

ST AIDAN'S
Voluntary Controlled
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Parent Governor elections policy

Introduction

School governors have been given many new responsibilities in recent years and they have a significant role to play in overseeing the implementation of the national curriculum. Along with the Headteacher, governors are responsible for the management of the school. They decide on key issues that affect the school, including standards and budgets. They also appoint the Headteacher and staff.

Parent Governors can play an important part in the overall direction of the school. All parents, guardians and carers of pupils attending the school are eligible to stand for election. We try to ensure that the Governing Body reflects the local community and encourage members of *ethnic* minority groups to stand for election.

In the event that there are more candidates than positions available an election by secret ballot will be held. This policy sets out the way in which these elections will be conducted.

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1 Notice of election and nominations

It is the responsibility of the governors and Headteacher to organise elections for governor positions.

- 1.1 When a Parent Governor position becomes available, a notice (Appendix 1) together with a nomination form (Appendix 2) and the code of practice (Appendix 4) will be circulated to all parents/carers informing them of an impending election and inviting nominations for candidates.
- 1.2 At least 14 days will be allowed between the distribution of the notice and the closing date for candidate nominations. A further 3 days will be allowed for candidates to withdraw if so desired.
- 1.3 The notice and code of practice explain the duties and responsibilities of parent governors, the sorts of qualities that a potential governor should have, an outline of the time needed and the term of office.
- 1.4 Nominations shall require the full names and addresses of the candidates, the names and ages of their children at the school and their signatures indicating their willingness to serve.
- 1.5 Nominations must also include the full names and addresses of their proposers (who must also be eligible to vote in the election), the names and ages of their children at the school and their signatures.
- 1.6 If there are more valid nominations than vacancies an election will be held. This will be undertaken by means of a secret ballot.

2 Process for balloting

- 2.1 Each candidate will be asked to provide a brief personal statement not exceeding 200 words and a passport-size photograph. These will be distributed to all parents/carers along with the ballot form.
- 2.2 Due to its limited membership, in the interests of fairness to all candidates and voters alike, the St Aidan's Yahoo newsgroup should not be used to promote candidates in the election.
- 2.3 A meeting will be arranged, at the request of the candidates, for them to explain in more detail their positions to the voting parents.
- 2.4 Ballot papers (Appendix 3), with personal statements and photographs of the candidates, giving the closing date for voting will be sent to all parents/carers of children at the school.
- 2.5 A period of 7 days will be allowed for the return of completed voting papers to the school. Parents may use normal mail, pupil post or they may return voting papers personally. A ballot box will be provided at the school.
- 2.6 Each parent/carer has one vote regardless of how many children they have in the school.



3 Declaration of results

- 3.1 The Chair of Governors (or Vice-chair if the need arises) will act as returning officer. Those standing for election will be invited to attend the count that will take place in the presence of at least one independent observer.
- 3.2 In the event of a tie, a second ballot will be held between the tied candidates.
- 3.3 Parents will be informed of the result in the following issue of the Headlines newsletter and by notices posted on school notice boards. The Director of Education (or representative) at Haringey will also be informed.
- 3.4 The successful candidate will be expected to attend the following full Governing Body meeting.

4 Review

This policy will be reviewed prior to each election.

Date of policy: **NOVEMBER 2015**

Policy ratified:..... (Signature) (Date)

Parent Governor vacancy

Dear Parent/Carer,

Are you interested in becoming a Parent Governor?

The governing body consists of:

- 2 Staff Governors: the Headteacher and a teacher elected by the staff;
- 5 Parent Governors elected by parents;
- 3 Foundation Governors: the 2 priests in charge of Holy Trinity and Holy Innocents Churches and a member of the Parochial Church Council;
- 1 Representative Governor appointed by the Local Authority (Haringey);
- 4 Co-opted Governors elected by the Governing Body.

The term of office for a Parent Governor is 4 years and we now have a vacancy. All parents, guardians and carers of pupils attending the school are eligible to stand. If there are more nominations than places available an election will be held.

While specialist knowledge or relevant experience is useful, common sense and willingness to give time are key requisites. You do not need qualifications or professional skills to become a Governor. You can contribute as a Governor if you have experience of life and you:

- want to help to improve children's educational attainment;
- want to contribute to the local community;
- want to work as part of a team and can value the contribution made by different people;
- are willing to ask questions;
- are open to ideas and willing to learn;
- have enthusiasm and commitment.

If you are interested in becoming a Parent Governor please complete the nomination form attached, ensure that it is countersigned by a proposer and return it to the Headteacher no later than xxxxxxxx.

If an election is necessary all candidates will be contacted by 1pm on xxxxxx. Candidates will be asked to provide brief statements (not exceeding 200 words) about themselves and a passport sized photograph. These must be at the school no later than xxxxxxxx as they will be distributed to voters along with the ballot papers.

Yours sincerely,

Jetta Norton
Chair of Governors

Parent Governor nomination form

Name of CANDIDATE: Male Female

Address:

..... Post Code:

Telephone: (Day) (Eve)

Children attending the school: Name: Age:.....

Name: Age:.....

Name: Age:.....

Signature of Candidate:

Name of PROPOSER:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Telephone: (Day) (Eve)

Children attending the school: Name: Age:.....

Name: Age:.....

Name: Age:.....

Signature of Proposer:

Parent Governor election: ballot paper

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are holding an election for the vacant position of Parent Governor. Every parent or guardian of a child at the school is allowed one ballot paper. The names of the candidates are listed below. Brief details of the candidates are attached. There is one vacancy; parents may vote for one candidate only by placing 'X' in the box next to that candidate's name./

Ballot papers must be returned to the school by no later than 12 noon on xxxxxxx using pupil post, normal mail or in person. A ballot box will be provided in the office. Parents/carers must not leave their ballot paper on the desk. Voters' names will be recorded at the time of voting.

The votes will be counted in the afternoon of xxxxxx and the results will be posted in the evening of the same day on the school notice board.

Candidate	Vote
<u>Name</u>	

Please note: The next governing body meeting is on xxxxxx at 6.45pm. The successful candidate will be expected to attend the meeting.



Governor code of practice

Introduction

This code is based on the NGA *Code of Practice* and sets out the expectations on, and commitment required from, governors in order for the Governing Body (GB) to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

Governors will sign the undertaking at the first GB meeting of each school year.

1 The purpose of the Governing Body

The GB is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The GB aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

1.1 The Governing Body:

- a. sets the strategic direction of the school by:
 - setting the values, aims and objectives for the school;
 - agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives;
 - setting targets;
 - agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure.
- b. challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework;
 - progress towards targets;
 - the implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy;
 - the budget and the staffing structure.
- c. ensures accountability by:
 - signing off the school's own self-evaluation report;
 - responding to Ofsted reports when necessary;
 - holding the Headteacher to account for the performance of the school;
 - ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate ;
 - making available information to the community.
- d. appoints and performance manages the Headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the GB.

1.2 For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- supported by the appropriate authorities in that task;
- willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.



2 The role of a governor

2.1 In law the GB is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full GB;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- although appointed through different routes (ie. parents, staff, Local Authority, foundation, co-opted), the overriding concern of all governors is the welfare of the school as a whole;

2.2 At St Aidan's we expect all governors to:

- attend all full GB meetings (six meetings per year);
- sit on one of the three main committees (six meetings per year);
- become a link governor (non-staff governors only) in at least one curriculum subject area and visit the school for a meeting with the appropriate subject leader once a year and report on this to the GB annually, in line with the agreed timetable;
- come prepared to meetings, eg. by reading papers in advance;
- attend governor training sessions.

Governor undertaking

General

- I understand the purpose of the GB and the role of the Headteacher as set out above.
- I am aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life (Appendix A).
- I accept that I have no legal authority to act individually, except when the GB has given me delegated authority to do so, and therefore I will only speak on behalf of the GB when I have been specifically authorised to do so.
- I have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice and, in so far as I have responsibility for staff, I will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- I will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the GB or its delegated agents. This means that I will not speak against majority decisions outside the GB meetings.
- I will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- I will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school I will follow the procedures established by the GB.

Commitment

- I acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- I will involve myself actively in the work of the GB and accept my fair share of responsibility, including service on committees or working groups.
- I will make every effort to attend all meetings and will explain fully in advance if I cannot attend. (Apologies will be noted in all cases, but accepted only in exceptional circumstances.)
- I will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve myself in school activities.
- My visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the GB and agreed with the Headteacher.
- I will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training.



- I am committed to actively supporting and challenging the Headteacher.

Relationships

- I will strive to work as part of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all communications with other governors.
- I will support our elected Chairs in their roles of ensuring appropriate conduct not only at meetings but at all other times.
- I will answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed.
- I will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- I will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- I will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a GB meeting.
- I will not reveal the details of any GB vote.

Conflicts of interest

- I will register any pecuniary or other business interest that I have in connection with the GB's business.
- I will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at any meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Breach of this code

- If I believe this code has been breached, I will raise the issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; if it is the Chair who is believed to have transgressed, the Vice-Chair will investigate.
- I understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the GB, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the GB.
- I understand that the GB will only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties, transgressions or disputes in more constructive ways.

Summary

As a member of the GB I will:

- always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart;
- do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos;
- never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the GB, the Headteacher or staff.

Signature: Date:

Name of governor:



The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee (The Committee on Standards in Public Life), established by the then Prime Minister in 1994 under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations.)

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.