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Monday, 20 November 2017

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS

We are writing to let you know that there is to be an election of Parent Governors. The governing body, when it is complete, will be made up of 12 Governors of which 2 will be elected by the parents. There is currently 1 parent governor place to be filled.

The term “parent” includes anyone who has custody of a child registered at the school, as well as “natural” parents. Parents can stand for election and vote in secret in the election, if a ballot is needed.

As well as parents, the governing body is made up of a governor nominated by the Local Authority (the County Council), school staff, the headteacher and governors appointed by the Bishop, known as Foundation Governors.

Parent Governors have a four year term of office and continue to serve even if their child(ren) leaves the school during this period.

What Do Governors Do?

The governors’ work affects most aspects of the school’s work.

Once appointed or elected, all governors must operate in the best interest of pupils, not as representatives to lobby on behalf of their constituency. Their task is to govern the school. This means focusing on the core functions of providing strategic leadership, holding the headteacher to account and making sure the school’s money is well spent. This is a demanding task for which all governors need to have, or develop, relevant and appropriate skills.

The governors, together as a body, have a range of legal responsibilities, so being a governor is an important commitment and new governors should be willing to attend training to help them learn what is entailed.

Membership of the GB requires a focus on a range of skills, experience and interests; this could include:

- Leadership experience in education, governance or another sector
- Communication with a variety of audiences
- Innovation, research
- School financial management
- Personnel management
- Special educational needs
- Buildings and maintenance
- Health and safety
- Marketing
- Literacy, maths or other curriculum interests

The term “parent” includes anyone who has custody of a child registered at the school, as well as “natural” parents.

What is the role of a governing body?

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Carrying out the Performance Management of the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders e.g. parents, staff and the wider school community
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

The governors, together as a body, have a range of legal responsibilities, being a governor is an important commitment and the Local Authority and school will provide induction training.

What is expected of governors?

- To acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- To strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- To observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- To accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.

Do Parent Governors have Special Responsibilities?

No. Parent Governors do not have “extra” duties. All governors are equally responsible and discharge their responsibilities as a body, not individually. The Parent Governors speak as parents: they can’t speak for all parents.

Are there any restrictions which could disqualify parents from becoming Parent Governors?

Yes, but they are unlikely to apply to most parents considering becoming a parent governor. The restrictions are contained in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, regulation 16 and subsequent amendment Regulations. A copy of these is attached as a Self Declaration form. Parents putting themselves forward for election will be required to sign this form and return it with a nomination form. If any of the restrictions apply you should not proceed with your nomination as a governor. Also, you are disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor if you are an elected member of the local authority (-or if you are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve month period commencing on 1 August and finishing on 31 July).

Governors are subject to enhanced DBS checks and the elected parent will be provided, by the school with the requisite information as to how to access the on-line application form to complete. Following this, the school administrator or headteacher must be notified and the governor is required to take proof of identity (as detailed in the list of Valid Identity Documents) into school. The headteacher will then complete the verification form to the DBS Unit at County Hall for checking and forwarding to the DBS, Liverpool. The term of office of the successful candidate (s) can commence prior to a clear enhanced DBS being received by the school. However, it is essential that whilst the check is being processed the school should ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are adhered to.

It is recommended that you discuss this with me if you have any concerns over issues which may be highlighted by the Enhanced DBS as they may not exclude you from acting as a Parent Governor.

Can you be removed from office?

A person is disqualified from being a governor of a particular school if they have failed to attend the meetings of the governing body of that school for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend, without the consent of the governing body.

The governing body may also remove an appointed or an elected parent governor. The code of conduct is expected to detail the circumstances in which the governing body may suspend or remove a governor.

Governing bodies are expected only to exercise the power to remove an elected governor in exceptional circumstances where the actions or behaviour of the elected governor warrants removal rather than suspension.

How are Parent Governors Elected?

Parent Governors must be people (aged at least 18) who have a child(ren) at the school when they are elected. Nomination forms are available from the school. Each form must be signed by the candidate. Candidates can also make a short statement about themselves - a simple form for this purpose will be provided with nomination forms. Return the form to me as quickly as possible.

If more nominations are received than there are places to fill, there will be a secret ballot and I will send to each parent, ballot forms (1 per parent) and envelopes for their return. The form explains how votes may be cast.

If the number of nominations received is the same as the number of places to be filled, then those people will be declared elected. If there are fewer, those nominated will be declared elected and it will be for the governing body to fill any remaining vacancy by appointing a parent governor.

The rules for the election are written down in Procedures set by the Local Authority, and these can be inspected at the school.

Result of the Election

The names of those elected will be displayed at the school for at least seven days and will be included in the next edition of the school prospectus or placed on the school website.

Anyone having any query about the election is invited to contact the school.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATION IS FRIDAY 1st DECEMBER 2017

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS

Nomination Paper

Name of School:
No. of Parent Governors to be elected:
Please read the Notes below before completing the form
<u>CANDIDATE</u>
(Name/Address/Signature)
Signed:

Notes:

A parent can stand for election and vote in the election, if he or she has a child registered at the school on the date of the election*.

A CANDIDATE **must** be eligible to vote in the election i.e. be a parent of a pupil(s) on the school roll; **must** sign, and return with this nomination paper, form Self Declaration 1 to indicate eligibility to stand for election under the School Governance (Constitution)(England) 2012 Schedule 4; **must** indicate whether they wish to have their address shown on the ballot paper.

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS BY FRIDAY 1st DECEMBER IN A SEALED ENVELOPE MARKED “CONFIDENTIAL – PG NOMINATION”.

* the date of the election is deemed to be the closing date for the receipt of nominations

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS

Statement in Support of Election

School:

Name: Age (s) of child (ren).....

Experience and/or interests relevant to serving as a Governor :

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Signed:

Date:.....