



Monday, 16 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

There is a vacancy for a **Parent Governor** on the school Governing Body and I am writing to invite you to nominate yourself, or somebody else, for the position.

Parent Governors play an important role as part of the Governing Body, meeting at least once every half term. They are responsible for shaping the strategic direction of the school, promoting high standards of educational achievement and ensuring our resources are used to maximum impact. The term of office for Parent Governors is 4 years.

Life as a Governor is varied and fulfilling and we hope that there are parents/carers prepared to take on this important role and give their time and commitment to helping us to continue to improve the school's performance. Training and support will be available to help you develop into the role. This will include one-to-one mentoring and support as well as access to external Governor training. Those new to being a Governor are expected to attend induction training.

In looking to fill this vacancy, the Governors of the school have identified the following skills, experience and attributes that they feel would help strengthen the Governing Body:

- Professional experience of safeguarding of young people
- A commitment to closing the educational gap between disadvantaged students and their peers
- The ability to support and challenge an organisation.

We are looking to ensure that the Governing Body reflects the diversity of the school and local community and we particularly welcome applicants from BAME communities and disabled members of the community. At present, the Governing Body is underrepresented in these areas.

For further information about the role, please read Appendix A. If you have any enquiries about the role of Parent Governor, please contact Emer O'Driscoll (e.odriscoll@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk), the school's Senior Administration Officer.

If you would like to nominate yourself to become a Parent Governor, please complete and sign the enclosed nomination form and return it to Emer O'Driscoll (e.odriscoll@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk) no later than 12pm on Monday, 7 December.

Please include a supporting statement with some details about yourself and why you would like to become a Governor (not exceeding 100 words). This will then be published on the school website and circulated to all parents/carers to help them decide who to vote for if an election is required.

An election, by secret ballot, will be held if more nominations are received than the number of vacancies. If an election is needed, details of the procedure will be sent to all parents/carers. Nominations must be from parents or carers with children at the school on the day that nominations close.



Here is a link to the National Governance Association's website, giving an overview of the responsibilities of a governor: <https://www.nga.org.uk/Governance-Recruitment/Be-a-school-governor-or-trustee.aspx>

The enclosed sheet summarises the disqualification criteria to serve as a Governor. Anyone standing for election must certify they are not disqualified for any reason. Parents/carers who have undertaken paid employment in the school for 500 hours per academic year or more, or who are elected members of the Local Authority are not eligible to stand in these elections.

Yours sincerely

Gloria Lowe

Headteacher

Attached

- 1. ROLE OF THE PARENT GOVERNOR LEAFLET**
- 2. DISQUALIFICATION CRITERIA**
- 3. NOMINATION FORM**



APPENDIX A: THE ROLE OF PARENT GOVERNORS

Parent Governors are elected by the parent body to represent them on the Governing Body. They act as a link between parents/carers and the Governing Body.

Parent Governors are not delegates and are not obliged to receive voting instructions on matters to be decided, nor to vote in accordance with the varied views of parents/carers in the school community.

It is important that Parent Governors can give a fair and accurate representation of parental/carer opinion on matters of importance. They vote, however, according to their own conscience and the well-being of the school should be foremost in any decision-making.

In all other respects, Parent Governors have the same role as every other Governor, i.e. together with other members of the Governing Body and school leaders, they contribute to

- the strategic leadership of the school
- overseeing the school's aims, values and ethos
- promoting high standards of educational attainment
- setting targets for student achievement
- ensuring compliance with the National Curriculum
- taking general responsibility for the conduct of the school
- monitoring the school's budget, including deciding how many staff will work in the school and their pay
- participating in the appointment of the leadership group
- regulating school conduct and discipline.

Like other Governors, Parent Governors do not have the power to take action on behalf of the Governing Body unless they have been asked to do so by the Governing Body.

Most Governing Bodies keep confidential items to a minimum. However, all Governors need to bear in mind that indiscreet talk about what has been said at a Governing Body meeting can cause problems and care needs to be taken when reporting on the outcome of meetings. Governors are expected to keep the content of all Governing Body meetings confidential.

In general, just like all Governors, Parent Governors should make sure that they never discuss individual children or adults outside the Governing Body if they have gained information about them as a result of being a Governor.

Parent Governors should be accessible to other parents/carers and Sydenham School has a range of parents/carer forums to facilitate this. Care must, however, be taken by any Governor if they are



SYDENHAM SCHOOL

Specialist Science and Mathematics School



High
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approached by another parent/carer with a complaint about the school, in which case the parent/carer concerned should be referred to the school's Complaints Policy.



APPENDIX B: Disqualification Criteria

A person is disqualified from holding or from continuing to hold office as a Governor or Associate Member if he or she:

- fails to attend the Governing Body meetings – without the consent of the Governing Body – for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed (not applicable to ex officio Governors);
- is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, an interim bankruptcy restriction order, a debt relief order or an interim debt relief order;
- has had his or her estate sequestrated and the sequestration order has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to:
 - a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
 - a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
 - a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - an order made under Section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a County Court administration order).
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the Charity Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under Section 34 of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from participating in the management or control of any body;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children.



APPENDIX C: Nomination Form - Parent Governor

Full name:

Children in year(s):

Supporting Statement (maximum 100 words)

I wish to serve as a Parent Governor and to be a candidate if an election is necessary. I have read the rules regarding the eligibility to become a Governor which I received with the nomination form and I confirm that I am eligible to serve as a School Governor.

Signed:

Date:

Please return this form to Emer O'Driscoll (e.odriscoll@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk) no later than 12pm on Monday, 7 December 2020.