

# Interested in volunteering as a school governor?

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**READ** the **FACTS** here.



# School Governance is the most important voluntary role in education

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It is a fantastic feeling volunteering as a school governor and making a positive difference in a local school; it's equally amazing to have the opportunity to develop such a variety of transferable skills. I would wholeheartedly recommend this opportunity!

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Rhiannon Evans  
Chair of Governors  
Stamford Hill Primary School, Haringey

## Who can be a school governor?



Anyone aged 18 or over and living in the UK can be a governor. There are many common misconceptions about what is required to be a governor.

### Misconceptions

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- ✗ **I have no children.**  
You don't need to have children, unless you are filling a parent governor vacancy.
- ✗ **I have no time.**  
6-8 hours a month is the average time commitment and meetings are usually in the evenings.
- ✗ **I'm too young / old.**  
You need to be 18 or over and able to attend meetings.
- ✗ **I'm not experienced.**  
You don't need specific qualifications to make a difference as a governor.

# What is the role of a school governor?

Governors do not manage a school day-to-day, but are required to oversee the development of the school. Ultimately, all governor responsibilities come back to this task and can be split into three roles:

## Key Responsibilities

**1** Providing strategic management

**Establish a strategic framework for the school.** Help set the school's aims and objectives.

**Allocate and control the school's budget.** From funding extra staff training to investing in new buildings or equipment.

**Support and challenge the Head Teacher.** Be there to hear about difficulties and together take positive steps to improve the school.

**2** Being a 'critical friend'

**Monitor and evaluate progress.** See whether decisions you have made with the Head Teacher are producing the desired results.

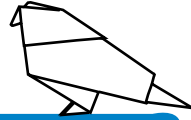
**3** Making executive decisions

**Appoint senior staff.** This includes a new Head Teacher or Deputy.

**Ensure accountability.** Governors are expected to act in the best interests of the school at all times.

# Why volunteer as a school governor?

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## What are the benefits for the **school**?

- An external perspective and someone to challenge assumptions and look for the best solutions.
- The enthusiasm, experience and expertise of volunteers from the local community and local businesses.
- A well balanced group of people to effectively support the Head Teacher and staff to drive the school forward.

## What are the benefits for **you**?



- A unique development opportunity; learn and apply transferable skills, gain experience in areas such as project management, recruitment, budget control, admin and marketing.
- Work alongside a wide range of people, offer opinions and solutions to interesting challenges and topics.
- Make a positive impact on the education of thousands of children and work towards better schools and a better community.
- Gain insight into the education system whilst building relationships with members of your community.

# Frequently asked questions

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## Who are SGOSS - Governors for Schools?

SGOSS - Governors for Schools is a national charity that recruits school governor volunteers in England and facilitates their efficient placement into suitable schools. We work in partnership with local authorities and schools. Our services are completely free to everyone involved.

## What is the time commitment?

On average, 6-8 hours per month during the school term. This includes attending the full governing body meetings, participating in one of the committees that support the governing body and undertaking any necessary preparatory reading. Meetings are usually held in the evenings.

## How long are you expected to serve as a governor?

The ideal term of office is 4 years - this allows you sufficient time to implement the changes and decisions you have been involved with. However, should your circumstances change, as a volunteer, you can resign at any time.

## Am I entitled to time off work for governor duties?

Governors have the right to reasonable time off work for their public duties, although this may be unpaid. If you are employed it is always worth checking with your Human Resources department for the up-to-date policy.

## Is there any training offered?

Local Authorities provide training and support for new and existing governors - this is normally free of charge. We recommend that all new governors attend the governor induction program, which is essential in helping them to understand their role.

## Where can you be a governor?

There are vacancies in schools throughout England. When applying the volunteer can specify a particular geographical area or school they would ideally like to volunteer in. Many choose to volunteer in their local community or at a school close to their place of work.

## What are the different types of governor?

Governing bodies are comprised of representatives from the school staff, the local authority, parents and the community and in certain circumstances, members of a church and other interest groups.

## What is the legal position?

Governing bodies are established by law as corporate bodies; responsibility for actions and decisions lies with the whole governing body and not with individual members. Governing bodies are covered by local authority insurance arrangements.

## Who makes the appointment?

Once you have applied and a suitable position becomes available, your application will be put forward to the school. At this stage, we recommend you visit the school to assess whether the school is right for you and vice versa. If you and the school are both happy, a place on the governing body will then be offered and your term as a school governor can begin.

Question not answered? For more info visit: [www.sgoss.org.uk/read-the-facts](http://www.sgoss.org.uk/read-the-facts)

# Application Process with SGOSS

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**1**

Complete the SGOSS application form online at [www.sgoss.org.uk](http://www.sgoss.org.uk). Alternatively, request a hard copy by calling us on **020 7354 9805**. When applying you can specify preference for the type of school, travelling criteria, etc.

**2**

SGOSS works in partnership with schools and local authorities to match you with the most suitable governor vacancy. We are always on hand to answer your questions and help you through the application process.

**3**

Once a suitable vacancy becomes available, the school or local authority will contact you to check if you are still interested. If so, you are usually invited to meet the Head Teacher and chair of governors at the school.

**4**

If, after visiting, you and the school are both happy, a place on the governing body will then be offered. If you choose to accept the role, your term as a school governor will begin!



# Contact

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## Supporting organisations

