

Role Description: Parent Governor

Governance Structure

The Heath Family Trust is a collaborative family of schools which is governed through a single set of directors (or trustees). The Trust is directly accountable to the Secretary of State for Education for its schools, through its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors has established a Local Governing Body for each school within the Trust, to which a broad range of responsibilities are delegated.

Role

The primary role of the local governing body is to provide support and challenge to the Executive Principal, Principal/Headteacher and/or Heads of School in ensuring every child makes good or better progress and that parents and carers are fully involved in their child's education.

Please note: Your role as a parent governor is no different from that of other governors; Parent governors are not delegates and do not speak 'on behalf' of the parent body, but bring a parental perspective to the issues discussed. Therefore, where you believe there is a potential conflict of interests of those of the parents and those of the school you should contact the Chair of Governors/Principal/Headteacher for advice. Also, if you are concerned about any aspects of the Trust's operation and/or policy you should seek to raise these issues with the Trust and not the local governing body. In these instances you would contact the Chief Executive Officer direct.

Members of local governing bodies are expected to:

1. Contribute to the strategic direction of the Trust/School by contributing to discussions at local governing body meetings which consider:
 - vision and values;
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets;
 - access of children, including those with special educational needs, to a broad and balanced curriculum;
 - the implementation of the Trust's policies;
 - the principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies;
 - the development of links with the local community;
 - the establishment of mechanisms to promote good parent/carer/family relations
2. Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance; this includes:
 - considering relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance;
 - asking challenging questions of school leaders;
 - ensuring senior leaders have implemented the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies;
 - acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on the progress on the relevant school priority; and
 - listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers.
3. In conjunction with the Trust, ensure that school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well (including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and continuing professional development, and suitable premises) and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
4. When required, serve on committees of the Trust and local governing body to:
 - hear complaints (if in relation to the Principal/Headteacher), second stage of staff grievances & disciplinary matters;
 - hear discipline, admissions and appeals cases;

5. Follow the principles and commitments set out in the Trust's Code of Conduct for Trustees and Local Governors.

The role of a local governor is largely a challenge and scrutiny role; they do not manage an academy day-to-day, but are required to oversee its long-term development in conjunction with the Trust.

As you become more experienced as a Governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (eg as a Chair, Vice Chair or Chair of a committee). This role description does not cover the additional responsibilities taken on by these roles.

In order to perform this role well, a Governor is expected to:

- Get to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during schools hours and in agreement with the Principal/Headteacher, and gaining a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses;
- Attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events
- Attend meetings (full governing Body meetings and Committee Meetings as applicable) and read all the papers before the meeting
- Act in the best interests of all the pupils of the school
- Behave in a professional manner, as set down in the Trust's Code of Conduct, including acting in strict confidence.

Additional Information

Knowledge and skills:

Local governing bodies rely on a variety of experiences and perspectives. No specific prior knowledge is required, and we actively appoint volunteers with a range of skills and backgrounds. Training and support will be offered to all new and existing local governors and is free of charge.

Time commitment:

The average time commitment is 10-15 hours per term. This includes meetings, background reading and academy visits.

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.

Term of appointment:

The normal term of appointment is four years and you would be eligible to be reappointed for a further term if you so wished. However, as a volunteer you can resign at any time if your circumstances change.

Expenses:

You may claim for necessary out of pocket expenses (such as travel costs) incurred as a result of fulfilling your role as a member of the local governing body. Payments do not cover loss of earnings.

Safeguarding:

The Heath Family (NW) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Governors are expected to be willing to undertake an Enhanced DBS check or Enhanced check for Regulated Activity with the Disclosure & Barring Services (previously the Criminal Records Bureau).