



# Procedure for the Election of Parent Governors

Agreed September 2019 - review September 2022



This booklet has been designed to provide guidelines for the election and appointment of Parent Governors

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### **DEFINITION OF A PARENT**

'Parent' is defined for the purposes of the Constitution Regulations as including 'any individual who has parental responsibility for, or cares a child or young person under the age of 18. It includes a person who the child lives with and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. The reference in the definition must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child.

## **School Governors**

School Governors are people who want to make a positive contribution to children's education. Governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in the country and have an important part to play in raising school standards. The role of the Board of Governors is absolutely key to the effectiveness of a school. Time and time again Ofsted (the national inspection body for schools) has noted that the most effective schools demonstrate effective leadership and management - including by the governing board

### Who can become a Governor?

Almost anyone over 18 years of age can become a governor. There are no particular qualifications or requirements, other than a willingness to give time to the role and a capacity for working with other people. There are three different types of Governor at this school:

- Parent governors can either be elected by parents of children at the school, or if insufficient numbers are elected, can be appointed by the governing body to fill any remaining vacancies. Such appointees need not be parents of children currently attending the school – if no suitable candidates are found, they may be parents of former pupils, or of any child of school age. Parents so appointed can be removed from their positions by a majority vote of the governing body.
- Staff governors (other than the head teacher) are elected by the school staff and must be paid to work at the school, by the school (that is, not under an external contract such as catering or cleaning). At least one staff governor must be a teacher, and if there are three or more staff governors, at least one must be a member of the support staff. If no member of the appropriate category stands for election, the vacant place can be filled by an elected person from the other category (i.e. if no teachers wish to become governors, all staff governors may be support staff, and vice-versa).
- Community Governors are chosen by the rest of the Governing Body and can be recruited from a wide cross section of the local community. For example they may be ex-parents, someone who lives in the local area, or a member of the local business community with a particular skill or area of expertise of use to the Governing Body.

### How do I become a Governor?

If you think you have what it takes to be a school governor you can:

- Contact the school – ask for our **Clerk to Governors, Pauline Challinor – 01477 410500**
- check out our website – all parent governor vacancies are advertised on our website and in our newsletters –
- for community governor vacancies - these are advertised on our website, in our newsletter and via the local press (parish/village magazines)

What do Governors do?

School Governors provide strategic leadership and accountability in schools. Governors appoint the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. It is governors who work with the Executive Headteacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

### What do our Governors do?

Each individual governor is a member of our Board of Governors, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the Board of Governors; decisions are the joint responsibility of the Board of Governors.

The role of the Board of Governors is a strategic one, its key functions are to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- be a source of challenge and support to the Executive Headteacher (a critical friend).

## Disqualification information taken from Cheshire East Council guidance

Someone is disqualified from becoming or continuing to be a school governor if s/he:

- is a registered pupil at the school;
- is under 18 at the date of election or appointment;
- is detained under the Mental Health Act 1983(a);
- without the consent of the Board of Governors, fails to attend their meetings for a continuous period of six months beginning with the date of the first such meeting;
- has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order;
- is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989(c), or a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002(d); or (d) an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986(e) (failure to pay under county court administration order).
- has been removed from the office of trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commissioners or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which he was responsible or to which he was privy, or to which he contributed or which he facilitated by his conduct; or  
(b) he has been removed, under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005(a) (Powers of Court of Session), from being concerned in the management or control of any body.
- is disqualified from working with children;
- within the previous **five years** has been convicted of any offence and has had passed a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than **three months** without the option of a fine.
- within the previous **twenty years** has been convicted of any offence and has had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment for a period of not less than **two and a half years**.
- **at any time** been convicted of any offence and he has had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment for a period of not less than **five years**.
- within the previous five years has been convicted under section 547 of EA 1996(a) (nuisance or disturbance on school premises) or under section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992(b) (Nuisance or disturbance on educational premises) of an offence and has been sentenced to a fine.

## **Election Procedure for Parent Governors**

1. The Executive Headteacher/Clerk to Governors will inform all parents of an impending election, as soon as possible after the vacancy arises. This may be postponed if the Board of Governors agrees to allow for new intake parents to be included in the election process.
2. Parents should be asked to indicate their intention of becoming a governor by returning a self-nomination form and a pen portrait. If the number of nominations received are fewer than or equal to the number of vacancies available, no voting is required; those nominated are simply declared to be governors. In the case of parent elections, all parents of registered pupils should be informed of the result by Bromcom and posted on the website.
3. If there are more nominations than vacancies available then an election will be needed. Ballot papers with a pen portrait for each nomination, and the closing date for voting will be sent to all parents with parental responsibility for registered pupils. One vote per parent is allowed regardless of how many children they have in school.
4. Once the ballot papers are returned, Clerk to Governors should act as returning officer.
5. Nomination forms and ballot papers that are returned outside the return dates are to be treated as invalid.
6. If no one stands for election of parent governor the Board of Governors can appoint a person to fill the vacancy. This person must have one or more children aged between 5 and 18.

**TIMETABLE FOR ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR**  
 (please note that the timetable is calculated on Working Days)

Day 1	Day 10	Day 13	Day 20	Day 21	Day 24
Letter to be sent out via Bromcom and posted on the website detailing the election as soon as possible after a vacancy occurs.	<p>Closing date for return of nominations</p> <p>If only one nomination is received and there is only one place, parent is automatically appointed.</p>	Ballot process (indicating deadline) and election statements to be sent via Bromcom and posted on the website for all parent eligible to vote	Closing date for return of ballot papers	Counting of ballot papers (N.B. In the event of a tie, the result will be decided by the toss of a coin)	<p>Name/s and home address/es of governors to be sent to Cheshire East Council and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Edubase).</p> <p>Result will be sent out to parents via Bromcom, school newsletter and via the Schools website</p>

## ELECTION PROCESS FOR PARENT GOVERNORS

The nomination process has taken place when the completed forms have been returned.

### What is the next step?

What if?	Action to be taken
You have <b>two</b> vacancies You receive <b>one</b> nomination	The nominated parent governor would take up office on the closing date for nomination subject to a successful check.  Governors have the power to appoint to fill the second vacancy
You have <b>two</b> vacancies You receive <b>two</b> new nominations	The two nominated parent governors would take up office from the closing date of the nominations subject to a successful check.
You have <b>two</b> vacancies You receive <b>three or more</b> nominations	Ballot procedure put in place. Two candidates elected according to the number of votes received. Their appointments will take effect from the closing date for the return of the ballot forms subject to a successful check.

## Appendix 1

### REQUEST FOR NOMINATION LETTER template

Dear Parent/Carer

We are currently looking to appoint 3 parent governors to join our governing body. Our governors come from a range of different backgrounds, skills and experience but all share a common interest of wanting the best possible education for the children in our school. Nominations are welcomed from anyone who has parental responsibility for a child at the school. If we receive more than three nominations in total then a ballot will be held.

In looking to fill these vacancies we are particularly interested in applications from people with **finance/budgetary experience** and also people who can occasionally visit the school during the day, although please do not be put off if you do not have these skills. What is more important is enthusiasm, interest and the willingness to learn.

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who:-

- Is interested in children's education and the performance of the school
- Has spare time and the energy for the role
- Is able to work well as part of a team
- Has an enquiring mind and the confidence to ask questions and debate issues that affect the school
- Can consider matters objectively and make informed judgements

What is the role of the governing body?

- To ensure the school ethos and vision are promoted – strategic direction.
- Holding the headteacher and school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- To ensure best value for money from the school budget.

What does the role offer?

- A chance to develop your own personal skills
- Access to a programme of free training in respect of education/governance matters
- A sense of achievement in helping make a difference to children reaching their potential
- The support and guidance from fellow governors

Our Board of Governors expects governors to:

- Attend at least 1 termly meeting of the full Board of Governors
- Join at least 1 committee and attend the meetings which are usually once per half term - all meetings take place on a Monday at 4.30pm
- Commit to attend training courses as required

Attached with this letter is a Notice of Election form and nomination paper. All papers can also be found on the website under Governors.

If you would like to have a conversation with one of our governors or discuss any other aspects of the role before submitting an application please contact Pauline Challinor, Clerk to Governors on 01477 689500 or e-mail [Pauline.challinor@hccs.info](mailto:Pauline.challinor@hccs.info).

Yours sincerely

Mr D Oliver  
**Executive Headteacher**



Appendix 2

**PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTIONS –  
NOTICE OF ELECTION and NOMINATION PAPERS  
HOLMES CHAPEL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
NUMBER OF PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCIES - FOUR**

- \* Nominations are invited not later than 3.30 p.m. on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018** for the election of **four** parent governors to the governing body for a four year period. Please place completed forms in the box in the General Office or via e-mail to [pauline.challinor@hccs.info](mailto:pauline.challinor@hccs.info).
- \* Each candidate must be the parent of a student registered at the school and must agree to being nominated. Each nomination must be supported by a proposer and seconder, who may be the partner of the candidate. A parent may not propose or second more than one candidate. Nominations will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the school.
- \* **Please note:** HCCS converted to Academy status on 1 September 2011. As a result of this change in status, all Governors are Directors of the Academy Company limited by Guarantee. Newly elected parent governors will therefore be required to provide their name, address and date of birth for registration at Companies House as a requirement of the role.
- \* Candidates are asked to provide a **statement of not more than 250 words**. If there are more than four nominations, an election will be held. The statements and photographs will be posted on the website. An electronic ballot will take place in October 2018, full instructions will be sent to parents should a ballot be required.

<b>Election Timetable</b>	
Nominations close (date/time)	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 3.30pm
If no ballot is required then - result will be available	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
If a ballot is required then - Instructions for voting will be issued using Bromcom, the newsletter and our website	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
Voting closes	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 3pm
Result available - Result advertised on our website and will be included in the newsletter on 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 -	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2018

?????? 2018  
(Date)

  
DENIS OLIVER (Executive Headteacher)

**NOMINATION FORM FOR ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR**

<b>Nominee's Name</b>	(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other)
<b>Student's Name(s)</b>	
<b>Student's Tutor group</b>	
I wish to submit my nomination for the election of parent governor. I am the parent/carer of a child at the School and I am willing to serve as a Governor if elected and I am not disqualified from holding office for any of the reasons set out in Cheshire East Council's guidance. I understand the commitment involved and will endeavour to attend training to assist me in the role.	
<b>Signature</b>	

***Nomination seconded by (must be a parent/carer of a student at the school)***

<b>Seconder's Name</b>	(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other)
<b>Student's Name(s)</b>	
<b>Student's tutor group</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	

The information that you provide on this form will be held on a computerised database maintained by the data controller upon successful appointment/election. Your data will be used in accordance with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, which protects the right to privacy of individuals whose personal details are held by the data controller.

I confirm that in the event that I am elected I will notify the clerk to the governing body immediately should I become disqualified during my term of office.

I agree that the information given on this form is being recorded and used by the Academy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and confirm that it is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

**Signed**

**Date**

**Print Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 4

### Ballot letter template

Dear Parent/Carer

I wrote to you in ? to invite nominations for the vacancy for parent governor.

I am delighted to say that there has been a good response and there are \*\*\*candidates for the ? vacancies. This means we must now hold a ballot.

### **Casting Your Vote**

The election will be conducted electronically via the link below. If you do not wish to participate in the election via this method, please contact me to make arrangements for a ballot paper to be posted to you. Voting opens on Friday ? and will close at 12 noon on Friday ?.

You are entitled to vote in the election as a parent of a pupil at the school, or as a person with parental responsibility for, or having care of a pupil at the school. Each person entitled to vote in this parent governor election can only submit their block of votes once and you may vote for up to ? candidates.

### **To cast your vote:**

1. Please click on the link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ZPBWX8C>
2. Read the biographical details for each candidate.
3. Select up to? candidates by selecting the small button next to their name(s).
4. Press the Submit button.

The process described above has been designed and tested to ensure that the election is secret and anonymous, is limited to one submission per person, voting for a maximum of 3 candidates.

**Please could I encourage you to use your vote. The work of the Parent Governor as a member of the Board of Governors is extremely valuable to this school.**

Yours sincerely



Pauline Challinor

Clerk to the Board of Governors and Returning Officer

## Model code of conduct

### For governing boards

Governing boards should use a code of conduct alongside individual [role descriptions](#) to ensure all members understand what is expected of them.

The NGA model code of conduct is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The code is also aligned with the [Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education](#) which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour in schools and trusts.

**The model code has been updated for 2021. The content of the code is largely unchanged; however, the Nolan Principles are now included. Three new statements have also been added to the code. These are marked (\*) to help you review the updated code.**

### How to use the model code

The NGA model code of conduct is suitable for boards in all types of school or trust. However, it is designed to act as a template and should be adapted to reflect:

- your specific governing board and organisation
- your board's delegated responsibilities
- specific policies that you must follow (such as your [policy for school monitoring visits](#))
- constitutional documents (such as your [articles of association](#) or instrument of government)

### Reviewing your code of conduct

Boards should review and approve their code of conduct annually, ideally at the first meeting of the autumn term. When reviewing your code, reflect on the events of the previous year and consider if any changes are required as a result.

Boards should also review their code of conduct upon any significant changes to the law or school/trust policy. NGA recommends that boards publish their code of conduct on their school/trust website.

### Using your code to support induction and development

When [recruiting new volunteers](#), we recommend that boards refer candidates to their code of conduct (and role description). This will help ensure new members have a good understanding of expectations before being appointed. New members should agree to the board's code of conduct on being appointed as part of their [induction programme](#).

Chairs may also use their code of conduct to support discussions such as annual governor performance reviews. In doing so, the code of conduct becomes a tool to help boards and individuals develop their governance practice.

### Using your code of conduct to support effective teamwork

Effective governance requires effective teamwork: working collaboratively as colleagues with a solid understanding and respect for each other's roles.

NGA's [Effective teamwork](#) guidance sets out an approach to dealing with conflict or tension using a measured and conciliatory approach. The guidance advises that the most direct way to clarify the expectations of those governing is through a code of conduct.

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## Further reading

- [What governing boards and school leaders should expect from each other](#)
- [Governing board skills audit](#)
- [Model role descriptions for chairs, governors, trustees and governance professionals](#)
- [Effective teamwork: a guide for governing boards](#)

Thank you for using this document. If you have any feedback you'd like to share, please email [kcfeedback@nga.org.uk](mailto:kcfeedback@nga.org.uk)

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## NGA model code of conduct

Once this code has been adopted by the governing board, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:

### *Selflessness*

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

### *Integrity*

**We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.**

### *Objectivity*

**We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.**

### *Accountability*

**We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.**

### *Openness*

**We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.**

### *Honesty*

**We will be truthful.**

### *Leadership*

**We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.**

We will focus on our core governance functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
  3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
- NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:*
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

As individual board members, we agree to:

#### ***Fulfil our role & responsibilities***

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. *\*For those working within a multi academy trust:* We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our [scheme of delegation](#).
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school/s.
4. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school/s.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school/s and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.
9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. *\*We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.*

#### ***Demonstrate our commitment to the role***

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school/s and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

#### ***Build and maintain relationships***

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. *\*We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.*
4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

#### ***Respect confidentiality***

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

***Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent***

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the [register of business interests](#).
2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school/trust website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

*\*New statement added in 2021*

We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.