

The Diocesan Flying Governor

"Successful schools are usually schools with strong and effective governance, unlike failing schools which almost invariably have weak and ineffective governance."
'Education, Education, Education: Reforming England's Schools' A. Adonis 2012

What is a Diocesan Flying Governor?

A Flying Governor is an Additional Governor appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education to supplement the Governing Body when a Church school is 'causing concern' i.e. a school that has been placed in a category by Ofsted or has failed to comply with a LA warning notice. In such instances, the LA can use its powers of intervention in accordance with The Education and Inspections Act 2006 to appoint as many additional governors as it sees fit; for a Church school, the LA must consult the diocese or other appointing authority for foundation or voluntary schools.

The Additional Governors in a Voluntary Controlled School will need to complete a LA application form if they have not been LA governors previously. They will have full status as Foundation Governors, but will be described as Additional Governors in accordance with regulations. For a Voluntary Aided School, the Diocese may also appoint additional governors where the LA has done so to preserve the Foundation Governor majority.

Officers of the Board of Education will not be eligible to be appointed as a Flying Governor.

Why appoint a Flying Governor?

- To strengthen the Governing Body of a school
- To bring particular skills and expertise e.g. education management, finance, personnel, strategic management
- To assist in school improvement
- To work with the Foundation Governors to ensure the Christian ethos of the school is upheld
- To help secure a smooth transition to Academy status
- To provide a direct link between the DDE and the Governing Body.

Will a Flying Governor be able to vote?

Once appointed, a Flying Governor has full voting powers. However, s/he cannot act as Chair.

How long does the appointment last?

The term of office will expire at the end of the term in which the school is removed from an Ofsted category; this is normally within eighteen months to two years. A Flying Governor can remain as an Associate Governor after this time, but s/he will not have voting powers on the full governing body, only on committees.

Where will a Flying Governor be deployed?

To aid objectivity, a Flying Governor will not normally be deployed in their home locality. Travel costs will be paid by the Diocese.

What are the risks involved?

A Flying Governor needs a 'thick skin', resilience and determination to improve outcomes for pupils. On the one hand, her/his expertise may be resented by the other governors; on the other hand, they may come to be over reliant on her/him.