

# **DISLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **INFORMATION FOR NEW GOVERNORS**

### **Roles of Governing Bodies in general**

All schools have a governing body whose job it is to work with the headteacher, the local education authority and the Diocese for church schools, to ensure that the pupils receive the best possible education at that establishment.

Governing bodies vary in size from 10 - 21 or more depending on the number of pupils in the school and the type of school, but they all have the same requirement - to work together with the headteacher in agreeing the aims and conduct of the school, ensuring that the pupils have a full entitlement to the agreed curriculum and managing the school within its allocated budget.

There are regulations within which the governing body must work. These are laid down by central government (Education Acts and Regulations) and the local authority (Instruments of Government and Schemes of Financial Management).

### **Qualifications and skills needed to become a governor**

Governors, once appointed, are holders of public office, and should be prepared to work to the same principles as any paid public official. This is true both as an individual and as a whole governing body.

There are certain disqualifications from being a school governor and all applicants for appointment or election must sign a declaration stating that they are not disqualified. In addition all governors have to sign a declaration of interests at the beginning of each school year.

The demands placed on a governor are various. The following list shows a range of the skills and qualities required:

- time (see Governors' work-load below)
- commitment
- a willingness to learn
- a listening ear
- the ability to assimilate information, make judgements and take decisions

- flexibility
- tact
- ability to work as part of a team

## **Responsibilities of school governors**

Governors are appointed and elected to provide:

- strong links between the school and the community it serves;
- a wide experience of the outside world;
- an independent view;
- a visible form of accountability for the headteacher and staff of the school;
- a team focusing on long term development and improvement;
- accountability to the community for the use of resources and the standards of teaching and learning in the school;
- support for the headteacher and staff.

## **Governing bodies are the strategic planners of schools**

In order to do this a governing body

- employs others to carry out the work;
- has an operational manager (the headteacher) who is responsible for the day to day management of the school;
- agrees policies and practice which allows the headteacher the necessary tools to carry out his/her responsibilities;
- agrees principles and targets for improvement;
- acts as the critical friend of the school and headteacher;
- receives and discusses reports on the resulting practice and conduct of the school;
- reviews its own working practices.

Decisions of the governing body are made in formal meetings, either with the full governing body, or in committees if their terms of reference allow.

All governing bodies have committees which

- carry out tasks specifically given to them by the governing body
- aid the work of the governing body
- report back to the governing body

The number of committees depends on the governing body and its needs.

## **All governors, once appointed, share the responsibilities and work as a team**

- Individuals are part of the corporate governing body
- Duties are carried out as part of the team
- Governors are not legally liable as individuals.

All Governors should be familiar with the Scheme for Financing Schools, which can be accessed at:

<http://www/Services/Education/INTRANET/fairfund/Financeforschool2005-06.htm>

## **Membership of the governing body at Disley Primary School**

All governors, other than the head teacher, are appointed or elected for a four year term. There is no restriction on the number of times a governor may re-stand for appointment or election.

The Disley Primary School Instrument of government became effective on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Under this constitution there are 15 governors consisting of: 2 parent governors, 1 Local Authority governors, 1 staff governors and 10 co-opted governors.

## **Governing body meetings**

The **Full Governing Body** meets at least three times a year – once in each term. However additional meetings may be called if considered necessary. The chairman and vice-chair are elected by the governors at the first meeting of each academic year or as required.

Regular meeting dates for the full governing body and the sub-committees are generally set for each academic year before the start of that year. The main work of the governing body is conducted by the sub-committees who report to the full governing body each term. The committees are responsible for taking their own minutes and forwarding copies to all governors and the clerk after each meeting. Each committee sets Terms of Reference, which are attached to this document and can also be found in the Manual of Internal Procedures. These are reviewed by committees annually.

The four committees are:

**Premises** - responsible for management and strategic improvement of buildings, health and safety, policies

**Finance** – responsible for strategic long-term planning, school budget, staffing structure, Manual of Internal Procedures

**Curriculum** – responsible for curriculum, standards and achievement, SEN, pupil issues, curriculum policies

**Personnel** – responsible for Performance Management, appointment of staff, personnel issues, whole School Pay policy.

Other committees are established as and when required. The full governing body may appoint the chairman to any of the committees or may delegate this power to the committees themselves.

## **Governors' work-load**

Governors should expect to spend about 10 hours a term attending meetings, reading papers, visiting school, and attending training courses. However some governors of Disley Primary School find that they spend more time than this in reality, although the work-load can vary from term to term.

All governors are expected to:

- attend the regular and special meetings of the full governing body;
- become a member of at least one sub-committee;
- work as a member of the governing body (not as an individual) in the best interests of the school;
- show an interest in school activities;
- become well-informed about education in general and about their school in particular;
- become familiar with the rules of school governance;
- attend necessary training courses;

## **Vacancies**

Vacancies which arise on the Governing Body are dealt with according to the type of vacancy:

- Vacancies for Staff governors are announced to all staff by the headteacher.
- Vacancies for Parent governors are announced to parents via a letter from the Chair of Governors and Headteacher
- Vacancies for LA governors are dealt with by the local authority.
- Vacancies for community governors are considered by the governing body and appointments made according to skills or qualifications needed.

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## **GOVERNING BODY (September 2017)**

Parent Governors	Zoe Lofthouse Helen McCaldon
Staff	Louise Carberry
Head Teacher	Heather Taylor
Local Government	Karen Tomlinson
Co-opted Community	Janette Johnson (Chair) Michael Clark (Vice Chair) Matthew Day Gregor Purves Harold Davenport Margaret Owens Sue McCaldon (Vice Chair) Gaynor Marshall Amy Mayell + 1 vacancy
Associate Governors	Wilf Burgess Bridget Jones