

Guidelines for the Recruitment, Election, Appointment and Induction of Governors

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Introduction

School governors form the biggest single group of volunteers in the country. They represent all the groups who stand to gain or lose by the success of a school – parents, staff, the local authority, the foundation or trust, the wider community. Their core purpose is to help schools provide the best possible education for their pupils. To do so they must play a significant role in the leadership and management of schools. The Department for Education (DfE) is increasingly comparing the role of governing bodies to corporate boards with an expectation that governing bodies will have highly skilled members whose focus will be on; holding the headteacher to account, ensuring financial probity and setting a strategic vision for a school.

The following is a recent quote from Chris Caroe, Head of the School Governance Unit at the DfE and gives a clear message of current government thinking.

‘Ofsted and Ministers’ vision for the primary role of GBs is as non-executive boards – akin to the board of charity trustees or company directors, strategic leaders driving the success and effectiveness of their organisation. Their primary role is to set the long term vision and hold executive leaders to account for the school’s performance – both educational and financial. This role is now defined in legislation for maintained schools, described in the Governors’ Handbook for all schools and academies, and reflected in the criteria inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of governance.

Being on the board of an organisation with a multi-million pound turnover is a demanding task, and many GBs may be feeling the pressure. But it’s a vital role and expectations are high. Governors may be volunteers, but they can’t afford to be amateur. We need more professional standards of governance, with GBs that are skilled and confident to not only ensure schools’ compliance, but to also take the lead in shaping schools’ long-term goals and strategic priorities and establishing robust arrangements for holding heads to account for progress towards them’.

Chris Caroe – Head of School Governance Unit, DfE

In view of this governing bodies must increasingly take responsibility for recruiting governors with the skills required to move the work of the governing body forward.

This toolkit has been produced to help governing bodies, including headteachers to be proactive in recruiting and retaining governors. It will be updated regularly and we welcome feedback from those who use it.

Governor Recruitment: The Role of the Local Authority

The Governors Services Team provides advice, support, and guidance for governing bodies. In relation to the **recruitment of governors**, the team:

- works with the One Stop Shop for School Governors (SGOSS) to recruit community and co-opted governors
- works with the LA Governor appointments panel to nominate LA Governors to be appointed on maintained, foundation, free schools and academies, where possible meeting skills set required by governing bodies
- provides advice and guidance to inform the election and recruitment of governors
- supplies material for parents' evenings and school functions to raise awareness of the role of governors and provide information for those considering undertaking the role
- produces a termly newsletter for governors which could be shared with prospective governors
- maintains a website which provides a range of information about the roles and responsibilities of governing bodies. This would be of interest to prospective governors
- attends Community Information Sessions to promote the role of governors
- works with the Black and Minority Ethnic Governors' Group to raise awareness and to encourage members of community groups to be governors
- organises an annual governor awards scheme to celebrate the achievement of outstanding governance and long service

In addition the team:

- maintains a database of all governor appointments
- analyses data and provides information to governing bodies and national organisations about issues such as vacancy rates and participation in training
- collects equal opportunities monitoring information with the ultimate aim of ensuring governing bodies reflect the communities served by their schools. **See appendix 1**

Governor recruitment : The role of the governing body

The DfE have made it clear that governing bodies will increasingly be responsible for governor recruitment, by carrying out more structured and focused recruitment activities.

When undertaking governor recruitment there is an expectation that governing bodies :

- Consider the skills of existing members by carrying out a skills audit. The NGA Skills Audit template Appendix 3 can be used to identify any specific gaps that need to be filled in membership in terms of skills, knowledge and experience of existing governors.
- Work with the School Governors One Stop Shop (SGOSS) to recruit co-opted governors who have the skills required by the governing body, where new governors do not have the knowledge or experience they must be encouraged to attend training sessions to develop these skills.
- Inform governor elections so that the electorate understands the extent to which nominated candidates possess the skills the governing body ideally requires.
- Ensure that all prospective governors understand the role of a governing body and the governing bodies code of conduct. A sample code of conduct can be found at on page 18.
- Appoint governors that have the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

Raising the profile of governing bodies

Governing bodies should ensure that their profile remains high in school to ensure that parents, pupils, staff and the community are aware of the work carried out by the governing body.

Raising awareness of the role of governors by schools, particularly amongst parents, should be an ongoing process and not only undertaken at the time of elections. Encouraging active governor participation at all school events will enable parents and members of the community to meet and

talk with existing governors and develop a regular flow of information. A governors' newsletter or school newsletter which regularly features an article on the work of the governing body will also help to keep governorship on the parents' agenda. It's also a good idea to feature an article on individual governors in newsletters. A noticeboard displaying photographs of the governing body also raises the profile of governors.

The school should consider on going opportunities for parents to meet and talk with existing governors, particularly parent governors, at the regular school events. The more familiar parents are with the work of the school and the governing body the more likely they are to come forward in parental elections.

Where parents/carers come into school regularly you can have:

A governors' notice board which gives:

- names, descriptions and photos of governors
- information on how to contact governors, including the SEN governor
- governors' arrangements for parents (i.e. non-governors) to attend meetings
- agendas of governors' meeting
- minutes of governors' meetings
- translations or summary information in community languages

Space set aside for parents/carers to use where information about the school and how to support their children's learning is available. Existing governors can be involved in activities/events that parents arrange, and can explain the governors' role.

Regular letters from the head to parents/carers – numbered week by week, with contributions from governors. These could include profiling each member of the governing body, and inserting a concise outline of the issues covered by the governing body during the term.

For all schools, including special schools

- Where parents may not be able to come to school regularly you can have:
- A governors' section in the school newsletter – numbered week by week
- information given at parent teacher association social events and meetings
- occasional meetings of class groups to discuss all kinds of issues affecting children and parenting. Representatives can be put forward to the PTA.
- Website which includes the latest newsletter, the school profile and information about governors' meetings

Make the role appealing

A well-organised governing body is more appealing than one that lets meetings run on late into the night. You can aim for:

- meetings at times that suit parents
- a crèche for parents with small children
- well constructed agendas with meetings that finish on time
- an induction programme that supports new governors
- involvement of governors in staff training sessions
- a system of linking governors to specific areas of the school development plan. This can reassure those who are put off by the amount they might have to learn and understand about the school.
- payment of expenses of getting to meetings

Pre-appointment checks

Safeguarding Regulations that came into effect in September 2012 changed the status of governor activities. The new regulations no longer defined governors as carrying out 'regulated activity' and removed the requirement for governors to be checked on the List 99 barred list. However, we recommend that all governors and Associate Members sign the disclaimer first for confirmation that they understand they are disqualified from holding office if they hold any previous convictions would prevent them from being appointed as a governor.

If any of the situations listed on the disqualification list Appendix 1 apply to an individual before or after election or appointment as a governor, the individual must inform the Chair of Governors as this will automatically render the individual ineligible to stand or to continue as a governor.

In addition, governing bodies may elect to carry out Debarring Services (DBS) checks on all governors prior to appointment, regulations state that any governor who refuses to have a DBS check is disqualified from holding office as a governor

All LA governors are DBS checked prior to appointment or re-appointment. Elected Members appointed as LA Governors are DBS checked by the LA. All other LA governors can be DBS checked in school for convenience, however the LA requires confirmation of the DBS check clearance reference and date.

It is very important that appendix 1 and appendix 2 are completed by each new governor and sent to Governor Services, Education Strategy, Second Floor South Wing, Civic 1, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2UW

Categories of governors

There are a range of categories of governor depending the type of school. The appointment/election methods for each category of governor is different. The governor types and appointment/election methods are outlined below:

Governor types

The governor types are as follows:

- Parent governors
- Staff governors
- The Headteacher
- Local Authority governors
- Co-opted governors (under the terms of the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012)
- Foundation
- Partnership governors (under the terms of the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012) Associate members
- Community governors (this category will cease to exist from 1 September 2015)
- Sponsor governors (this category will cease to exist from 1 September 2015)

Parent Governors

A parent governor is elected by parents of registered pupils at the school and who is himself/herself a parent of a registered pupil attending the school at the time of the election. The regulations state that "any person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor of a school if he/she is paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve month period". In practice this means that parents who work at the school as teachers, Learning Support Assistants, or in any other supporting role for more than 12.5 hours per week are disqualified from standing as parent governors.

Eligibility

With the exception of parents working 500 or more hours a year in a school, all those who are a parent, carer or have parental responsibility of a registered child at the school are entitled to make a nomination or second a nomination, to stand and to vote in parent governor elections. This is not changed by separation or divorce, unless a Court so orders.

Legal guardians and foster parents would count as 'parents' for these purposes but local authorities or voluntary organisations would not.

The school should do its best to ensure that everyone whom it knows to be a parent is aware of their rights as above. Schools have to keep a register of parents with parental responsibility

The role of a parent governor - representative or delegate?

- Parent governors are elected by parents of pupils registered at the school.
- They are on the governing body to contribute to the work of the group in advising, setting policy and making decisions.
- Their input is valued because they have particular knowledge, experience and views to bring to the governing body.
- They are also representative of the group who elected them and therefore have a responsibility to generally communicate their views to the governing body, as far as they are able, and to keep them informed if this is possible.
- They are not delegates obliged to get voting instructions on every item on the agenda and to vote in accordance with the views of some or all of the parent body. If an issue comes to a vote, they must vote for what they personally believe to be in the best interests of the school.
- They have a vital role in raising the awareness of the role of governors amongst parents, particularly new parents.

When are they a parent and when a governor?

- Parent governors tend to be approached by parents more often than other governors for advice and support – they will need to consider whether giving support and advice to an individual parent can be reconciled with their role as a governor.
- They need to make a judgement in each case as to whether they are acting as a parent or as a governor.
- They should make sure they are familiar with the procedures that apply when parents have concerns or wish to make a complaint.
- If a parent has a concern or complaint which is very specific to their child, they should encourage them to follow the school procedure which would normally suggest trying to resolve their concerns by speaking to the appropriate teacher, usually the class teacher.
- If they remain unhappy or dissatisfied with the outcome of the contact with the teacher, the parent governor should suggest that they make an appointment to speak to the headteacher (in secondary schools they may need to speak to a member of staff who is designated for particular roles, e.g. pastoral head, head of department, head of year).
- If a parent raises any issues of general concerns with a parent governor about the school's performance or provision for the pupils, they should suggest that they make these known to the headteacher. They may wish to advise the parent how best to approach the matter. If however the parents are reluctant to do so the parent governor could agree to make these known to the headteacher and discuss with him/her how best to manage the issue.
- Being a parent governor does not disqualify them from their usual rights as a parent, including making a complaint.
- Being a parent and a parent governor provides them with an invaluable role in improving communications between the school and home.

- Parent governors are the best advocates to encourage parents to become future governors.

Staff Governors

Teaching and support staff who, at the time of election, are employed by either the governing body or the local authority to work at the school under a contract of employment, are eligible to be staff governors.

Staff governors are elected by the school staff. They cease to hold office when they cease to work at the school.

It is important that prospective staff governors understand the nature of the role of a governor – and specifically that their role will not be to represent staff, nor to stand alongside the headteacher in being held to account by the governing body, but to operate as part of the governing body to provide strategic leadership and to hold the headteacher to account.

As with elected parent governors, staff governors cannot be removed from office. Clear expectations of role and conduct should therefore be communicated and agreed upfront.

If no candidates are forthcoming, the position on the governing body remains vacant and an election should be held as soon as an eligible candidate is identified.

The role of the staff governor - representative or delegate?

All members of a governing body have equal status in the responsibilities they share.

- A staff governor is, in every sense, a full governor with the same rights to participate and contribute to shared decisions as any other.
- Staff governors serve for a 4 year term of office unless the governing body has agreed a shorter term of office for all staff governors to increase the number of staff who can be involved. This term of office is automatically terminated when the member of staff ceases to be employed at the school.
- The governing body is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the school. The Headteacher is the day-to-day manager of the school and works within the strategic framework agreed by the governing body.
- Staff employed at the school cannot hold the office of Chair or Vice-Chair of the governing body but may chair committees.
- Staff employed at the school must withdraw and not take part in discussions relating to the appraisal or pay of any school employee (all governors need to withdraw if they have a pecuniary or other interest in any item under consideration by the governing body).
- The Headteacher cannot be a member of any staff dismissal or staff dismissal appeal committee or the pupil discipline committee which the governing body chooses to establish.
- The model LA parental complaints procedure, which has been adopted by schools in Harrow, recommends that school staff are not members of the governors' hearing panel.
- Staff in schools cannot be community or LA governors. In addition, if they work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year they cannot be parent governors. This makes the election of staff governors more important as representatives of school staff. However, staff can become associate members of committees with voting rights if so agreed by the governing body.

Briefing for potential staff governors

- They are on the governing body to contribute to the work of the group in advising, setting policy and making decisions.

- Their input is valued because they are a teacher or a member of the support staff of the school and have particular knowledge, experience and views to bring to the governing body as well as contributing to increasing the governors' understanding of the school.
- They are also representative of the group who elected them and therefore have a responsibility to convey their views to the governing body and to keep them informed.
- They are not delegates, obliged to get voting instructions on every item on the agenda and to vote in accordance with the views of the particular staff group.
- They should agree with the Headteacher a suitable mechanism for ensuring that there is time to carry out their representative role.
- They have a vital role in raising the awareness of the role of governors amongst colleagues, particularly new colleagues.

The Headteacher

Under the terms of the 2012 regulations, the headteacher is a member of the governing body by virtue of their office.

The headteacher may at any time resign as a governor, and withdraw their resignation, in both cases by notifying the clerk in writing.

Local Authority Governors

Under the terms of the 2007 Constitution regulations, the decision on who to appoint is made by the Local Authority.

However, under the terms of the School Governance and Constitution Regulations of 2012, Local authority governors are nominated by the local authority but appointed by the governing body. The local authority can nominate any eligible person as a local authority governor, but it is for the governing body to decide whether their nominee has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any other eligibility criteria they have set. Local authorities should therefore make every effort to understand the governing body's requirements and identify and nominate suitable candidates.

An individual eligible to be a staff governor at the school may not be appointed as a local authority governor.

There are two types of LA Governor appointees

Political LA Governor appointments

Political group LA governors are allocated to governing bodies under the principle of proportionality, that is, each political group in proportion to their representation on the Council. The application of proportionality necessitates discussion between the nominated representatives of the political groups in order to agree the make-up of the LA representatives on each governing body.

Non political party LA Governor appointments

Non Political Party LA governors are appointed if a governing body makes a request for an appointment to be made on the basis of the nominee having a particular skills set or experience required by the governing body.

Method of appointment

The Corporate Director of Children's Services nominates LA Governors on the advice of the LA Governor Advisory panel which is made up of representatives from the leading political parties in Harrow and also officers from Governor Services. The panel meets every term to discuss nominations for appointments and re-appointments. All LA Governor appointments and re-appointments are subject to Debarring Service Clearance. However, checking of documentation for clearance can be carried out in schools if more convenient for LA governor nominees.

Co-opted Governors (this category applied to maintained school governing bodies that have reconstituted under the September 2012 regulations)

Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body. They are people who in the opinion of the governing body have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

Staff can be appointed by the governing body as co-opted governors providing they do not make up one third of the total membership of the governing body.

Foundation governors

Foundation governors are appointed by the school's founding body, church or other organisation as identified in the instrument of government. A foundation governor is someone who, in the opinion of the organisation entitled to appoint them, has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school, and who is appointed for the purpose of securing:

- the school's character (including religious character where it has one)
- that the school is conducted in accordance with the foundation's governing documents.

In appointing a foundation governor the organisation entitled to make the appointment should seek to understand and take into account the skills and experience the governing body requires.

Partnership governors (not applicable to Community School governing bodies)

Partnership governors are appointed by the governing body. Individuals are only eligible to be nominated as a partnership governor if the person nominating them believes that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Likewise the governing body may only appoint a person as a partnership governor if they believe that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

The number of partnership governors required on the governing body is set out in the instrument of government.

The governing body must first try to appoint partnership governors from those nominated:

- where the school has a religious character: by the "appropriate diocesan authority" in the case of a Church of England or Roman Catholic school, and
- by the "appropriate religious body" in any other case; and,
- where the school does not have a religious character, by the parents of registered pupils at the school and such others in the community as they consider appropriate (for example, staff, community organisations and other local bodies).

Where the governing body cannot fill all the vacant posts from among the nominees, either because there were not enough or because they rejected some of the nominees as ineligible, then the governing body can fill those posts from among persons nominated by governors.

Where the governing body makes an appointment having rejected nominees as ineligible then they must put their decision and reasons not to appoint in writing to:

- the local authority
- the person or body who nominated the rejected individual, and
- the person rejected

Associate members

Associate members are appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committee. They may also attend full governing body meetings. They are not governors and therefore do not have a vote in governing body decisions, but may be given a vote on decision made by committees to which they are appointed.

Associated members should be appointed because of the specific expertise and experience they can contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The definition of associate member is wide. Subject to the disqualifications set out in the Regulations, the governing body

may appoint a pupil, school staff member, or any other person as an associate member so that they can contribute their specific expertise. This can help to address specific gaps identified in the skills of governing body members, and/or help the governing body respond to particular challenges that they may be facing.

Community Governors (this category will cease to exist after 1 September 2015)

A Community Governor is “a person who lives or works in the community served by the school, or a person who, in the opinion of the governing body, is committed to good governance and the success of the school”. The disqualifications in this category are:

- pupils of the school
- anyone eligible to be a staff governor
- elected members of the LA
- governors are able to vote on the appointment of other community governors

The governing body needs to be mindful that it reflects a balance of interests. When considering potential community governors the governing body should review its membership to ensure that it reflects the needs of the school and the community, with particular regard to:

- ethnic diversity
- the local business community
- any additional skills and experience needed by the governing body
- people who have shown a commitment to the school or have been involved in school activities

The Regulations require that community governor vacancies are filled by invitation from the governing body as a whole. The number of community governors required will be listed in the school’s Instrument of Government.

Sponsor Governors (this category will cease to exist after 1 September 2015)

The following is an extract from the former Guide to the Law for School Governors.

‘Sponsor governors are appointed by the governing body. It is at the governing body’s discretion whether they choose to appoint sponsor governors or not. If the governing body wants to appoint one or more sponsor governors, it must seek nominations from the sponsor(s).

The sponsor can be someone who gives substantial assistance to the school, financially or in kind, or who provides services to the school. The governing body can appoint a maximum of two persons as sponsor governors, or where the school is a secondary school, up to four sponsor governors’.

Please note that under the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012 the role of a sponsor governor has been removed. Governing bodies that have reconstituted under the September 2012 regulations cannot appoint Sponsor Governors and this category will not exist after 1 September 2015.

Election of parent and staff governors

The LA and governing bodies have the responsibility for organising elections and determining all matters relating to the election of parent and staff governors in community schools, although responsibility for recruiting governors and the election is delegated to the Headteacher. For VA schools the governing body is responsible for the conduct of elections for parent and staff governors.

The following guidelines have been produced for use by community schools although they may be adopted by the governing body of a VA school.

In the term before a governor is due to end his/her period of office, or as soon as is possible when a vacancy occurs, the school should make arrangements to elect a replacement. If an unplanned vacancy occurs towards the end of a term it may be more appropriate to conduct the election at the start of the following term to allow all those who are eligible the opportunity to participate.

A separate election must take place for each category of governor. Well run elections use secure and reliable voting systems and offer candidates the opportunity to publish a statement of sufficient length to set out:

- evidence of the extent to which they possess the skills and experience the governing body desires;
- their commitment to undertake training to acquire or develop the skills to be an effective governor;
- if seeking re-election, details of their contribution to the work of the governing body during their previous term of office; and
- how they plan to contribute to the future work of the governing body.

22. The purpose of governing bodies providing and publishing information about the role of a governor and the skills they ideally require is not to create additional eligibility criteria for potential candidates – which they do not have the power to do. It is for the electorate to elect their choice of candidate(s). The purpose of publishing the information is to simply inform the electorate of the governing bodies' expectations, circumstances and ideal requirements.

Staff Governors. Deciding who is eligible

The system for electing staff governors and the headteacher as staff governors is as follows:

- For staff governor seats, nominations must be sought from all staff, both teacher and support staff. They cannot be restricted to one or the other. In all cases, all staff can nominate and all take part in voting, including the headteacher. A teacher can nominate a support staff member and vice versa.

To clarify how this works, the following examples may help:

Full-time and part-time staff, but not supply or casual staff working as teachers at the school are eligible to stand and to vote in staff elections. This will include staff working at the school as music teachers, special educational needs teachers, and any other staff who work regularly at the school but who may be funded from elsewhere. Full-time and part-time staff, other than teachers, working at the school are also eligible to stand and to vote in staff elections. This will include all support staff, catering staff, cleaning staff, grounds maintenance staff and any other staff who regularly work at the school but who may be funded from elsewhere.

Notification of a vacancy

The school must notify, in writing, all those eligible to stand and vote in an election of a vacancy and outline the procedure to elect a replacement. The notification must include:

- information on the number of vacancies
- those entitled to stand and vote
- a copy of the statutory disqualification sheet

- the process for submitting nominations
- a timetable

An example of the letter/notification for parents is provided at appendix 4.

An information sheet for parents is provided at appendix 5.

An example of the letter/notification for staff is provided at appendix 10.

An information sheet for staff is provided at appendix 11.

For parent governor elections all parents must be informed, with an invitation for nominations and the date of any election meetings. A letter to parents may be sent by 'pupil post'. Generally a letter to the household is acceptable and does not need to be sent to each individual parent. Parents of children who are absent, or those with parental responsibility who do not live with the child, should have a letter sent to their nominated address by post.

The letter should explain the duties and responsibilities of parent governors, the circumstances which might disqualify a parent from standing, an outline of the time needed and the term of office. A note from an existing parent governor might be helpful. Parents could be told that while specialist knowledge or relevant experience are useful, common sense and willingness to give time are key requisites.

Schools should try to ensure that the governing body reflects the local community. Information may need to be given in other languages besides English to encourage members of ethnic minority groups to stand for election.

For staff governor elections a written notification should be made available for the eligible staff working at the school, either individually or via a staff notice board. Individuals who are absent from school or who work part-time should be notified in writing by post to their designated address.

Nominations

No-one may nominate more candidates than there are vacancies.

Those being nominated must be willing to stand in the election.

Proposers and seconders of nominations for parent governors must be parents of registered pupils at the school. A seconder should not be related to the person being nominated.

An individual who is nominated may nominate one or more others and may also be a seconder to one or more nominees provided that s/he is eligible to do so..

An individual may nominate himself/herself provided s/he has an eligible seconder to whom s/he is not related.

NB There is no legal requirement to have proposers and seconders. Anyone eligible to stand for election can nominate themselves. Schools are free to decide how they want to operate this process

See appendix 6 for a model nomination form for a parent governor election.

See appendix 12 for a model nomination form for a staff governor election.

The receipt of nominations will cease on the date specified and no further nominations should be accepted.

Statement by candidates

Those nominated should be offered the opportunity to submit a short written statement to provide voters with some information to help them in casting their votes. There should not be a word limit for written statements, candidates should be given the opportunity to fully describe their suitability for the role. Should an election be necessary, the school should arrange for the statements to be circulated in a standardised format with the ballot papers to all those eligible to vote.

When no election is required

If by the closing date for receipt of nominations the number of nominations received is less than, or equal to the number of vacancies, no election is required and those nominated should be declared to be elected governors unopposed. The result should be notified to those who were eligible to stand and vote in the election.

Secret ballot

If there are more nominations than vacancies the school must arrange to hold a secret ballot.

Returning officer

The school should appoint a Returning Officer who would ensure that the election is conducted fairly and openly. The head, school bursar or school secretary normally acts as a returning officer for parent governor elections. It may be appropriate to involve the Chair of Governors or another governor. Those standing for election should be invited to attend the count as well as at least one independent scrutineer.

Voting arrangements

Ballot papers (with a short note about each nomination supplied by the candidate) and the closing date for voting must be sent to all those with parental responsibility for registered pupils. A letter should be included outlining the process involved including any opportunity to meet with those nominated. An example of the letter/notification is provided at [appendix 7](#) for parent governors and [appendix 13](#) for staff governors.

Each parent is entitled to one vote per vacancy, regardless of the number of children s/he may have in the school. Care should therefore be taken to ensure that each parent only receives one ballot paper. [See appendix 8.](#)

All staff, both teaching and support, can make nominations and vote in all staff governor elections.

[See appendix 14](#) for a staff governor ballot form.

Schools will need to consider the most appropriate method to ensure a secret ballot. A double envelope system could be used where the ballot paper is sealed in the inner unmarked envelope. The inner envelope is then sealed in an outer envelope which could be named or numbered and checked for entitlement to vote. The inner envelope would be placed in a ballot box until the appointed day for the count. Alternatively each ballot paper could be numbered with a set of numbers for each class or year and issued randomly, which again would adhere to the secrecy yet enabling a check for eligibility.

Arrangements for returning ballot papers should include by post, by 'pupil post', or in person.

Proxy voting is not permissible. If a ballot paper is spoiled or lost a duplicate may be issued. A ballot box should be placed in the school office or other suitable place where continuous supervision is possible. An election is not invalidated by an individual's failure to receive or return a ballot paper.

The count

The count should take place as soon after the date for return of ballot papers as is possible. Candidates or their representatives should be invited to be present with the Returning Officer at the designated date and time for the count. It is important that the count is properly conducted to avoid any claims of unfairness or impropriety.

The successful candidates will be those who receive the highest number of votes.

Dealing with a tied vote

In the event of a tie, the votes should be recounted. If the votes cast are still equal the school should have previously decided what method it would use to resolve a tie and should have made this known to all eligible individuals. Possible methods of deciding include tossing a coin, drawing lots or, in the case of parental elections, the parent with the youngest child in the school.

Announcing the result

The result of the election should be made known to those involved in the election, the school and the governing body. The result could be placed on a school notice board and/or in any forthcoming school newsletter. Parents should be told how the new parent governor may be contacted (normally care of the school).

Please also notify Governor Services on e-mail: governor.services@harrow.gov.uk so that an appointment letter and supporting paperwork can be sent to the successful candidate(s).

The ballot papers, a record of the count, letters and other associated paperwork should be retained securely for six months in case the election result is challenged. After six months all the paperwork should be destroyed.

The number of ballot papers issued and the number returned at each election should be noted in order to monitor participation.

Please refer to :

[Appendix 9 Parent governor election record sheet](#)

[Appendix 15 Staff governor election record sheet](#)

Inducting governors

It is very important for schools to have a well developed strategy to induct new governors to the school and to the governing body. Publicising this and the support available from the LA may help to persuade parents and staff to stand as governors.

The clerk has an important role to play in introducing the new governor to the work of the governing body and the headteacher also has a crucial role to play in helping new governors to understand the unique context in which they will be working. The Chair of the governing body will:

- allocate an experienced governor to mentor each new governor. The mentor will co-ordinate the initial induction. The Vice Chair of the committee selected by the new governor will act as ongoing mentor after the initial induction
- identify the key documentation that would enable a new governor to gain an understanding of the school and the role of governors.

Documentation could include the following items:

Immediately on appointment/election/co-option Clerk to send

1. A welcome letter from the Clerk with contact details for the Chair and Headteacher. This letter should list the documentation enclosed, inform the new governor that a mentor will be in touch, explain how to access a copy of the Governors' Handbook online
2. School's values and vision statement
3. The school's prospectus
4. List of governors and the committees to which they belong
5. Committee structure and terms of reference
6. Minutes of two most recent governors' meetings
7. Two recent reports written by the head for governors
8. Dates of future meetings, events and location details
9. List of staff and their responsibilities
10. Plan of the school
11. Visits policy

Ideally before first full GB meeting the mentor will meet the new governor(s) and introduce them to the following:

12. The school development plan
13. A recent newsletter to parents
14. The most recent Ofsted report
15. The school's complaints policy

The clerk will ensure that supplies of these documents are readily available in school. We will review at regular intervals what documentation we will provide, and at what stage, so that new governors aren't deluged.

Based on the documents provided the mentor will cover in that initial meeting:

- the areas of work covered by the governing body and its committees and will encourage the new governor to take his/her time to consider where s/he might like to focus. Suggest that new governors sit in on committee meetings before making up their minds
- the purpose of the Governor's Profile
- the value of attending an Induction Programme for New Governors organised by the Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP)

Following that initial meeting the headteacher will invite each new governor to the school to meet with him/her, tour the school and be briefed on current priorities. This is important even if the new governor is already familiar with the school – for example as a parent. Being a governor brings different responsibilities.

Once the new governor has decided upon a committee the Vice Chair of that committee will assume responsibility for ongoing support of the new governor.

School Governors' Code

This code is provided, following consultation at the Governors' Forum, as a model for governing bodies to adapt or adopt for their own use. The purpose of the Code is to ensure a clear and shared understanding of the role of a governor.

The key purpose of governing bodies is to help schools to provide the best possible education for children.

Governing bodies must act as a corporate body. No governor has individual authority or power by being a member of the governing body, unless it has specifically been delegated. Only the governing body as a whole can take actions or decisions unless agreed otherwise and formally minuted. Only when the Chair and governing body have given their agreement to an individual governor can he or she make statements or express opinions on behalf of the governing body. Even if responsibilities have been delegated to individuals or committees, the governing body as a whole remains accountable.

Governors should

1. support the aims and objectives of the school and safeguard the interests of the school and its pupils in the wider community;
2. make a positive contribution to the efficient and effective management of the school by giving their time and bringing their experience to help raise the standards of education;
3. attend regularly, be a member of a committee(s), and work co-operatively as a member of a team;
4. seek and take opportunities to enhance their effectiveness as governors, through participating in training and development programmes, and by increasing their own knowledge of the school;
5. acknowledge that differences of opinion may arise in discussion of issues, but, when a majority decision of the governing body prevails, it should be accepted;
6. take due account of the views of parents, pupils, staff and other interested parties and base their views on matters before the governing body on an impartial assessment of the available facts;
7. acknowledge and respect that the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the implementation of plans and policies of the governing body are the responsibility of the headteacher and other senior managers of the school;
8. make a declaration of interest openly and immediately about any potential personal conflict which may arise from any matter before the governing body or from any other aspect of governorship and not seek to benefit from their position as governors;
9. respect the confidentiality of the work of the governing body and particularly those items which the governing body decides from time to time should remain confidential;
10. be aware of the wider implications of individual governing body decisions, and contribute to the Harrow LA partnership.

Appendix 1: Declaration for eligibility for membership on a governing body

- I understand that I need to read the following information and tick each box to indicate that I have read and comply with the information provided in each statement.
- I am aged 18 years or over at the time of my election or appointment.
- I only hold one position of governorship at this school.
- I am not a registered pupil at this school.
- I have not been subject to a bankruptcy restriction order or an interim order, debt relief restrictions order or my estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged or annulled or reduced
- I have not had my estate sequestrated and the sequestration order has not been discharged annulled or reduced.
- I have not been subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Director's Disqualification Act 1986, a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, a disqualification undertaking accepted under the company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, or an order made under section 429 (2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order)
- I have not been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body.
- I am not included in the list of teachers or workers considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- I am not disqualified from working with children or from registering for childminding, or providing day care.
- I am not disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- I am not disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006.
- I have not been sentenced to 3 months or more in prison, without the option of a fine, in 5 years before becoming a governor.
- I have not received a sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor.

- I have not at any time received a prison sentence for 5 years or more.
- I have not 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.
- I will not refuse to allow an application for a Debarring Service check

I understand that I will not be eligible to remain as a governor in the event of the following:

- I am detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 during my period of office as a governor.
- I fail to attend governing body meetings – without the consent of the governing body – for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed.
- I am sentenced to 3 months or more in prison without the option of a fine.
- Or as a result of any other change affecting my eligibility to be a governor.

DECLARATION

I declare that I have read each statement above and have indicated that I comply with requirement by ticking each box. I confirm that the information provided above is true and accurate.

I also agree that I will notify the Chair of the Governing Body immediately if any of the above circumstances apply to me after I have been elected or appointed as a Governor.

Signed:Date:.....

First Name(s).....Surname.....

Maiden Name.....Previous Name(s).....

I am a governor at School(s):.....

If you are unsure of any issue that may apply to any of the statements above, please provide details of the issue and the Local Authority will consider the information provided against the disqualification list.

Signed:Date:

Please return this form to:
 Governor Services
 Education Strategy
 Second Floor South Wing
 Civic 1
 Station Road
 Harrow
 HA1 2UW

Appendix 2 : Equal opportunities monitoring information

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING INFORMATION

We ask for your co-operation in providing the following information. The information given will be used to analyse governing body membership in Harrow in relation to gender and ethnicity.

I consider my ethnic origin to be: (Tick appropriate box)

Asian or Asian British

Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Black or Black British

African	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Chinese or Other Ethnic Group

Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any Other Ethnic Group	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mixed

White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White & Black Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

White

British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Gender

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tick this box if you do not wish to disclose this information

Name:.....

Governing Body.....

Governor Type

Signature..... Date.....

Please return to:
Governor Services
Education Strategy
Second Floor South Wing
Civic 1
Station Road
Harrow
HA1 2UW

ALL THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY.

Appendix 3 Parent/Staff governor elections timetable

PARENT/STAFF GOVERNOR ELECTIONS TIMETABLE	
(Insert date)	Letter sent to all those eligible to participate in the election process notifying them of the vacancy with nomination paperwork
10 school days later (insert date)	Closing date for receipt of nominations
If a ballot is necessary	Ballot papers and supporting statements sent to all those eligible to vote
10 school days later (insert date)	Closing date for receipt of ballot papers
Within 4 school days later (insert date and time)	The count of the ballot papers will take place
As soon as possible after the count	Announce the result of the election process to all those involved.

Dear Parent

Parent Governor Elections

This is to let you know that we will be electing xxx new parent governors this term to join the governing body from xxxx. Our parent governors are very valuable members of the governing body. We rely on them to help us to keep in touch with what parents are thinking and to help us to decide what is best for all our pupils/students.

- **You DO NOT need to be an expert in education to be an effective governor**
- **You DO have to want to help our school to be the best it can be**
- **SUPPORT and TRAINING are available to help you to get to grips with the role**

Besides parents, the governing body includes the headteacher and other members of staff, representatives of the local authority and people from the local community. All of these people play an important part in building good relationships between the school, parents and the wider community. Together they decide the key priorities for the school, help plan to achieve them, and then check whether the actions taken have had the desired impact. The governing body also plays an important role in deciding how the school's budget should be spent, and it helps to appoint our staff.

Anyone who has parental responsibility for a pupil on the school roll at the time of the election can stand for election, can nominate someone for election and can vote in the election. Roughly speaking, **parental responsibility means someone with whom the child is living**, but if you are not sure about this please contact the school office who will be able to explain in more detail. We have a factsheet about becoming a governor we can send you if you want more information.

All nominations should be sent in to the school office by **3.00 p.m. on xxxx**. You can nominate yourself and you will also need a seconder. Every nomination must be signed by the parent/candidate stating that they are willing to stand. We also need a few words about them and why they would like to be a governor. Candidates cannot withdraw from the election once ballot papers have been issued.

If there are more nominations than vacancies an election will be held. You are therefore invited to provide a statement about yourself, with your nomination form, (see appendix 5A) of no more than ... (insert number)... words. Your statement will be produced by the school in a standard format and distributed to parents to assist them in casting their votes.

On xxxx we will send the ballot forms with the names of the candidates and their details home with the children so please watch out for the letter! As there are xxxx vacancies each parent will have xxxx votes, however many children they have in the school. The ballot is secret; you can send or post the ballot paper back in a sealed envelope, or drop it into the ballot box outside the school office. All the votes must be in by **3.00 p.m. on xxxx** when they will be counted.

In the event of a tie the votes will be recounted. If the votes cast are still equal the decision will be made by ... (insert method agreed).

Please think about taking on the job, or suggesting someone who will do it well. We need committed parent governors, people who really want to make a positive difference to the life chances of our children.

If you would like to know a little more about becoming a parent governor please get in touch with xxx, who has been a parent governor and has a really clear understanding of how the governing body works

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Appendix 5. Parent governor election information sheet

The LA (local authority) has overall responsibility for organising the election and determining all matters relating to the election of parent governors in community schools. Responsibility for conducting the recruitment and election process is delegated to the Headteacher. For VA schools the governing body is responsible for the conduct of elections for parent and staff governors.

However, the Regulations make provision for the governing body to appoint parent governors where, not enough parents stand for election.

Governing bodies may only appoint as a parent governor a parent who has, in their opinion, the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.

Elected parent governors cannot be removed from office – even if it becomes apparent that they are unable to develop the skills to contribute to effective governance or behave in a manner befitting the role. Every effort should therefore be made upfront to avoid potential difficulties later by informing prospective candidates of the nature of the role and securing their agreement to a clear set of expectations for behaviour and conduct – as set out in a code of conduct. The 2012 Roles, Procedures and Allowances regulations set out the basis on which governing bodies may suspend governors, including parent governors.

Parent governor

This is a parent who is elected by parents of registered pupils at the school and who is himself/herself a parent of a registered pupil attending the school at the time of the election. A parent governor is, in every sense, a full governor with the same rights to participate and contribute to shared decisions as any other governor.

Term of office

All governors serve a four-year term of office. (Edit if your governing body has agreed a shorter term for all parent governors). A parent governor can remain on the governing body of the school for the whole of the 4-year term of office, regardless of whether his/her child has left the school during that period.

Eligibility

All those who are a parent, carer or have parental responsibility for a registered child at the school are entitled to make a nomination or second a nomination, to stand and to vote in parent governor elections. This is not changed by separation or divorce, unless a Court so orders.

Legal guardians and foster parents would count as 'parents' for these purposes but local authorities or voluntary organisations would not.

Disqualification

A statutory disqualification list is attached. If any of the circumstances listed on the disqualification list apply to an individual before or after election or appointment as a governor, the individual must inform the Chair of Governors as this will automatically render the individual ineligible to be appointed or to continue as a governor.

In addition, a person is disqualified from being a parent governor if they are an elected member of the LA or paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours (i.e. for more than one-third of the hours of a full-time equivalent) in any consecutive twelve month period (at the time of election or appointment).

Nominations

No-one may nominate more candidates than there are vacancies.

Those being nominated must be willing to stand in the election.

Proposers and seconders of nominations must be parents of registered pupils at the school. A seconder should not be related to the person being nominated.

An individual who is nominated may nominate one or more others and may also be a seconder to one or more nominees provided that s/he is eligible to do so (see eligibility above).

An individual may nominate himself/herself provided s/he has an eligible seconder to whom s/he is not related.

The receipt of nominations will cease on the date specified and no further nominations will be accepted.

When no election is required

If by the closing date for receipt of nominations the number of nominations received is less than, or equal to the number of vacancies, no election is required and those nominated are declared to be elected governors unopposed.

Secret ballot

If there are more nominations than vacancies the school will arrange to hold a secret ballot.

Voting arrangements

A Returning Officer will be appointed to oversee the whole election. A letter will be sent to all those eligible to vote (see eligibility above) outlining the process and including a list of names of the candidates and a copy of each of their statements, the ballot paper, and a timetable.

Each parent is entitled to one vote per vacancy, regardless of the number of children s/he may have in the school.

The count

The count will take place on the date and time given on the timetable. The successful candidate(s) will be those who receive the highest number of votes.

Dealing with a tied vote

In the event of a tie, the votes will be recounted. If the votes cast are still equal ***insert information about how this will be resolved.***

Announcing the result

The result of the election will be made known to all parents by ***insert information about how this will be communicated.***

Appendix 6

Sample nomination form for parent governor election

(insert name of school)

This form should be returned to(insert name)by(insert date)

I would like to nominate myself/propose* for the role of parent governor

Name _____

Address _____

Tel.No. Home _____ Work _____

I am a parent / guardian* of :

Name of child _____

Signature _____

OR

My role in school is: _____

Signature: _____

If you are nominating someone else please first check that s/he is willing to stand and ask him or her to sign this form.

Name of proposer _____

Name of child (parent governor vacancy only) _____

Signature _____

I wish to second the proposal for the above named to be nominated as a candidate for the parent governor election. I am not related to the person nominated.

Name of seconder _____

Name of child _____

Signature _____

* delete as appropriate

The candidate is invited to provide a statement which will be produced in a standard format and circulated to all parents if an election is held. You may use the reverse of this form to provide your statement or attach it on a separate sheet.

Dear Parent

Parent Governor Election

I wrote to all parents recently to invite nominations for the vacancy/vacancies for a parent governor/for parent governors. There has been a good response and there are (x) candidates for the (y) places. This means that we must now have a ballot.

I enclose a ballot paper. You are entitled to one vote for each vacancy. This means that you can vote for up to (y) of the candidates. As indicated on the ballot paper you should vote by marking a single "X" alongside the name/names of the parent/parents you support.

Two envelopes are also enclosed. This is so that your vote can be kept confidential. Once you have marked the ballot paper you should place it in the smaller envelope and seal it. Please do not mark this envelope.

This envelope should then be placed in the larger, envelope which you should also seal. **On the outside of the larger, printed envelope write your name and the name of your child/children who attend this school and then sign it.**

Return the envelopes to the school by *(date - at least ten school days)*, which is when the ballot will close. This may be done by posting the envelope back to school, by pupil post or by hand delivery.

When the envelopes are received the details you have put on the outside of the larger, printed envelope are checked to make sure that you are entitled to vote. The large printed envelope will then be opened and the smaller envelope taken out and placed, unopened, in the ballot box. This ensures that there is no way of telling who voted for whom.

Once the votes have been counted I will tell you the result of the election.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Enclosed

- 2 x Envelopes
- 1 x Ballot Paper

SAMPLE BALLOT PAPER

(INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL)

1. There are ... (insert number)... vacancies and you may therefore vote for up to, but no more than (insert number of vacancies) candidates.
2. Each parent is entitled to **one vote per vacancy**
3. Please indicate your preference clearly by putting a “**X**” in the box next to the name of the candidate(s) of your choice.

PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ANY OTHER MARK ON THIS PAPER

4. Please return the ballot paper in a sealed envelope to:

The Returning Officer (give name of this person)
At the school
5. You may return your ballot paper in person, by your child, or by post.
6. Your ballot paper must be received in the school by ... (insert time and date).

The names of the candidates standing in the election are given below. A copy of the statements provided by each candidate is attached for your information.

CANDIDATE’S NAME	PLEASE MARK “X”
JAMES BROWN	
USHA PATEL	
MIKE O’REILLY	
NITIN SHAH	
FIONA SMITH	

Parent Governor Election Record Sheet

This record sheet is to be kept in a file with all parent governor election ballot papers for the below dated election. All ballot papers should be retained for at least six months in the event that the election is contested.

Number of Parent Governor Vacancies

Key Election Dates

Date that Headteacher sent 'notification of vacancy' letter to parents

Date that all nominations needed to be returned by

Date that Headteacher sent letter and ballot papers to parents

Date that ballot papers needed to be returned by

Date that ballot papers were counted

The Nominees were ...

The Result

Nominee Name

Number of Votes

Elected into Office?

The above information is a true record of the parent governor election dated above.

Signature of the Headteacher

Date

Appendix 10. Sample letter to all staff re: vacancy

Circulation list: Everyone who works at the school on a regular basis.

Dear Colleague

Election of a Staff Governor at our school

This is to let you know that we will be electing a staff governor this term to join the governing body from xxxx. The staff governor role is valuable to the governing body. We rely on the Staff Governor to help us to keep in touch with what staff are thinking and to help us to decide what is best for all our children.

The governing body includes the headteacher, parents, a local authority governor and people from the local community. (co-opted/partnership/foundation governors as appropriate). All of these people play an important part in building good relationships between the school, parents and the wider community. Together they decide the key priorities for the school, help plan to achieve them, and then check whether the actions taken have had the desired impact. The governing body also plays an important role in deciding how the school's budget should be spent, and it helps to appoint our staff.

- **You DO NOT need to be an expert in education to be an effective governor**
- **You DO have to want to help our school to be the best it can be**
- **SUPPORT and TRAINING are available to help you to get to grips with the role**

There is a vacancy for a staff governor on our school's governing body. An information sheet about the staff governor role is enclosed.

All members of staff (teaching and support) may nominate and vote in the election. Should no member of the teaching / support staff wish to stand for election, then members of the teaching / support staff may be nominated to stand.

All nominations should be sent in to the school office by **3.00 p.m. on xxxx**. You do need a seconder and you can nominate yourself. Every nomination must be signed by the member of staff stating their willingness to stand. We also need a few words about why they would like to be a governor. Candidates cannot withdraw from the election once ballot papers have been issued.

If there is more than one nomination an election will be held. You are therefore invited to provide a statement about yourself, with your nomination form, (see appendix) of no more than ... (insert number)... words. Your statement will be produced by the school in a standard format and distributed to staff to assist them in casting their votes.

If there is one nomination, then the person nominated will be deemed elected unopposed. If there aren't any nominations, a notice of this result and the vacancy will be placed on the staff notice board and the deadline for nominations to fill the vacancy extended until **[insert date - one week after deadline]**.

The term of office for a staff governor is **xxx** years, but will end sooner if the person elected ceases to be employed to work at the school.

If a ballot is needed we shall send you a ballot paper on **xxx**.

Each member of staff will have *one vote*. The ballot will be secret and you will be notified of the result as soon as possible afterwards.

Please think about taking on this role, or suggesting someone who will do it well. We need committed staff governors, people who really want to make a positive difference to the life chances of our children.

If you would like to know a little more about becoming a staff governor please get in touch with XXXXX, who has been a staff governor and has a really clear understanding of how the governing body works.

If you have any questions about whether you are eligible to stand or vote in the election or about anything else in this letter, please contact me.

Please think about taking on the job, or suggesting someone who will do it well. We need committed staff governors, people who really want to make a positive difference to the life chances of our children.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Enclosed:

- Staff Governor Nomination Form
- Staff Governor Information Sheet

Appendix 11. Staff governor election information sheet

The LA (local authority) and the Governing Body has responsibility for organising the election and determining all matters relating to the election of staff governors in community schools. Responsibility for conducting the recruitment and election process is delegated to the Headteacher. For VA schools the governing body is responsible for the conduct of elections for parent and staff governors.

Staff governor

At this school we have a vacancy for a staff governor position.

A staff governor is, in every sense, a full governor with the same rights to participate and contribute to shared decisions as any other governor. The exception is that they are not allowed to participate in discussions about individuals' pay.

Term of office

All governors serve a four-year term of office. (Edit if your governing body has agreed a shorter term for all staff governors). A staff governor must resign when they leave the school.

Eligibility

Full-time and part-time staff, but not supply or casual staff working as teachers at the school are eligible to stand and to vote in staff elections. This will include staff working at the school as music teachers, special educational needs teachers, and any other staff who work regularly at the school but who may be funded from elsewhere. Full-time and part-time staff, other than teachers, working at the school are also eligible to stand and to vote in staff elections. This will include all support staff, catering staff, cleaning staff, grounds maintenance staff and any other staff who regularly work at the school but who may be funded from elsewhere.

Disqualification

A statutory disqualification list is attached. If any of the circumstances listed on the disqualification list apply to an individual before or after election or appointment as a governor, the individual must inform the Chair of Governors as this will automatically render the individual ineligible to be appointed or to continue as a governor.

Nominations

No-one may nominate more candidates than there are vacancies.

Those being nominated must be willing to stand in the election.

Proposers and seconders of nominations must be staff at the school. A seconder should not be related to the person being nominated.

An individual who is nominated may nominate one or more others and may also be a seconder to one or more nominees provided that s/he is eligible to do so (see eligibility above).

An individual may nominate himself/herself provided s/he has an eligible seconder to whom s/he is not related.

The receipt of nominations will cease on the date specified and no further nominations will be accepted.

When no election is required

If by the closing date for receipt of nominations the number of nominations received is less than, or equal to the number of vacancies, no election is required and those nominated are declared to be elected governors unopposed.

Secret ballot

If there are more nominations than vacancies the school will arrange to hold a secret ballot.

Voting arrangements

A Returning Officer will be appointed to oversee the whole election. A letter will be sent to all those eligible to vote (see eligibility above) outlining the process and including a list of names of the candidates and a copy of each of their statements, the ballot paper, and a timetable.

Each member of staff is entitled to one vote per vacancy

The count

The count will take place on the date and time given on the timetable. The successful candidate(s) will be those who receive the highest number of votes.

Dealing with a tied vote

In the event of a tie, the votes will be recounted. If the votes cast are still equal the school should have previously decided what method it will use to resolve a tie and should have made this known to all eligible individuals.

Announcing the result

The result of the election will be made known to all staff.

Name of School

Personal information (please tick ✓ all applicable boxes)

- I am a teaching member of staff at the school who is also a parent of a pupil at the school. I do not work more than 500 hours per year at the school.
- I am a non-teaching member of staff at the school who is also a parent of a pupil at the school. I do not work more than 500 hours per year at the school.
- I have previously been a staff governor at this school
- I am a member of staff employed to work at the school and hereby nominate myself for election as a staff governor of the school.

This nomination form, of which page 3 will be included in any voting paper, is duly completed and attached.

Employees Name	(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other)
Job Title	
I am a member of ...	<input type="checkbox"/> the teaching staff <input type="checkbox"/> the support staff
Signature	

Nomination proposed by* (if applicable)

Employees Name	(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other)
Job Title	
I am a member of ...	<input type="checkbox"/> the teaching staff <input type="checkbox"/> the support staff
Signature	

*The proposer must be an employee who is paid to work at the school. The proposer may only propose one nomination for election.

My reasons for wanting to be a staff governor.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Data protection

The information that you provide on this form will be held on a computerised database maintained by the data controller (the School as named on page 1) upon successful appointment/election. Your data will be used in accordance with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, which protects the right to privacy of individuals whose personal details are held by the data controller. The School will only make candidate details available within the local education authority.

Appendix 13 Model letter to staff re ballot

Dear Colleague

Staff Governor Election

I wrote to all staff recently to invite nominations for the vacancy for a staff governor. There has been a good response and there are *(x)* candidates for the place. This means that we must now have a ballot.

I enclose a ballot paper. You are entitled to one vote. This means that you can vote for up to the candidate of your choice. As indicated on the ballot paper you should vote by marking a single “X” alongside the name of the staff member you support.

Two envelopes are enclosed. This is so that your vote can be kept confidential. Once you have marked the ballot paper you should place it in the smaller envelope and seal it. Please do not mark this envelope.

This envelope should then be placed in the larger, printed envelope, which you should also seal. On the outside of the larger, printed envelope, write your name in clear capital letters and then sign it.

Return the completed envelope to the school by *(date - at least ten school days)*, which is when the ballot will close. A ballot box will be located *(state location in school)*. You may return your vote by posting the envelope back to school, by hand delivery, or by placing the envelope in the box yourself.

When the envelopes are received, the details you have put on the outside of the larger, printed envelope are checked to make sure that you are entitled to vote. The large printed envelope will then be opened and the smaller envelope taken out and placed, unopened, in the ballot box. This ensures that there is no way of telling who voted for whom.

Once the votes have been counted I will tell you the result of the election.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Enc: one ballot paper and 2 x envelopes

Appendix 14
Model Staff Governor Election Ballot Paper

Name Of School

Ballot Paper

Election of a staff governor

There are is a vacancy for a staff governor. Please insert x against the name of the candidate of your choice.

Candidates (in alphabetical order)

	Vote
Name	
Name	
Name	
Name	

Please return to the school by time, date.

Appendix 15

Staff Governor Election Record Sheet

This record sheet is to be kept in a file with all staff governor election ballot papers for the below dated election. All ballot papers should be retained for at least six months in the event that the election is contested.

Staff Governor Vacancy

Key Election Dates

Date that Headteacher sent 'notification of vacancy' letter to staff

Date that all nominations needed to be returned by

Date that Headteacher sent letter and ballot papers to staff

Date that ballot papers needed to be returned by

Date that ballot papers were counted

The Nominees were ...

--

The Result

Nominee Name	Number of Votes	Elected into Office?

The above information is a true record of the staff governor election dated above.

Signature of the Headteacher

Date

Governing body skills audit

National Governors' Association

The National Governors' Association aims to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by promoting high standards in all our schools and improving the effectiveness of their governing bodies. NGA represents governors and trustees across England in both LA maintained schools and academies.

The NGA is a membership organisation: governing bodies can join at a standard (£75 for 2013/14) or GOLD rate (£260). To join NGA and receive regular updates, contact us:

Website: www.nga.org.uk • Telephone: **0121 237 3780** • Email: membership@nga.org.uk

Introduction

This audit is a useful way of assessing the skills, knowledge and experience of your governing body. In the 2013 NGA/TES survey, 80% of respondents said their governing body uses a skills audit. Of these, 78% used it to identify training needs and 45% used it when recruiting new governors.

NGA would like to see more governing bodies using the results of the skills audit to help them identify any skills and knowledge they still need to deliver their functions – particularly their core functions – effectively.

No individual is going to have all the skills listed in the audit. The governing body is a team, and the purpose of the audit is to ensure that each of the skills below are covered by at least one of the governors around the table. Therefore, we have also produced a skills matrix in which governors' responses can be collated – this can be found on the [NGA website](http://www.nga.org.uk). If there are any gaps, these can be filled when recruiting new governors or training existing governors. The way in which this exercise is introduced is crucial – the intention is to enable all members of the governing body to set out their skills and experience whatever their backgrounds, and make clear that the essential and desirable skills for governance can be acquired through a range of life experiences. As such, the experience and skills below may come from either governors' professional or personal lives.

When considering the skills listed, it is important to understand that governance is a 'thinking' not a 'doing' role. This means that the skills and knowledge sought are those which enable governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have focussed discussions which create robust accountability for school leaders. For example, a governor might work in the construction industry, but it would not be appropriate for him/her to carry out a health and safety check at the school. Similarly, a lawyer should not be asked to give free legal advice. Governance is a strategic role and governors must not be tempted to do the staff's job: management must be left to the school leadership team.

Your Name	
------------------	--

Experience, skills and other attributes	Level of experience/skill: rate on scale of 1 (none) to 5 (extensive) Do remember to think about all the situations in which you may have developed/used these skills				
	1	2	3	4	5
Essential for all governors/trustees					
Commitment to improving education for all pupils					
Ability to work in a professional manner as part of a team and take collective responsibility for decisions					
Willingness to learn					
Commitment to the school's vision and ethos					
Basic literacy and numeracy skills					
Basic IT skills (i.e. word processing and email)					
Should exist across the governing body					
Understanding and/or experience of governance					
Experience of being a board member in another sector or a governor/trustee in another school					
Experience of chairing a board/ governing body or committee					
Experience of professional leadership					
Vision and strategic planning					
Understanding and experience of strategic planning					
Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively					
Problem solving skills					
Ability to propose and consider innovative solutions					
Change management (e.g. overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure, changing careers)					
Understanding of current education policy					
Holding the head to account					
Communication skills, including being able to discuss sensitive issues tactfully					
Ability to analyse data					
Ability to question and challenge					
Experience of project management					
Performance management/appraisal of someone else					
Experience of being performance managed/appraised yourself					

Experience, skills and other attributes	Level of experience/skill: rate on scale of 1 (none) to 5 (extensive) Do remember to think about all the situations in which you may have developed/used these skills				
	1	2	3	4	5
Financial oversight					
Financial planning/management (e.g. as part of your job)					
Experience of procurement/purchasing					
Experience of premises and facilities management					
Knowing your school and community					
Links with the community					
Links with local businesses					
Knowledge of the local/regional economy					
Working or volunteering with young people (e.g. teaching/social work/youth work/sports coaching/health services for young people)					
Understanding of special educational needs					

Existing governors only

What contribution do you feel you have made to the governing body over the past year?

Please give brief details of courses you have undertaken in the past year - include governor training, work based training/development and/or any other development/training activities.

Are there any additional areas of the governing body's responsibilities to which you would like to contribute in the future?