

Information about Parent Governor Elections

1) The persons who shall be eligible to be elected as parent governors on the governing body of a school and to vote in an election shall be:

- any parent of a registered pupil at the school at the time of the election; or a person who is not a parent, but who has parental responsibility for the child; or who has care of the child where such a person is an individual.
- and if they are paid to work at the school, they work less than 500 hours per year. If they work more than 500 hours per year they can only stand in the staff category.
- they are not an elected member of the local authority.
- all parents/carers are eligible to vote in an election

2) The Headteacher of the school shall be responsible for conducting the election on behalf of the Service Director: Education.

3) All timescales should be reasonable to allow full participation and should normally seek to fill the vacancy as soon as practically possible.

4) When a vacancy for a parent governor has been anticipated by the end of the term of office or arises due to resignation, the Headteacher shall invite self-nominations by distributing to each eligible person a letter notifying the vacancy, specifying the term of office and fixing the closing date for receipt which shall be not less than seven days from the date of the letter. The letter should also inform parents that the successful candidate will need to be eligible to be a governor. A nomination shall not be valid unless the nominee has signed the nomination form and the declaration of eligibility to be a governor. Nominees should be invited to supply, with the nomination a short personal statement for circulation to parents. All communications regarding the election shall be made available in English, and other languages and formats on request.

5) If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, a secret ballot shall be conducted in accordance with these rules. Otherwise, nominees shall be deemed to be elected unopposed. Where there are two or more vacancies, only one ballot will be held, in which the eligible voters may vote for a number of candidates equal to the number of vacancies.

6) All ballots must ensure only eligible people can vote and must have a secret ballot, be that paper or electronic.

7) The Headteacher shall arrange for the distribution to each eligible voter of a ballot paper and two envelopes. The double envelope system ensures the ballot is secret. The parent must be instructed to put the completed ballot slip inside an unmarked envelope. The unmarked envelope is then put inside the second envelope with the voter's name marked on it. When the school receives the envelope, they can mark off that the parent has voted, and remove and destroy the outer envelope. The unmarked envelopes are kept securely by the Headteacher until the day of the vote.

8) Marked ballot papers shall be sorted and counted in the presence of the candidates (if they wish to be present) on the next working day after the day fixed by the Headteacher for the return of the ballot papers.

9) The Headteacher shall notify the result of the ballot to parents by letter, indicating the names of the candidate(s) and the outcome. The candidate(s) with the highest number of votes will be declared elected. If there is equality of votes, the votes should be recounted. If the votes are then still equal the method of deciding who is to become the governor shall be by the tossing of a coin.

10) The Headteacher shall send the result of the ballot to the School Governance Team and to their clerk to governors who will send to the person elected a letter confirming his or her election to join the governing body.

11) The period of office for a parent governor is specified on the school's Instrument of Government (in most schools this will be four years). The period of office begins immediately after the parent governor's election.

12) Schools must make every reasonable effort to fill parent governor vacancies through elections. Only, if insufficient parents stand for election can the governing body appoint:

- a parent of a registered pupil at the school, or if that is not possible;
- a parent of a former pupil at the school, or if that is not possible;
- a parent of a child of or under compulsory school age.

13) Parent governors continue to serve out their term of office when their child leaves the school. It is their decision if they wish to resign. However, at the end of that term of office, they are no longer eligible to stand for election for a further term as a parent governor, if they no longer have a child at the school.