

**Governor Recruitment Toolkit**

**Introduction**

Governing boards are an integral part of school leadership and are drawn from different stakeholders involved with schools. Governing boards set the ethos of the school, drive continuous improvement by supporting, challenging and holding to account the Headteacher and other members of the school’s leadership team. The role that governors undertake in Wolverhampton’s schools is crucial and the commitment and support that they give is greatly appreciated.

This document has been written to support our vision that:

*All children and young people in Wolverhampton’s schools achieve outcomes which exceed expectations by attending outstanding schools, where every Governing Board drives improved outcomes for young people through effective strategic leadership, challenge and support to the school.*

This Toolkit has been created to aid you in the appointment of new governors within maintained schools. The toolkit includes guidance on what to consider when thinking about recruiting new governors, how to advertise your vacancies and recruitment techniques and the induction of new colleagues.

Links to all resources in this Toolkit can be found on the Resources Page at the end of the document.

If you require any further advice or assistance please contact: Sarah McElduff, School Governance Co-ordinator, Education Excellence [Sarah.mcelduff@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.mcelduff@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

**YOUR VACANCY**

* Make sure that you have notified the School Governance Co-ordinator of any governor resignations so that we are aware of the vacancies on your governing body. If you have a Foundation governor resignation/vacancy you must also make sure the Diocese is aware.
* To help you report a resignation please use this form **APPENDIX 1 Governor Changes Notification Form**
* Consider reconstitution. If you have an excess of vacancies but your governing body composition is within the legal regulations and is working effectively, you may not feel the need to recruit. In which case you may want to think about reconstituting and changing your Instrument of Government (IoG) instead. For more information on this see **APPENDIX 2 Reconstituting Your Governing Body**
* Look at the vacancies you have on your governing body and ensure that all existing governors are filling the right role for them. For example, you might have a long-standing parent governor vacancy but have a co-opted governor eligible to fill this role. If you find it easier to recruit co-opted governors than parent governors, you may want to move this individual over to fill the parent vacancy.
* Do you have any associate members who would be prepared to become governors?
* Carry out a skills audit with your existing governing body. Most schools use the NGA Skills Audit, Weblink - <https://www.nga.org.uk/Knowledge-Centre/Good-governance/Effective-governance/Governing-Board-Self-Review-(1)/Skills-Audit-and-Skills-Matrix.aspx> or you can create your own. This will help you to determine what skills you maybe lacking and therefore what skills you would be looking for from applicants.
* Consider the diversity of your current governing body. Does it reflect your school by offering a good mix of age, gender, race, physical ability, ethnicity and any other characteristics that are important to your school. Being able to have strong positive role models at a strategic level are really important for children to see.
* Consider what additional roles you may like your new governor to fill, for example Safeguarding, and make sure you consider which skills a new governor would need to have in order to fulfil these roles.
* Make sure you have an application form and job description/person specification that you can ask potential candidates to complete. You can create your own or use the City of Wolverhampton Councils Governor Application Form and Role Description. **APPENDICES 3 & 4**
* Don't forget to take up references before making the recommendation to appoint to the full governing body. This is an important role in a position of trust and should not be treated any less seriously than any other school appointment.

**APPOINTMENT PROCESSES**

* Make sure you are clear on the processes for appointing different types of governor:
  + **Parent Governors** are elected by the parent body of the school and can include any individual with parental responsibility for a registered pupil at the school at the time of election. Parent governors can continue until the end of their term-of-office even if their child leaves the school. For sample letters to the parent body including ballot papers please see **APPENDIX 5 Parent Governor Election Templates and Timeline**
  + **Staff Governors** are also appointed by election. Teaching and support staff who are employed by the governing body or City of Wolverhampton Council to work at the school under a contract of employment are eligible to be a staff governor. They are elected by the staff body and cease to be a governor if their employment at the school ends or their term of office expires. For sample nomination forms and ballot papers please see **APPENDIX 6 Staff Governor Election Templates and Timeline**
  + **Local Authority (LA) Governors** are the responsibility of the LA to source and they will nominate suitable candidates before they can be formally appointed by the school’s governing body. Candidates do not have to be employees of the Local Authority but should be able to offer the skills required to compliment the governing bodies skills audit. Any individual eligible to be a staff governor at the school cannot be appointed as a LA governor. For all LA governor vacancies please contact the School Governance Co-ordinator as previously mentioned.
  + **Co-opted/Community Governors** are appointed directly by the governing body and are people who the governing body consider having the correct skills to contribute effectively to the governance of the school. This is usually achieved through application and formal/informal interviews. For suggestions for interview questions please see **APPENDIX 7 Governor Interview Questions.** You need to consider where to advertise your vacancy and what skills you are looking for. Consider the diversity of your community and advertise/approach local community centres, places of worship, local shops and businesses whose staff may be interested in being a governor. For more assistance in recruiting Co-opted governors please contact the School Governance Co-ordinator.
* Other governor roles include Foundation Governors – who are appointed by the Diocese – and Associate Governors – who are appointed by the governing body but only have restricted voting rights.
* More information on the different governor types and full appointment procedures can be found in the Department of Education Constitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools: Statutory Guidance. Weblink: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/constitution-of-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools>

**SCHOOL BASED RECRUITMENT**

* Methods of recruitment should suit the type of governor you are trying to attract.
  + **Parent Governors** positions could be advertised in your school newsletter, on your website, on your noticeboard or a direct mail home
  + **Staff Governor** positions could be on the staff noticeboard, internal email or part of the staff briefings.
  + **Co-opted Governor** positions will be based on the skill set you need. Think about the community around your school and the diversity of your community.
* Consider if you need to recruit a governor from your locality or would you like to recruit someone with a specific skill set who can attend meetings virtually. This may also assist with the diversity of your governors and in ensuring you have a wide set of views when considering and setting strategy.
* Have governors available at parents evening, school fetes and other events to generate interest from the wider community and discuss what it’s like to be a governor. Consider holding an open day event.
* Create your own materials if you would like your governor advert to be more personal to your specific school. This could include some brief information about the school itself and what the role entails. **APPENDIX 8 example adverts**
* Contact local businesses and see if they would display your advert to their workforce via their noticeboards or internal newsletters. Invite them to your school fetes and other events where they can see the school and meet other governors. Hold an open day event.
* Contact local places of worship, your parish council, supermarkets, local ‘corner’ shops, free local papers to see if they could advertise the vacancy.
* There are criteria around who can become a governor and in what circumstance. This information is detailed in full in The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 Schedule 4 – Qualifications and Disqualifications. You must pass this information onto your applicants. This is usually done through the application form (see appendix 3) or as part of your communication to parents/staff (see appendices 5 & 6). It is also advised that you share the Nolan Prinicples as these outline the code of conduct that you will expect from a governor in your school (see appendix 3)
* Make use of the City of Wolverhampton Council promotional video and other resources available. Contact the School Governance Co-ordinator for more details and assistance with your recruitment plans. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience that might help you to attract the right people.

**NEW GOVERNORS**

* Notify the School Governance Co-ordinator of all new appointments, so that we are able to update our records, send induction materials and add them to the Council’s Governor Bulletin mailing and distribution lists.
* To help you report a new governor or reappointed governor please use this form **APPENDIX 1 Governor Changes Notification Form**
* The LA will invite your new governor to attend one of the induction training sessions – An Introduction to Effective Governance and also keep all governors informed of all the training events coming up. These are free for all maintained schools in the City.
* Training is important to all new governors as they will find themselves suddenly presented with a wealth of information in formats that they may not be familiar with. All governors should have an on-going commitment to self-development, and this should be made very clear at recruitment stage. Remember to ensure that all governors access the free training offered by the LA
* You must remember to update your Governance page on your school website and on the ‘Getting Information About Schools’ (GIAS) website. Your Clerk to the Governing Body or school Website Manager will be able to organise this.
* Guidance given in the National Governors’ Association ‘Welcome to Governance Handbook’ (available to purchase) states that there are certain documents that a new governor should be given access to upon appointment. This has been adapted and is shown in the form of an Induction Checklist **APPENDIX 9 Governor Induction Checklist**
* You might like to allocate a ‘mentor’ to your newly appointed governor. This doesn’t have to be the Chair, it could be any governor who is happy to be on hand with advice and support. New governors often find it reassuring to have someone who can advise on the role and the school and answer simple questions during their first few months. This can also be achieved by talking to the School Governance Co-ordinator who will also help support new governors.

**SUCCESSION PLANNING**

* Succession planning is a key part of a healthy cycle in the governing body development. As the school changes so will the improvement needs, and skills of the governing body will need to reflect this. Succession Planning should be an integral part of your governing body. See **APPENDIX 10 Succession Planning Policy for Governors** written by the Governing Body of Deanshangar Primary School as a way of ensuring all governors are aware of the remit and experiences they will encounter on the governing body.
* The National Governance Association recommends that governors serve no more than two terms of office – that’s 8 years. However, this is not a regulation, but you should consider the skills and diversity of the governing body by using the skills audit.
* The role of the Chair and Vice-Chair are vital to ensure a successful governing body is maintained. They are roles that often seem unattainable, but a good Chair will share the workload with all governors, also ensuring that everybody has an opportunity to experience the role.
* For more information on succession planning it is advised to look at the materials on the NGA website. Follow this link: <https://www.nga.org.uk/Knowledge-Centre/Governance-structure-roles-and-responsibilities/Roles-and-responsibilities/Chairing/Preparing-your-board-for-the-future.aspx>

**APPENDICES**

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| **No.** | **Document** |
| **1** | Governor Changes Notification Form – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101675/download?token=L1-rBVoR) |
| **2** | Reconstituting Your Governing Body – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101677/download?token=WKI1NBu2) |
| **3** | Governor Application Form – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101678/download?token=xRhskz-W) |
| **4** | Governor Role Description – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101679/download?token=IQ_rKgeQ) |
| **5** | Parent Governor Election Templates and Timeline – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101680/download?token=X-Wq9HRU) |
| **6** | Staff Governor Election Templates and Timeline – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101681/download?token=Ok9cdnk-) |
| **7** | Governor Interview Questions – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101682/download?token=-LwUy0ZF) |
| **8** | Example Adverts – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101683/download?token=ubXyVghS) |
| **9** | Governor Induction Checklist – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/file/101684/download?token=oqdli5f9) |
| **10** | Succession Planning Policy – [Web link](https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/APPENDIX%2010%20Deanshanger%20Primary%20Governor%20Succession%20Planning%20Policy..pdf) |