

School Governance

To be a school governor you must be over 18 years old and no formal qualifications are needed.

Everyone has experience and skills to offer, so an effective governing body has people from different backgrounds with a mix of skills.

A good governor has:

- common sense
- the ability to work in a team
- an interest in education and a commitment to the school
- patience, energy, enthusiasm and some spare time
- a willingness to listen, learn and to spend time in school
- a willingness to undertake training.

The role

The governing body is responsible for making sure the school improves each year. It sets the direction and make sure the school is meeting its targets, whilst allowing the head teacher and teaching professionals to manage the school on a day to day basis.

Governors attend meetings where reports about the school's progress are discussed, they test information received by asking questions and make sure the school spends its budget wisely against the priorities shown in the school plan.

Whilst every governing body is different, it is likely that most governors will:

- work within a structure that gives every governor a role in the governance team
- learn how the school evaluates its own strengths and weaknesses
- understand how the weaknesses or areas for development become targets in the annual school plan
- share decision making to ensure that the school budget supports the delivery of the targets in the school plan
- receive reports, make focused visits to the school, study results, and participate in other activities to enable them to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school
- support the school, act as representatives of the school and provide a link between the school and the community.

Many governing bodies also evaluate their own performance and identify areas of development and complete training to make sure they continue to work effectively as a team.

Governor support

Support and training to all our governors is provided by the authority. Regular conferences are held and support information is available.

Parent governors

Parent governors are elected by parents/carers of pupils on the school roll at the time of election. They must be parents/carers of pupils on the school roll themselves to stand for election.

Parent governors do not have to stand down if their child leaves the school, though they may do if they wish. They may stand for re-election at the end of their term of office if they still have a child on the school roll. If not enough parents stand for election, parent governors may be appointed by the governing body.

At Rowhill we have 3 places on our Governing Body identified for parents/carers. When a parental vacancy occurs, we write to all parents to inform them, and enclose a nomination form for them to complete if they are interested. If more than one candidate applies, an election is held. All parents/carers have a vote. Applicants are invited to provide a written statement introducing themselves and detailing why they wish to become a governor.

Staff governors

Staff governors are elected by the school staff to represent their interests on the governing body. Both teaching and support staff paid to work at the school are eligible to be staff governors. The head teacher is automatically a member of the governing body. If the head teacher decides not to be a governor, he or she must inform the clerk of that decision in writing. The head teacher's place remains reserved for him or her and cannot be taken by anyone else.

Authority governors

Authority governors are appointed by the authority. We can decide to fill these posts to reflect the local political balance. Normally they are appointed because of their commitment to raise standards at the school.

Community/co-opted governors

Community/Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body. They are normally someone who in the opinion of the governing body, has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. When deciding who to co-opt, governors should make sure that the governing body reflects a balance of interests and skills.

Foundation governors

Foundation governors (at voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and some foundation and foundation special schools only) are selected by the appointing body to which the school is attached. They are appointed to preserve and develop the religious character of the school, if it has a religious character, and to secure compliance with the trust deed.

Partnership governors

Partnership governors are appointed only at foundation and foundation special schools, which do not have a foundation or trustees.

They are usually members of the local community, who want to see the school succeed. The governing body can decide how it will seek nominations, but parents of pupils at the school must be informed that they may make nominations.

Parents of pupils currently at the school, County Councilors, or Kent County Council employees may not be appointed as partnership governors.

Governors may appoint partnership governors if they do not receive enough eligible nominations to fill the available vacancies. If a governing body rejects a nomination and subsequently appoints its own nominee it must give reasons for the rejection to the person it has turned down and to us.

Associate members

Associate members can be appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committees and attend full governing body meetings.

Associate members can be school staff, pupils or people who contribute specifically on issues related to their area of expertise. However, they are not governors and are therefore not recorded on the Instrument of Government. They can have limited voting rights.

At Rowhill our Governing Body consists of:

The Head Teacher	Mr T South
1 x Staff Governor	Mr D Ralph
1 x Local Authority Governor	Vacancy
4 x Community/co-opted Governors	Mr B Musendo Mr A Halpin Mr S Jeffery's Ms S Walker Down
2 x Foundation Governors	Mrs L Baxter (Chairman Mr F Hart
3 x Parent/Carer Governors	Mrs C Benocci Mrs J Siayn Ms Z Williams

From this group 2 (the Head and Chairman) sit on the Trustee Governors of the Cooperative Trust along with the two foundation governors who are nominated trust members for the Cooperative Trust.