HARINGEY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The role of a parent governor

Governing bodies are an integral part of school leadership, setting the ethos of the school, driving continuous improvement, supporting, challenging and holding to account the headteacher and other members of the school leadership team by negotiating stretching targets for improvements in standards and monitoring progress towards them.

Your role as a governor is strategic and will continue to evolve to meet the needs of children in the 21st Century. Increasingly, schools will need to work in partnership and collaborate and the focus of our governing bodies will be in delivering outcomes for children in the wider community.

Governing body responsibilities

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 3 core strategic functions are:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

Parent governor

A parent governor believes that parents should have a say in matters affecting their children's education.

You should meet the relevant statutory eligibility criteria for school governors as set out in the Regulations and agree to DBS checks as required. You will have:

- an interest in all the children's futures
- a desire to make a difference
- a willingness to accept responsibility
- an ability to work in a team, ask questions, listen and learn

As a parent governor you hold the unique position of having a parental viewpoint. Through the children you will have first-hand experience of the curriculum and how the school is perceived from the consumers' point of view. You will be able to bring this perspective to the strategic management of the school.

A parent governor is a representative and not a delegate of parents. As a parent governor you do not have to vote in a particular way because you have been pressed to do so by parents. Objectivity, however, is essential. You are not there to promote the interests of your own children but all children. Parent governors are elected by other parents and it is important to establish a rapport with the parental body that elected you, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance.

You are disqualified from being elected or appointed as a parent governor if you are an elected member of the local authority or are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve consecutive months.

As an effective parent governor you:

- help to decide the priorities for improving the school
- make yourself available to parents and listen to other parents' opinions and take account of them as you contribute to governors' decisions
- work in partnership with the headteacher, senior leadership team and other governors to raise standards and improve outcomes for all children
- prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand
- take responsibility for your own learning and development as a governor including attending training
- attend full governing body and relevant committee meetings promptly, regularly
- read briefings and newsletters for governors
- be loyal to the decisions made by the governing body
- respect the confidentiality of governing body affairs
- declare an interest and withdraw from any meeting where you, a partner or close relative or associate stands to gain, or where you are so close to a matter discussed it is difficult to be impartial
- have regard to the broader responsibilities as a governor of a public institution in regard to promoting accountability for the actions and performance of the governing body
- never press your own child's case at the expense of others