

Introduction to the Role of Foundation Governor

The Board of Education is grateful that you have put yourself forward to act as a Foundation Governor for a Church School in the Diocese of Peterborough.

The role of governor in schools today is challenging and yet many find the opportunity to serve the school in the community very rewarding. The Church School is an example of the Church working in the community and working for the community. Many Christians find that governorship offers an opportunity to serve the community and gain a great deal of satisfaction from bringing their own skill and experiences to the many issues that face the Church School. **The term of office is usually four years.** School governorship these days is quite a complex experience and some governors take a little time to settle into the role, many offer themselves for a second term when they feel more equipped to fully understand the implications of issues under consideration.

In all schools there is more than one Foundation governor and in Voluntary Aided schools there are often eight or more Foundation governors. In these circumstances, when appointing new governors, the Board will consider the range of skills and experiences on the governing body before making an appointment. The Board will be looking for governors who reflect:

- a range of experience of life, both those who are current parents of children of school age and those who have had the opportunity to experience the whole of a child's development to maturity.
- A range of experience of work, both whose primary experience is the support of the home and those who bring experience of the workplace. All governing bodies need an accountant, lawyer, surveyor, personnel, professional, educationalist and the Board will endeavour through foundation governor appointment to ensure wherever possible these skills are available to all governing bodies.
- A range of Churchmanship, both of the local parish and the diversity of the Church of England.

A Foundation Governor has a complex role:

- ***working* alongside other governors (LEA, parent, staff, minor authority and headteacher) the governing body monitors the development and performance of the school in all areas**
- ***promoting* the importance of the Church School ethos.**
- ***acting* as critical friend of the school, supporting the headteacher and staff and offering pastoral support**
- ***ensuring* that the school operates according to the Instrument of Government to the school particularly in respect of pupil admissions, staff appointments, provision for collective worship, provision for RE and preservation of the assets of the school's Trust.**

The Board of Education offers support to governors in carrying out their role. This support is provided by the Board's Officers either in response to individual enquiries or through the training opportunities provided during the year. All new governors (including those opting for a second term) are encouraged to join the evening **Foundation Governor Roles and Responsibilities Course** which is held monthly during term time at different venues around the diocese. This course provides a useful introduction to the role, support services and current issues relevant to being a governor at a church school. Once a year the Board offers a **Governors' Conference** to which governors from all Church Schools are invited. The conference provides an opportunity to discuss particular topics and for the Board to gain the views from schools across the diocese. This gathering also provides an opportunity for governors to share their experiences and to build alliances with other school governing bodies, many of whom will be facing similar issues.

All Foundation Governors are expected to be supportive of the staff and to represent the views of the local Church to the governing body. At times there may be conflict. It is expected that all Foundation Governors will work constructively to resolve difficulties and bring a better understanding of the Church to the school governing body and a better understanding of the views of the school governing body to the Church.

Please note that the Board of Education's policy is that:

- Members of the school's staff should not be appointed as foundation governors,
- Spouses or partners should not serve as foundation governors on the same school's governing body

The Board welcomes your interest in the governorship and welcomes a completed application form in due course. Please complete both sides of the application form, and arrange for the nomination form to be completed. The Board's agreed appointment process requires the school governing body and the Parochial Church Council to be consulted on any appointment. The information in the form of the application form will be shared with these parties. Once these consultations have been completed, the relevant information is taken to the Board of Education's Pastoral and Governance Committee who will consider and then make the appointment. The Foundation Governor, Cleric (or parish secretary in an interregnum), relevant Local Authority Governor Services and Clerk to Governors will all be informed of the appointment and the dates of the term of office by letter.

This document has been produced by:



Peterborough Diocese
Board of Education