knowledge, skills and point of view to the table, always being prepared to listen to all the varying views, to seek further information and advice where necessary, and take part in the broad, balanced and strategic decision making which is the basis for excellent governance. It is vitally important that all governing body members recognise the ultimate independence of the governor to decide upon what is best for the school, not to represent any other agenda. The DfE statutory guidance 'The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools' (May 2014) makes clear in its main points that 'anyone appointing governors to the governing body must

appoint someone they believe have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school', (page 4, E).

The legislation states that for all governing bodies constituted under the 2012 regulations local authorities may nominate an appropriate individual but that they are no longer the appointing body- this is now the school's governing body. Governing bodies must appoint one, and only one, LA governor.

2. Responsibilities as part of the governing body

- developing the strategic plan for the school;
- determining aims, policies and priorities of the school;
- setting statutory and non statutory targets;
- monitoring and evaluating the work of the school;
- appointment of staff and ensuring the implementation of a range of personnel procedures;
- management of the budget;
- quality of teaching;
- securing high levels of attendance and good standards of pupil behaviour;
- ensuring that all children in the schools have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is suitable to age, aptitude and ability, which prepares them for adult life;
- ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff.

3. Tasks

- to get to know the school: its needs, strengths and areas for development;
- to attend meetings (full governing body, committees and working groups);
- to work as a member of a team;
- to speak, act and vote in the best interests of the school as one perceives them;
- to respect all governing body decisions and to support them in public;
- to act within the framework of the policies of the governing body and legal requirements;
- to commit to training and development opportunities.

4. Nomination process for LA Governors in maintained schools.

The County Council seeks to nominate people as LA Governors who:-

- Have a keen and active interest in education and school improvement in Northamptonshire;
- Are able to commit their time, skills and energy to the school
- Are willing to undertake the necessary training and keep themselves up-to-date
- Are committed to the effective governance of the school and to ensuring pupils are able to achieve the highest possible standards.

Once a vacancy arises the Local Ward County Councillor is informed and invited to put themselves or another recommended individual forward for nomination. SGOSS applications may also be put forward for consideration if no County Councillor or recommendation is forthcoming to fill the vacancy. All nominations are considered against the skills that the Governing Body have identified, in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance, by the NCC Governance Group. The LA requests that the Governing Body complete a skills pro-forma (1) to help identify suitable nominees. The NCC Governance Group consists of the lead member for schools and the shadow lead member assisted by an officer from Governor Services.

The name and details of the agreed nominee are then sent to the Governing Body's clerk and head teacher so that arrangements can be made for the chair of governors/ head teacher to meet the LA nominee.

If the Governing Body decide to appoint the LA nominee then the local authority, via Governor Services, must be informed immediately using pro-forma (2) so that our database can be updated, otherwise a vacancy will still exist.

The Governing Body may decide to appoint their own candidate and reject the LA's nomination. In this case the clerk must return pro-forma (3) to the LA.

Clerks must notify Governor Services of any LA governor vacancy that arises for reasons other than the term of office coming to an end. It is vital that LA governor vacancies are filled as quickly as possible. Regulations do allow individual Governing Bodies to specify a term of office between 1 and 4 years for any category of governor including LA governors.

Unless the person appointed by the GB as an LA governor has been nominated by the LA or the LA has delegated the GB to appoint a person as an LA governor – the appointment is not valid as the GB has not followed the correct process through the LA..

Ongoing support and development opportunities are available to all governors of Northamptonshire schools. The majority of this support is offered by Governor Services and through the LGSS OWD Governor training programme. We expect all new LA governors to attend the induction course provided as this is a vital part of the new governor's development. We also expect all LA governors to adhere to the school's adopted Code of Conduct and recommend the NGA code.

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This process will be reviewed annually.

