

HAZELDENE LOWER SCHOOL



GOVERNOR INDUCTION POLICY UPDATED JANUARY 2016

SIGNED DATE.....
HEADTEACHER

SIGNED DATE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

TO BE REVIEWED February 2018

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document states the Policy for new Governor recruitment and induction and defines the arrangements established to implement this policy. The document also identifies the methods for validating that the defined arrangements are being carried out and are effective. The policy includes specific information for recruitment and induction of parent and partnership Governors. This document is not a legal requirement but has been deemed necessary by the Governors and Staff for the effective management of the school.

1.1 Rationale

Governors are essential for effective management of schools and there is a legal requirement to have a full and functioning Governing Body. The recruitment of new Governors is an ongoing process as existing Governors complete their term of office etc. Once an individual has agreed to consider becoming a Governor, the onus on the school and the Governing Body is to provide information to that person pertaining to the role and associated responsibilities. Should that person be accepted onto the Governing Body, it is important that they undertake both formal and informal induction to the school, the other Governors and to their role. This policy includes a recruitment procedure and recommends an induction procedure. Induction is the joint responsibility of the new Governor and the Governing Body.

2.0 POLICY

The Governors, Head Teacher and Staff of Hazeldene Lower School are committed to ensuring the active and useful participation of Governors in the effective management of the school. This policy relates to Governor:-

2.1 Recruitment

Policy for new Governor Recruitment and associated materials are provided. The information is most relevant to parent and community Governors.

2.2 Induction

Policy for induction will cover who has responsibility for the following:-

- first Governors meeting
- information to read first
- legal requirements of being a Governor
- formal training
- mentoring
- potential roles on the GB eg in committee
- further information sources

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Recruitment

Procedures for attracting high calibre individuals to become school Governors include motivating them about school Governance and the correct formal procedures for recruitment of the different types of Governor. This policy concentrates on recruitment of **Partnership** and **Parent** Governors. The following steps should be considered when recruiting new Governors:-

1. When a vacancy arises, the Head Teacher and chair of Governors should decide which category of Governor is needed.

(NB there are 5 classes of Governor at Hazeldene: Local Education Authority, Parent Governors, Staff Governors (including the HEAD Teacher) Partnership Governors and co-opted Governors. There is also a clerk to the Governors.)

The Head Teacher and Chair of Governors prepare a joint letter to be sent out with a promotional flyer intended to be motivational to prospective Governors, to the target community (parents via the students, other recipients, depending on the category of Governor required). Specimens are appended in ATTACHMENT 1.

2. Enquiries from recipients are followed up by providing a short document outlining the nature of the role, ATTACHMENT 2. The school prospectus and latest Annual report to parents can also be provided for additional information, especially to an individual not familiar with the school already.
3. It is assumed that after receiving information as outlined above, an interested prospective **partnership** Governor would contact the school and a prospective **parent** Governor will complete a nomination form. The Head Teacher and or Chair of Governors (via the school office) should provide an opportunity for interested parties to visit the school to discuss the role and its responsibilities in more detail.
4. If an applicant confirms their interest they are required to submit a short pen portrait (500 words or less) indicating any skills and experience which could be useful to bring to the Governing Body.
5. **Partnership Governor** - Applications will be discussed at the next meeting of the Governing Body and appointments made and communicated in writing to the successful applicant well in time before the subsequent Governing Body meeting. In the event of there being more applicants than vacancies, then the Governing Body shall elect the successful candidates by ballot.
6. **Parent Governors** - In the event of there being more applicants than vacancies, then the Governor shall be elected by parent ballot. A specimen procedure for this is appended in ATTACHMENT 3.

3.2 Induction

Induction starts as soon as the new Governor is appointed. They will be provided with information, in a structured and timely way will ensure that the new Governor is not swamped with reading materials but gets the key information necessary to make a good start as a Governor. Several people have responsibility for the induction. The following checklist should be followed.

- The Chair of Governors will- Contact the new Governor suggesting an informal opportunity to meet the Chair of Governors and have a tour of school. (A tour may have been done during the recruitment process).
- Appoint a Governor mentor. This could either be a new-ish Governor or the training Governor.
- Inform the new Governor of the time and date of the first meeting they should attend and ensure they are on the clerk of Governors list for the agenda and any pre-reading materials to be sent out.

The MENTOR will:-

- Contact the new Governor prior to their first Governor's meeting
- Ensure the new Governor has their induction pack and spend some time going through the information with the new Governor as required.
- Copies of the pack will be retained by the school office and the clerk to the Governors will review the packs bi-annually to keep them up to date.
- Plan how to introduce the new Governor at their first meeting. E.g. request on the agenda a time for round table introductions; suggest names stickers/cards etc; plan some informal time before or after the meeting.
- Arrange to meet the new Governor at the school on their first meeting and introduce the new Governor to the Governing Body. Provide any information about the meeting itself and school safety (e.g. fire drill) and to be a 'buddy' during their first important experience as a Governor.

- Introduce the new Governor to the person responsible for Governor Training who will discuss the formal training programme and suggest dates for Governors induction training

Provision of useful information in a timely way to a new Governor helps them appreciate their new role without swamping them with unnecessary reading in the first weeks/months. An induction pack is recommended to meet the specific needs of the new Governor and content and responsibility for content is detailed below and in ATTACHMENT 4:-

The clerk will provide an induction pack, including:-

- A 'friendly' letter of welcome (provided by the Chair of Governors)
- A current calendar of Governors meetings
- The current Governing Body structure and committee membership
- A list of current Governors contact details
- A current issue of the school Governors newsletter
- Copy of the minutes of the last two full Governing Body meeting
- The current school development plan
- A recent Newsletter to parents
- A recent report to Governors from the Head Teacher
- The school complaints policy
- Information on how to use Governorhub
- Pecuniary interest form with a request to return the form to the clerk of Governors
- A statement of qualification to be a Governor
- Information on the training programme for new Governors offered by Bedford Borough Council
- A jargon buster (this can be found at the back of the Head Teacher Report)

The Clerk to the Governors will arrange for the new Governor to join Governorhub and keep the information on Governorhub up to date for new Governors.

Once their appointment is confirmed, the new Governor is responsible for ensuring their effective induction. The following is a suggested list of what the new Governor should be aiming to achieve over their first year:-

The new Governor should:-

- Prior to first meeting
 - Read the pre-meeting materials in the induction pack and skim through chapters 1-4 of the Governance Handbook for Academies, Multi Academy Trusts and Governors of Maintained Schools which will be provided by the clerk.
- Within first 3months
 - Attend a full Governors meeting
 - Read the "Governance Handbook" in more detail
 - Access further reading for new Governors, e.g. available on the internet or vis DfES/HBS documents (normally available from the school office)
 - Join at least one committee
 - Arrange to spend a day in school, in a subject area of their choice, to gain an insight into life at Hazeldene Lower School NB this visit would be informal and part of the new Governors induction.
- Within 3-6 months
 - Attend one each of the committee meetings to 'see what goes on' and where their skills could be best utilised if not already decided.
 - Arrange to attend formal new Governor training

This activity plan and associated documentation form the basis for effective new Governor induction. Depending on the role the new Governor assumes within the Governing Body, access to other information will be necessary. Examples are listed below.

- Chairs of subcommittees are deemed responsible for ensuring that the new Governor has information relating to the work of the committee they are joining. (eg minutes, relevant policies, etc)
 - This task can be delegated to the Clerk to the Governors.
- Last OFSTED report
- RAISE on line (Performance and Data Analysis, based on Target Tracker results)

4.0 VERIFICATION

A tabulated version of this check-list and induction pack contents can be found in Attachment 4 and should be given to the new Governor, the Chair of Governors and the Governor Mentor. All should verify timings eg of meetings and agree to sign off the induction process upon completion. Induction will normally last 6-12months.

5.0 REFERENCES

A list of documents referred to within the Body of this document or that influenced the creation of this document are:

Title (Source)	Sections/Code
Governance Handbook	Chapters 2-4
http://www.governornet.co.uk/linkAttachments/ACF70EC.pdf	
DfES Guidance for head teachers and Chairs of Governors on the national training programme for new Governors	DfES/0736/2001
Booklet on training available to School Governors http://www.schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CPD/Governor%20Portfolio%20-%20Final.pdf	
Roles of Governing Bodies and Head teachers	DfES 0168/2000

ATTACHMENT 1

Example of Letter to Parents informing of Vacancy and inviting Nominations

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to invite parents, guardians and carers of registered pupils at Hazeldene School to put their names forward for election to serve as parent governors.

The governing body of our school is made up of parents, staff, and other members of the community. The governors, along with the Head teacher, are responsible for a wide range of matters affecting the life of the school and the work of the pupils. Parents may be interested in the overall governing body and how it is made up. There are:

- Parent Governors (elected by Parents and Carers)
- Partnership Governors (nominated by parents, community etc and appointed by the governing body)
- A Local Authority Governor (nominated by Bedford Borough)
- A Staff Governor (elected by Staff)
- Co-opted Governors (appointed by the Governing Body)
- The Head teacher is a governor by virtue of their office.

There is/are a vacancy/ies for parent governors and we hope that parents will feel encouraged to put themselves forward.

We know that parents are interested in the education of their children and share the school's commitment to ensuring the best possible education and opportunities for all our pupils. One of the best ways to pursue this interest and commitment is to volunteer to become a parent governor.

The governing body has three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

No special qualifications are needed and the most important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the governing body's work. However, we would particularly welcome nominations from parents with the following skills *<description of desired skills>*. Training is available for all governors and this governing body has an expectation that those new to being a governor attend free induction training. There is also the expectation that governors abide by the school's Code of Conduct. New governors will have to declare relevant business interests and these will be published on the school's website.

If you would like an informal chat about what being a governor means please contact myself or the Chair of Governors (.....) via the school.

If you are eligible to be a parent governor, please complete the attached self nomination form. In addition to the self nomination form, candidates are also asked to write a statement for all parents, saying something about themselves and why they would like to be a governor. This statement should not be more than 500 words.

If the number of nominations is not more than the number of vacancies, then those nominated will be appointed. If there are more nominations than vacancies then an election will be held.

The procedure will be::

- Letter to parents inviting nominations
- Completed nomination forms and statement **must** be received by pm on
- Depending on the number of nominations I will either
 1. write to all parents with the parent governors appointed
 2. write to all parents providing details of the election process.

Please find enclosed with this letter a self nomination form and a paper stating any reasons a parent or carer may not stand as a parent governor.

Nominations should be sent to me in school by pm on

Yours sincerely

Helen Ward
Head teacher

Self Nomination Form for the Election of Parent Governor(s) at Hazeldene School

Name of candidate:

Child(ren) in Year(s):

I am willing and eligible to stand as a parent governor at (School name).

Signature

Date:

Why I would like to be a parent governor and the skills and experience I can bring to this role:
(please provide a statement of no more than 500 words continuing on a separate sheet if necessary)



Please return this form to the Returning Officer at the School by on

Election Letter with Ballot Paper

Dear Parent/Carer

I wrote to you a short while ago regarding nominations for the appointment of Parent Governors. There were more nominations received than there were vacancies and therefore an election will be held. The ballot paper and personal statements from each candidate are enclosed. The candidates' names are listed in alphabetical order on the ballot paper.

Every parent/carer of a registered child at the school is allowed to vote. The voting procedure is as follows:

- Each parent/carer may vote for 1/2/3 candidates (Number of vacancies)
- Please indicate your vote by placing the mark **X** beside the name of your preferred candidate(s)
- You may not cast more than one vote for any candidate and parents with more than one child are not entitled to more votes
- Please place the completed ballot paper in an envelope marked "Parent Governor Elections" and with your child's / children's name, and return to the school office by(time) on(date). Late forms will not be counted.

In the event of a tie, that is two candidates with the same number of votes, the election will be decided by drawing lots.

After the ballot, the results of the election will be posted on the school notice board/website and all parents will be informed of the result.

Yours sincerely

Helen Ward
Head teacher

The Governing Body of

Hazeldene Lower School

Partnership Governor Information Sheet

BACKGROUND

School governors represent the largest volunteer force in the country with approximately 1% of the adult population serving in this capacity at any one time. The governing body of Hazeldene Lower School has 13 governor positions of which 3 are for partnership governors. Devolved local management of schools has influenced the day-to-day managerial function of head teachers and the strategic role of governing bodies. A consequence of this devolvement is that governors recruited from the local community are highly valued for the skills, experience and objectivity that they bring to decision-making.

CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Governors are people who have an interest in the role of schools in society and wish to make a positive contribution to their communities. They will have enquiring minds and contribute to the effective day-to-day running of the school and the educational achievements of its pupils.

A governing body's overriding responsibility is to work in partnership with the head teacher to promote continuous improvement in the performance of the school. This involves the establishment of a development plan, the

setting of challenging but achievable targets and the interpretation of information to assess progress and determine appropriate action. Typically, a governor's duties will average at around 6 hours of spare time each month in addition to attending meetings.

Aligned to its improvement role, the governing body is there to be a 'critical friend' who can provide the right balance between supporting and challenging the performance of both the head teacher and the school.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Bedford Borough LA values the voluntary contribution of its governors and in return aims to provide high-quality training and support service. Governors are able to access this support in a variety of ways including training courses and a designated helpline. A regular newsletter is sent to all school governors in the Bedford area to keep them informed of developments in education policy and current best practices.

BECOMING A PARTNERSHIP GOVERNOR

Being a community governor can be stimulating, enjoyable and rewarding. If you have the enthusiasm and desire to become closely involved in the running of the school then please contact Victoria Cromwell, Chair of Governors via the Clerk of Governors or write directly to her at the school address.

Hazeldene Lower School
Stancliffe Road
Bedford
MK41 9AT
Tel 01234 300100

ATTCHMENT 2: ROLE OF PARENT GOVERNOR

The Role of a Parent Governor

All school governing bodies have parent governors and in Bedford Borough, the local authority has delegated the election process to the Head teacher of the school. Anyone who has parental responsibility for a pupil on the school roll at the time of election can stand for election and can vote in the election. A parent who works for the school for 500 hours or more per year, or a parent who is an elected member of the local authority (County Councillor) is not eligible to stand for election but they are permitted to nominate and vote. The term of office for a parent governor at Hazeldene Lower School is 4 years but obviously a governor can choose to stand down at any time. Parent governors will usually be selected through a parents' election but if insufficient parents stand for election the governing body can appoint parents to the governing body.

Why become a parent governor?

Parents who have a child at the school and who take an active interest in the education of **all children** at the school should consider becoming a parent governor. They should not take on this role because they have a particular concern about the education of an individual child.

Parents may have a useful skill such as an expertise in finance that can be useful to the governing body. It is useful for parents to talk to other parent governors to find out what they think about the role and what is really involved before deciding if the role is one which they would like to take on. *What have they found challenging? What have they found rewarding?*

What will parent governors have to do?

- take an active interest in education
- give time to find out about your school
- give time to learn about the role by attending induction training
- attend meetings throughout the year
- abide by the Code of Conduct and confidentiality
- undergo the pre-appointment checks by reading and signing a Declaration of Eligibility form and completing a register of pecuniary interest.

The Strategic Role

The role of a parent governor is essentially the same as that of a governor from any other category. **Some** of the ways in which governors work together strategically:

- monitoring the schools' performance and working to raise standards and promote pupil welfare
- ensuring that the school is improving the achievement and attainment of all children
- making sure that special needs are properly catered for
- dealing with disciplinary issues of pupils and staff
- appointing the Head teacher
- monitoring work-life balance of the staff and Head teacher
- setting the budget
- helping to formulate policies
- accountability to parents by ensuring they have the information they are legally entitled to
- dealing with problems and agreeing solutions
- determining curriculum policy
- ensuring the school has sound self-evaluation processes in place

Collective Responsibility

All governors have equal status. They act collectively to support the school strategically. They participate in and contribute in shared decisions. Once decisions have been made even if a governor does not personally agree with these they must act collectively to support these decisions in a united way.

Support and Challenge

Governors support the school but are also prepared to question why decisions have been made and request information about the school to help them in their monitoring role.

The Head teacher's Operational Role

Parent governors and other categories of governors may become involved in other aspects of school life. They may visit the school to help in various capacities such as hearing children read. What governors must not do is get involved with operational decisions. The Head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school.

Sometimes it can be difficult to decide where the strategic role ends and the operational one begins. There is a wealth of information available to governors to help them understand their role. Governors should attend Induction training to help them understand their role.

Diplomacy and Confidentiality

The role requires diplomacy, adherence to a Code of Conduct and particularly confidentiality. It can also be difficult to separate a parent's involvement with the school in relation to their own child and in raising issues as a parent governor.

The Playground

Being a parent governor and being in contact with other parents maybe in the playground before and after school can mean that a parent governor has to be particularly careful regarding issues of confidentiality and professionalism. It is important to keep the role of governor separate from personal feelings when given information about individuals. Similarly, a parent governor may be involved in discussions of a confidential nature during the course of a governing body meeting and these discussions may concern a particular individual. Names would not normally be disclosed at meetings but inevitably at some time a parent governor may become aware about issues surrounding an individual child or member of staff. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance in these circumstances.

A parent governor may be involved in a disciplinary case and would have to declare an interest to other members of the governing body if they had had contact with a child or teacher involved with the case. Parent governors need to be familiar with the school's complaints procedure.

Communicating with Parents and Representing Parents

A parent governor has a duty to communicate concerns and feelings expressed by parents to other members of the governing body. However, a parent governor is not a delegate who attends meetings with instructions on how to vote on any particular issue. A parent governor is a representative parent and should vote on issues at meetings in the best interests of the school and according to his/her own conscience.

If a particular issue is raised and brought to the attention of a parent governor, this should be referred to the whole governing body to discuss and decide collectively how to act. A parent governor takes account of what parents are thinking and then makes a decision about what he/she feels is in the best interests of the school.

Communication between governors, parents, pupils and teachers is very important and will take place in a number of ways.

Induction and Support

One of the most important ways to ensure that governors are clear about their role is for them to receive good, sound induction as soon as possible following their appointment. This should include general induction to the role by attending local authority induction training, and in-school induction to their own governing body from the Head teacher, the chair of governors and a mentor governor.

Hazeldene Lower School subscribes to the Bedford Borough Governor training package and can provide free access to a full training package for their governors.

NEW GOVERNOR INFORMATION

Dear Prospective Governor

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Governor at Hazeldene Lower School. Please read the following information, which is a brief summary of the role and responsibilities of the Governing Body.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNING BODY

The following are summary headings of the areas of responsibilities and activity for the governing body.

- Strategic Overview
- School Development Plan
- Governor In-Service Training
- Governor Visits
- Effective Committee Structures
- Policy review/creation
- Monitor and evaluate
- New initiatives e.g. Governing Body reconstitution, School Visits, Child Protection, Workload Agreement, Employment Law 2002:
- Communication with Parents.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF GOVERNORS

Below are six areas of responsibility:

1. All Governors;
2. Chair;
3. Vice Chair;
4. Sub-Committee Chair;
5. Governors with responsibilities e.g. Literacy, SEND etc;
6. Clerk.

First and foremost, we are all governors. We may then take on additional roles and responsibilities e.g. chairing a sub-committee. The role of all governors is to:-

- attend meetings;
- read papers before a meeting;
- share the workload;
- share and use their expertise;
- sit on at least one sub-committee (see attached annual report for details of these);
- partake of training opportunities;
- show initiative;
- make Governors visits to the school;
- read, contribute and question SIP;
- monitor and evaluate progress and performance in the school;
- challenge Lead Professional and Senior Management Team;
- be supportive of the Head;
- Promote the reputation of the school.

EXPERTISE YOU MAY HAVE

- *Already been on committees*
- *Been involved with youth organisations*
- *Work with children*
- *Being a parent*
- *Health & safety skills*
- *Other?*

I hope this has in some way given you an idea of what being a governor involves. We are trying to recruit new members to the Governing Body. Please give serious thought to this. We need parents and members of the wider community from all walks of life who are interested and want to contribute to the life of the school, and who can care about all the children. We need YOU and training will be given.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Cromwell

Chair of Governors

Attachment 3: PARENT GOVERNOR Election Procedure

Head teacher/ Chair of Governing Body:

- Determine
 1. procedure
 2. nomination timetable
 3. election timetable
 4. method of ballot
 5. procedure in the event of a tie in the voting
- Informs all candidates and parents
- Publishes election results



Vacancy notified to parents
Nominations sought
Allow 10 school days for return of nominations

If there are more nominations than vacancies



Prepare ballot papers
Send to all eligible voters



Allow 10 school days
for return of ballot papers



Count votes



Notify candidates and
all parents of the result

If there are less or equal nominations to the number of vacancies



Nominees appointed
Declare the result

ATTACHMENT 4: INDUCTION PACK CHECKLIST

The Clerk to the Governors is required to maintain copies of the induction pack up to date ON Governor Hub.

Item	Responsible for placing in the induction pack	Completed/Updated (Date)
A 'friendly' letter of welcome	Chair of Governors	
A current calendar of Governors meetings	Clerk to the Governing Body	
The current Governing Body structure and committee membership	Clerk to the Governing Body	
A list of current Governors contact details	Clerk to the Governing Body	
A current issue of the school Governors newsletter	Clerk to the Governing Body	
Copy of the minutes of the last two full Governing Body meeting	Clerk to the Governing Body	
The current school development plan	Clerk to the Governing Body	
A recent Newsletter to parents	Clerk to the Governing Body	
A recent report to Governors from the Head Teacher	Clerk to the Governing Body	
The school complaints policy	Clerk to the Governing Body	
Pecuniary interest form with a request to return the form to the clerk of Governors	Clerk to the Governing Body	
A statement of qualification to be a Governor	Clerk to the Governing Body	
List of websites of relevance to school Governance	Mentor	

ATTACHMENT 4: INDUCTION CHECKLIST

Name of Governor:.....

Date of Appointment:.....

Name of Governor Mentor:.....

Task	Responsibility	Completed (Date)
Invite new governor to an informal opportunity to meet the Chair of Governors/ Head Teacher	Head Teacher/ Chair of Governors	
Appointment of a Governor mentor.	Chair of Governors	
Inform the new Governor of the time and date of the first meeting they should attend.	Chair of Governors	
Ensure they are on the list for receiving the agenda and any pre-reading materials to be sent out.	Clerk	
Provide the new Governor with their induction pack and spend some time going through the information with the new Governor.	Clerk / Appointed mentor	
Plan how to introduce the new Governor at their first meeting	Appointed mentor	
Arrange to meet the new Governor at the school on their first meeting	Appointed mentor	
Introduce the new Governor to the person responsible for Governor Training	Appointed mentor	
Prior to first meeting, read the pre-meeting materials in the induction pack and skim through chapters 1-4 of 'Governance Handbook' for School Governors'.	New Governor	
Within first 3months Attend a full Governors meeting Read the 'Governance Handbook' in more detail Access further reading for new Governors	New Governor	
Within 3-6 months Attend one each of the committee meetings to 'see what goes on' and where their skills could be best utilised.	New Governor	
Within 6-12 months Arrange to spend a day in school, to gain an insight into life at Hazeldene School. Join at least one committee Arrange to attend formal new Governor training	New Governor	
Sign off of Induction procedure	Chair of Governors	

Induction Signed off:-

New Governor:.....Date:.....

Chair of Governors: