



## Discovery Primary Academy

Mountsteven Avenue, Walton

Peterborough, PE4 6HX.

Tel: 01733 325001

Email: [office@discoveryprimary.com](mailto:office@discoveryprimary.com)

Website: [www.discoveryprimaryschool.com](http://www.discoveryprimaryschool.com)

Head Teacher: Ms M Siequien

Deputy Head Teacher: Miss C Daniels

Dear Parents/Carer,

### **PROSPECTIVE PARENT GOVERNOR**

All Local Governing Committees have parent governors. Full details of the role and responsibilities of governors are described in the "Governance Handbook" published by the Department for Education, and available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

Anyone who has parental responsibility for a pupil on the academy roll at the time of the election can stand for election, subject to certain restrictions, and can vote in the election. A parent who works at the academy for 500 hours or more per year or a parent who is an elected member of the local authority is not eligible to stand for election but they are permitted to vote. If insufficient parents stand for election the Local Governing Committee can appoint parents to the governing board. The term of office for a parent governor is usually 4 years. A governor can stand down at any time.

### **Why become a parent governor?**

Parents who have a child at the academy and who take an active interest in the education of all children at the academy should consider becoming a parent governor. They should not take on this role to follow up a particular concern about the education of an individual child.

Parents may have a skill or area of expertise which can be useful to the Local Governing Committee. It is useful for prospective parent governors to talk to other parent governors to find out what they think about the role and what is really involved before deciding whether to put forward a nomination. Questions could be "What have you found challenging?", "What have you found rewarding?"

Prospective governors may also be invited to attend a Local Governing Committee meeting as an observer, to meet the Chair, Headteacher and other governors.

### **What will parent governors have to do?**

- Take an active interest in education
- Give time to find out about the academy
- Give time to learn about the role by attending induction training
- Abide by the Code of Conduct and confidentiality. A copy of our Code of Conduct is available on the school website
- Undergo pre-appointment checks and sign a Declaration of Eligibility form
- Complete a register of pecuniary interests, for publication on the academy website

- Attend meetings throughout the year. At this school, our meetings are currently held on a Tuesday evening at 6.30pm We hold no more than six full meetings per year.

### **The Strategic Role**

The role of a parent governor is the same as that of a governor from any other category. Some of the ways in which governors work together strategically include:

- Monitoring the academy's performance and working to raise standards and promote pupil welfare
- Ensuring that the academy is improving the achievement and attainment of all pupils
- Helping to set the academy's priorities for improvement
- Making sure that special needs are properly catered for
- Help to appoint the headteacher
- Helping to formulate some academy policies
- Being accountable to parents by ensuring they have the information to which they are legally entitled
- Ensuring the academy has sound self-evaluation processes in place.

### **Collective Responsibility**

All governors have equal status. They act collectively to support the academy strategically. They participate in and contribute in shared decisions. Once decisions have been made, even if a governor does not personally agree with these, they must act collectively to support these decisions in a united way.

### **Critical Friend**

The governing board is often described as a "critical friend". They should support the academy but also be prepared to question why decisions have been made and request information about the academy to help them in their monitoring role.

### **The Headteacher's Operational Role**

Parent governors and other categories of governor may become involved in other aspects of academy life. They may visit the academy to help in various capacities, for example to hear children read. What governors must not do is get involved in operational decisions. The headteacher is responsible for the day to day running of the academy.

Sometimes it can be difficult to decide where the strategic role ends and the operational one begins. There is a wealth of information available to governors to help them understand their role, including free training provided locally.

## Confidentiality

The role of governor requires diplomacy, adherence to a Code of Conduct, and particularly confidentiality. A parent governor may be involved in discussions of a confidential nature during the course of a governing body meeting and these discussions may concern a particular individual.

Sometimes, governing board decisions need to remain confidential in the shorter or longer term, until such a time as formal announcements are made.

## Communicating with parents and representing parents

A parent governor has a duty to communicate concerns and feelings expressed by parents to other members of the local Governing Committee. However, a parent governor is not a delegate who attends meetings with instructions on how to vote on any particular issue. A parent governor is a representative parent and should vote on issues at meetings in the best interests of the academy and according to his/her own conscience.



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