



What is a Parent Governor?

February 2024

The Role of the Parent Governor

Like all other governors, parent governors have three strands to their role:

- ♦ Take a strategic role
- ♦ Act as a critical friend
- ♦ Ensure accountability

What are the good bits about being a parent Governor?

- ♦ You have a very privileged and responsible role
- ♦ You have the opportunity to make a difference for children now, and in the future
- ♦ You will learn a lot and develop new skills

How to fulfill your role:

- ♦ Attend Governing Body meetings regularly. These are held three times a year, usually early evening, and can last up to 2 hours.
- ♦ Play an active role in sub-committees and decision making – you will be required to attend committee meetings that you are a part of (Again, these are held during the early evening and will be a maximum of 3 a year.)
- ♦ Learn all you can about the school
- ♦ Be approachable to other parents, but make sure you are clear about your role
- ♦ Always represent the school positively
- ♦ As a governor, you are one of a group and must never act alone
- ♦ Always support the decisions of the full Governing Body
- ♦ Have your say on decisions in meetings, and vote in the way you wish, but then support the outcomes of the vote, even if you disagree with them
- ♦ Always, always observe confidentiality. You will get to know a lot of highly sensitive and confidential information. Do not discuss this with anyone who is not a governor. *A governor can be suspended for serious breaches of confidentiality.*

Myths and facts explained and common misunderstandings

Representative NOT Delegate

Parent governors are representative parents rather **than** representative **of** parents. A Parent Governor is NOT a delegate. This means you don't have to adopt the opinions of other parents when you vote. You are a representative, which means you listen thoughtfully and can report to fellow Governors vital matters shared by many parents. But when it comes to voting, a representative follows their own conviction of what is right for the school and also heed the views of other governors. *That's the difference between a representative and a delegate.*

The important thing to remember is that once a decision is made, irrespective of whether a parent governor supported it or not, then their loyalty is to the governing body and the school. Sometimes, other parents do not understand that you are not a delegate and not elected to represent them or their personal views. Other parents cannot persuade parent governors on how they should vote or what they should say in governing body meetings.

It is also **not** the role of the Parent Governor to gauge views of parents and carers in the school playground to be discussed at governing body meetings.

Acting as the Critical Friend

Often, parent governors who have lots of contact with the school say that this aspect of their role is difficult. Parent Governors must put personal interests aside and participate in governor meetings in the interests of the school as a whole and specifically the interests of the children in the school.

How to deal with approaches from individuals

Sometimes parent governors find they are approached by parents with individual concerns. Parents may feel that you should become involved in their own child's issues with the school or a complaint. But it is not appropriate to take the issue to the governing body and they should encourage the parent to take the matter up with the child's class teacher, the phase leader or the Headteacher. The governing body deals with school policies and meetings are not the place to take individual problems. Parent Governors must make it clear that they can't act for the governing body.

We would really value your support in this so please think carefully about helping us out—we would love for the right people to join our committed governing body so that we can continue on our school improvement journey.

If you would like a conversation about the role or are interested in applying, please email
vacancies@roodend.sandwell.sch.uk.