



# SYDENHAM SCHOOL

Specialist Science & Mathematical School

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Headteacher Emma Wijnberg, BSc PGCE NPQH  
Dartmouth Road, London, SE26 4RD  
Tel: 020 8699 6731

Website: [www.sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk](http://www.sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)  
Email: [info@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:info@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)

Friday, 1 March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Parent Governor Vacancy 2024

We currently have a vacancy for a Parent Governor to join our school's Governing Body and are looking for parents or carers, who would like to take on this important role.

Parent Governors play a vital role as part of the Governing Body, meeting four times a year for a Full Governing Body meeting and sitting on one of our three committees (Finance & Resources, Curriculum & Achievement and Children Families & Community) which meet once a term.

Governors are also expected to make monitoring visits to the school, attend events, volunteer for Working Groups, sit on Panels and Hearings, and participate in selection processes for senior staff. There are regular Governors' Away Days, which strengthen the work of our Governors and allow them to think strategically about the direction of the school.

Governors are responsible for promoting high standards of educational achievement and ensuring that the school's resources achieve excellent value for money. **The term of office for Parent Governors is 4 years.**

Life as a Governor is varied and fulfilling. You will learn new skills and enhance your personal and professional development. Training and support will be available, including support from an experienced governor as well as access to external Governor training.

Although no previous experience is necessary, the following knowledge, skills and attributes would be helpful:

- A strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion and to closing the educational gap between disadvantaged students and their peers.
- Knowledge of the school community as well as the local community
- Available to spend time on the work of governance both in the evening and, at times, during the school day. Approximate time commitment is 15 hours per term (includes training)
- Experience of working as part of a team, contributing to the improvement of a team or organisation, and actively participating in formal meetings (in a paid or voluntary capacity).

We are looking to ensure that the Governing Body reflects the diversity of the school and local community, and we welcome applicants from all sections of the school community.



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For more information about the role, please see [Appendix A](#).

If you have any further enquiries about the vacancy or would like to have an informal conversation with a current Parent Governor, please contact our Office Manager, Pauline Nofiu at [p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk). The link to the National Governance Association's website below will give you an overview of the responsibilities of a Governor:

<https://www.nga.org.uk/Governance-Recruitment/Be-a-school-governor-or-trustee.aspx>

If you would like to nominate yourself to become a Parent Governor, please complete and sign the enclosed nomination form and return it to Pauline Nofiu ([p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)) **no later than 12 noon on Monday, 18 March 2024**. The form should be returned via email, post, or handed in-person to the Main School Reception.

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.

## **Eligibility to stand**

All parents and guardians of students at Sydenham School are eligible to stand as candidates in the election **EXCEPT**

- if they are an elected member of the local education authority; (local councillor)
- if they are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve-month period beginning on 1 August and finishing on 31 July. (an academic year)

## **Eligibility to vote**

Each parent or guardian in the school will have one single vote for the parent governor vacancy.

## **Election Process**

- **If we only receive one nomination for the vacancy, the nominated candidate will automatically be appointed as Parent Governor.**
- If **two** or more nominations are received, parents/carers will be informed, and the eligible candidates' statements will be published on the school's website and its social media. **The election will be held by anonymous ballot during the week beginning 15 April 2024 (after our Easter Break)**. Further details about the election will be notified to you, should the need for an election arise.

All new governors are required by law to undergo a check on their suitability to serve. This will include an enhanced 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) check and a 'Section 128' check. The Secretary of State Section 128 direction prohibits or restricts an unsuitable individual from participating in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools and in the governance of maintained schools.



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Parent governors are very important to the life of the school, and we do hope that there are parents/carers in our community who are prepared to take on this important role and give their time and commitment to helping us to continue to improve the school's performance.

I am very much looking forward to receiving your nomination.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Wijnberg  
Headteacher



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## APPENDIX A: The role of a Parent Governor

Parent Governors are elected by the parent body to represent them on 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.

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

- ensuring 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
- 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 at all times. 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. However, care must be taken by any Governor if they are approached by another parent/carer with a complaint about the school. In these cases, the parent/carer concerned should be referred to the school's Complaints Policy.



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## APPENDIX B: Disqualification Criteria

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

- Fail 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).
- Are subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, an interim bankruptcy restriction order, a debt relief order, or an interim debt relief order.
- Have had their estate sequestrated and the sequestration order has not been discharged, annulled, or reduced.
- Are 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).
  - have 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.
  - are included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children.



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## Appendix C:

### NOMINATION FORM – PARENT GOVERNOR

My child is a student at Sydenham School, and I would like to nominate myself:

NAME

ADDRESS

EMAIL

TELEPHONE NO.

AS A PARENT GOVERNOR OF SYDENHAM SCHOOL

I AM A PARENT/GUARDIAN OF:

NAME OF CHILD

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_



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## PERSONAL STATEMENT

FULL NAME

I AM A PARENT/CARER OF THE FOLLOWING STUDENT(S) AT SYDENHAM SCHOOL:

I AM STANDING FOR ELECTION AS A PARENT GOVERNOR BECAUSE:  
*(Supporting statement – please, no more than 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 Parent 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 (pages 6 – 8) to Pauline Nofiu ([p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:p.nofiu@sydenham.lewisham.sch.uk)) by Monday, 18 March 2024 by 12 noon.



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## Appendix D: Monitoring Form

Lewisham Local Authority is eager that governing bodies reflect the ethnic mix of the Borough. To assist in gathering information would you please indicate which of the following categories you would place yourself in?

		(Please ✓)			(Please ✓)
<b>White</b>	British	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Asian or</b>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Asian British</b>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Traveller of Irish heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>		Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other white background	<input type="checkbox"/>		Sri Lankan Tamil	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Turkish/Turkish Cypriot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Black or</b>	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White European	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Black British</b>	African – Somali	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mixed</b>	White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>		Any other Black background	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Chinese</b>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Any other mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Any other</b>	Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>Ethnic background</b>	Any other ethnic background	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you consider yourself to have a disability Yes / No (please delete)

If yes, please specify:

All new governors are required by law to undergo a check on their suitability to serve. This will include an enhanced 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) check and a 'Section 128' check. The Secretary of State Section 128 direction prohibits or restricts an unsuitable individual from participating in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools and in the governance of maintained schools.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS FOR MONITORING PURPOSES ONLY AND WILL NOT BE SHOWN ON INFORMATION SENT TO PARENTS/CARERS.