



Governor Induction Pack

Contents

Foreword from the Headteacher/Chair of Governors

What is a governor?

Three key roles of the governing body

Core Responsibilities

Types of governors

Typical governing body makeup

Annual meeting

Statutory committees

Governing body meetings

Confidentiality

Mentor governor

Governor training

Documentation

School & Governor team contact details

Foreword from the Chair/Head

School may use the space to provide information about the school and all the governing body.

What is a Governor?

A governor is someone who:-

- is a volunteer;
- cares about teaching, learning and children;
- represents those people with a key interest in the school, including parents, staff, the local community and the Local Authority.;
- is part of a team which accepts responsibility for everything a school does;
- has time to commit to meetings and other occasions when needed;
- is willing to learn;
- is able to act as a critical friend who supports the school but also challenges and asks questions about how the school works and the standards it achieves;

Acts as a link between parents, the local community, the Local Authority. and the school.

Three Key Roles of the Governing Body

- With the school senior staff, set the strategic plans for the school
- Support the headteacher and staff in the role as a “critical friend” by asking challenging questions about the running of the school and the schools overall performance
- Being accountable to all school partners by fulfilling the first two responsibilities

Core Responsibilities

- Promoting high standards of educational achievement and behaviour
- Setting targets for pupil achievement
- Ensuring that all learners have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Determining the aims, policies and priorities of the school
- Determining and monitoring the school's budget
- Staffing – e.g. staff appointments, performance management

- Providing parents with information regarding the school
- Producing an action plan and monitoring progress following an inspection by ESTYN
- The wellbeing and safeguarding of learners

Types of Governors

Headteacher - A headteacher will be a full member of the governing body of their school unless they choose not to be a governor. If a headteacher decides not to be a governor they are still entitled to attend all meetings of the governing body. The special position of the headteacher governor is important if a good relationship is to be maintained between the head and the governing body. The headteacher will:

- report to governors but also involve governors closely in the running of the school (without, of course, avoiding their own responsibilities);
- be honest, direct and open with governors;
- establish a good rapport with the chairperson of the governing body;
- use simple and direct language rather than technical educational jargon;
- create a climate where governors feel welcome in the school and not just when governors meetings are held.

Parent – Parent governors are elected as representatives of the interests of parents of pupils currently attending the school. A parent governor can continue to serve as a governor until the end of their four year term of office, even if their child leaves the school during the period. Parent governors may express their personal views at governing body meetings, however it is expected that these views would be representative of the interests of the parents at the school.

Teacher - Teacher governors are elected as representatives of the interests of the teaching staff of their school. Whereas on occasion they may give the views of teaching staff to the governing body, they are equally free to express their personal views and exercise their own judgements when decisions are made, like any other governor. Sometimes the views of a teacher governor will not be those of their headteacher. If this is the case, it is wise for the teacher governor to pay the headteacher the courtesy of informing him or her before the particular issue is discussed in a governors' meeting

Staff - Staff governors are elected from among the support staff (all staff employed at the school other than in a teaching capacity) at the school. They may be staff employed either under a contract of employment or a contract for services at the school. Staff governors may give the views of the support staff to the governing

body, they are also free to give their own personal views and exercise their best judgement when contributing to the decisions of the governing body.

Local Authority - Local Authority (LA) governors are appointed by the LA which maintains the school. LA governors may present the LA's views but they are not delegates of the LA and they cannot be mandated by the LA to take a particular view. LAs should publish the process and criteria for identifying candidates for appointment as LA governors.

Community - These governors are invited by other governors to join the governing body and are appointed by the governing body. Community members bring their own experience or skills to the governing body and can act as a link with the community in which the school serves. Community governors usually live or work in the community of the school area and are committed to the good government and success of the school.

Additional Community - An additional community governor is nominated by the community council(s) where a primary or nursery school is situated in an area where there are one or more community councils.

Foundation (voluntary aided schools only) - Foundation governors are members of the governing bodies of voluntary aided, foundation and voluntary controlled schools. They ensure that the school preserves its particular religious character or that it is conducted in accordance with the terms of a trust deed

Associate Pupil - Associate pupil governors (APGs) are nominated from members of the school council from Years 11, 12 or 13 in secondary schools. The aim of APGs is to provide the voice of the school council at governing body meetings and vice versa. They can also be members of the governing body non statutory committees and may vote at committee meetings (not governing body meetings) if voting rights are granted by the governing body.

Typical Governing Body Make-up

* numbers on the left are a larger size governing body and numbers on the right are the smaller size governing body

Secondary

Headteacher
Parent 6/5
Teacher 2
Staff 1
Local Authority 5/4
Community 5/4
Foundation 5/4
Additional Community 1
Associate Pupil 2/1

Primary

Headteacher
Parent 4/3
Teacher 2/1
Staff 1
Local Authority 4/3
Community 4/3
Foundation 4/3
Additional Community 1

Governor Training

Training is an integral part of the development of every governor and this is organised and delivered through an annual training programme facilitated by specialist staff called upon as appropriate because of their particular expertise.

According to The Government of Maintained Schools (Training Requirements for Governors) (Wales) Regulations 2013 it is mandatory to attend the following courses within a year of appointment:

- **New Governor**
- **Understanding School Data**

For a list of dates and to book please visit

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/governortrainingcourses>

The School and Governor Team monitor attendance to ensure all governors are compliant with the requirements. Governors who do not attend mandatory training within a year of appointment are automatically suspended for a six month period and be at risk of disqualification.

There are many other courses to help you in your role such as Finance and Budgets, Health & Safety, Child Protection, Exclusions and the Role of the Pupil Discipline Committee, Redundancy and many more. For a full list please visit

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/governortrainingcourses>

Annual Meeting

- Chair will be appointed
- Vice Chair will be appointed
- Committees will be set up
- Instrument of Government is reviewed
- Declaration of Business Interest issued

Statutory Committees

- Staff Disciplinary and Dismissal
- Staff Disciplinary and Dismissal Appeals
- Pupil Discipline and Exclusion
- Admissions Committee (**voluntary aided schools only**)

Governing Body Meetings

The clerk to the governing body will send out the agenda up to 5 working days before the meeting. This will include the Headteachers Termly Report to the Governing Body and any other papers for discussion/consideration at the meeting.

Confidentiality

As a governor, from time to time you will be involved in discussions where very personal and sensitive information is exchanged. At other times, when the governing body is making decisions about the finances of the school, perhaps commercially sensitive information is discussed. Because of the sensitivities involved, these kinds of discussions are regarded as confidential.

On other occasions, perhaps a parent or other member of the community may give you information which is relevant to your work as a governor on the understanding that you will repeat it to no-one else, i.e. the information is given to you **'in confidence'**.

It is essential to your personal reputation and credibility that you do not abuse the rule of confidentiality, unless it is about a child protection issue. This applies when information is given to you in confidence whether you receive the information in the playground or in the street, or during the meeting of the governing body.

In a meeting you may be privileged to receive information about parents, pupils, members of staff or even the headteacher. The information is given to you only because it is necessary for you to do your work as a governor. For example, when considering pupils with additional educational needs, the pupil concerned will not be identified by name in order to maintain confidentiality. You must never repeat information received in confidence in a governors' meeting to others in the community (including friends and members of your family). Equally, information given to you confidentially outside the meeting must not be brought into discussion during the meeting.

If you break this rule of confidentiality, your personal reputation in the community, your standing as a governor, the status of your governing body and of governors generally, are all likely to be seriously damaged. You may even be suspended from the governing body for a period of up to six months, or even removed from the governing body. Elected governors cannot be removed but they can be suspended.

The only circumstances when a breach of confidentiality is justified arises when a governor of a school receives information in confidence outside a meeting, which suggests that a pupil is at risk of physical, sexual or other abuse of some kind. Child protection matters **cannot** be kept confidential and must be reported to the statutory authority i.e. the police or social services. However, if a problem of this kind arises, you would be wise to seek the advice of your chairperson or headteacher as soon as possible before breaching the confidence.

Mentor Governor

Your mentor governor will be _____

They will support you during your induction period.

Child Protection governor _____

Chair of Governors _____

Documentation

New governors can request and be encouraged to read the following:

- Dates of future meetings of the governing body;
- List of governing body members and responsibilities i.e. committee members, link governors etc;
- Details of how to contact the school;
- Details of the governing body committees and their terms of reference;
- Copies of the minutes of the last two full governing body meetings;
- Governor visits to school policy;
- Copy of the latest budget report;
- Latest headteacher report to the governing body;
- School Prospectus;
- List of staff members and their responsibilities;
- Latest Annual Report to Parents;
- Latest Inspection Report and Action Plan;
- School Development/Improvement Plan;
- School Self-Evaluation Report;
- Current school holiday schedule/calendar of events.

School and Governor Team Contact Details

The School and Governor Team offer a governor support service via email
schoolandgovernorunit@swansea.gov.uk

Gemma Wynne
Governor Support Officer
07970327925
gemma.wynne@swansea.gov.uk

Agnieszka (Agnes) Majewska
Governor Support Assistant
01792 636395
agnieszka.majewska@swansea.gov.uk

Deborah Hulsken
Governor Support Assistant
01792 636552
Deborah.hulsken@swansea.gov.uk

Sue Ingmire
Admin Assistant
01792 636065
susan.ingmire@swansea.gov.uk

Claire Abraham
School & Governor Support Officer
07557197167
claire.abraham@swansea.gov.uk