



Could you become a governor?

Types of governors & the appointment process

There are different categories of governors including parent, staff and community (also known as co-opted) governors. All governors have the same role and responsibilities as part of the governing board.

Parent and **staff** governors are appointed for their experience and understanding of the needs of the groups they represent. They are usually elected by their peers although they can be appointed by the board if an election isn't successful in filling vacancies. The election process will be advertised and instructions provided on how you can stand as a candidate for election.

Community governors are appointed (co-opted) to the board for the skills they can contribute. The trust has an appointment process for community governors which includes completing an application form, undertaking an interview and visiting the school. This provides an opportunity for both you and the school to make an informed decision about your potential appointment. The school will also take up references before confirming their decision to appoint.

Before an appointment can be confirmed you will need to:

- Provide evidence of your identity and right to work in the UK.
- Confirm your eligibility to be a governor. There are certain conditions which you have to meet in order to be eligible to be a governor. These are listed on the nomination and application forms.
- Complete a declaration of interests form to declare any conflicts of interest you will have including conflicts of loyalty and financial interests – this information must be published by the school on its website
- Undertake an enhanced DBS check and a Section 128 check carried out by the school (your appointment will be subject to these)
- Provide relevant information (name, address, date of birth) for the GOV.UK Get Information About Schools (GIAS) service as part of the appointment process.

You should note that governance is a voluntary role and therefore your services will not be paid for. Essential travel expenses may be reimbursed for attendance at training.

What do governors do?

The governing board provides strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It has three key functions, which are set out in more detail in the [DfE Governance Handbook](#):

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

In ONE Academy Trust, the board of trustees have overall responsibility for the effective performance and management of all the schools in the trust. The trustees delegate responsibility to the local governors of each school (the local governing body) to oversee their school.

Governors help set the aims and objectives for their school and agree the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives. They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher. In action, this means:

- Contributing to the development of the school's strategic plan and monitoring progress against targets
- Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community
- Sitting on panels and making decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary
- Addressing a range of education issues within the school including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special needs, staff workload and teacher recruitment
- Looking at data and evidence to ask searching questions and have challenging conversations about the school
- Providing the headteacher with support and advice, drawing on their knowledge and experience.
- Attending meetings and visits
- Participate in training

All governors are elected or appointed with one common purpose – to govern the school in the best interest of pupils. They are not elected to represent their stakeholder group (e.g. parents) but are elected in order to contribute to the work of the governing board.

Responsibilities

- As part of the governing board, governors work co-operatively with other governors in the best interests of the school. They respect the headteacher's position as the professional leader of the school.
- Governors must abide by the [7 Principles of Public Life](#): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. All governors are required to sign up to the WAT Governance Code of Conduct (available to view on the WAT website) which incorporates the 7 Principles of Public Life.
- Governors have an equal right to participate in meetings and to state their views whilst respecting the views of others. They are loyal to the decisions made by the governing board and respect the confidentiality of the board.
- As part of the role, governors are required to declare their interests (financial, relationships). They must declare an interest and withdraw from a decision from which they or a partner or close relative stands to gain or where they are too involved to be objective.
- Each individual governor is a member of a governing board, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the governing board; decisions are the joint responsibility of the governing board.

How much time does it involve?

The average time commitment is about four hours per month, although it will vary depending on the needs of the school and the role. For example, in addition to your general responsibilities, you may volunteer for a link governor role, focusing on a particular area of school life on behalf of the whole board.

You will need to:

- Prepare for meetings. There will be papers that will need reading such as policies and reports
- Attend meetings. We meet at least once per term either in person or virtually.

You will also be encouraged to:

- Take part in school visits/meetings with a particular focus during the school day
- Join in some of the school's activities (e.g. attending school assemblies) in an informal way to get to know the school

What training and support is available?

There is no requirement for you to have any specific training to be a governor. However, as a new school governor you will be expected to take part in training to help you understand your role and develop your knowledge and skills. You will also be expected to undertake some essential training in areas such as Safeguarding and Data Protection as part of your role.

The ONE Academy Trust induction process, and the ONE Academy Trust Governance Handbook will help guide you in your role.

Subsequent training on a wide range of activities will be made available as needed.

Each governing body has a clerk appointed who supports the functions of the governing body, provides advice on statutory responsibilities and will organise appropriate training and development to support you in your role.

Term of office

The term of office for a governor is four years.

If you are a community governor you can choose to serve multiple terms if this is approved by the governing body.

If you are a parent governor, your appointment does not cease when your child leaves the school but can carry on for the full term if you wish. However, you cannot be re-elected as a parent governor if you don't have a child at the school. Many parent governors choose to offer their services as a community governor at the end of their term and are co-opted onto the board if there is a suitable vacancy.

If you are a staff governor, your appointment will end when your employment ends or after four years, whichever is soonest. At the end of your term, you can stand for re-election.

As a volunteer, you can resign before your term is finished if your circumstances change.

More information

If you would like some more information about becoming a governor and what it involves, please contact Mr. Fowlie (Headteacher) and we will be happy to discuss it with you in more detail.