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Your guide to governor recruitment



Hampshire
County Council

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Welcome to your guide to governor recruitment (by governor type), which we hope will give you some ideas and tips to help you fill the vacancies on your board.

As you will be aware, carrying significant numbers of vacancies impacts on the ability of the board to effectively fulfil its three core functions:

- to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- to hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of the staff;
- to oversee the financial performance of the school and to make sure its money is well spent.

Also, on the ability of the board to:

- fulfil its monitoring role (to support the process of triangulating evidence);
- ensure that governor key roles (e.g. safeguarding governor) are occupied by suitably trained and knowledgeable individuals;
- succession plan (ensuring effective board leadership for the future);
- form suitable panels when required (perhaps as part of the process of dealing with a parental complaint) and to ensure that all meetings are quorate;

- effectively distribute board responsibilities – as current governors will be picking up the additional workload created by the reduced capacity of the board.

We are hopeful that you will want to incorporate some of the suggestions and activities from the following sections of this guide into your governor recruitment action plan.

It may be that your board has actioned some of the suggestions previously, without success, however people's circumstances do change periodically, so we highly recommend that boards persevere.

Please use this document in conjunction with the other resources in your toolkit.

We wish you every success with your board's recruitment activities.

Recruitment of co-opted governors

Co-opted governors are appointed by the board. They are people who in the opinion of the governance board have the skills/knowledge required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

Useful resources to support the recruitment of suitably skilled/knowledgeable co-opted governors might include registering your co-opted vacancies with:

Local volunteer bureaus

There are a number of volunteer bureaus across Hampshire who may be able to advertise your board vacancies. For example:

[volunteerfirst.co.uk](https://www.volunteerfirst.co.uk)

Do take some time to search for the websites of volunteer organisations that serve Hampshire districts, with a view to registering and advertising the opportunities that you have for individuals to join your board. The process for placing an advertisement is relatively straightforward and it will reach a wide audience of potential governors.

Inspiring Governance

inspiringgovernance.org

Inspiring Governance is a free online service that connects schools and trusts in England with skilled volunteers in your

area who are interested in becoming a school governor or trustee. The site lets you quickly search for volunteers based on skills, experience and location. You can then directly contact as many as you like and invite them to have a conversation with you about the vacancy and what it entails. You can recruit for vacancies in a single school, or across multiple schools:

inspiringgovernance.org/recruiting-governors/sign-up-now/

Governors for Schools

governorsforschools.org.uk

Governors for Schools finds, places and supports skilled volunteers as governors and trustees on school and academy boards. The site supports schools across England and Wales to run effectively by finding high calibre governors to bring their skills and expertise to the table, improving education for children:

governorsforschools.org.uk/register

Do attempt to establish links with local businesses and organisations who are key stakeholders for your school and who have an interest in ensuring that children leave school with the necessary skills and academic qualifications, ready to be successful in the workplace.

For employees of local businesses/ organisations, the role of a school governor may also afford them the opportunity to gain new transferable skills/knowledge that will be useful to them (and their employer) in the workplace.

Many employers are happy to support their employees to take up a voluntary position in the community (supporting their corporate social responsibly strategy), so establishing these links with local employers might better enable your board to recruit new governors with the skills/knowledge your board requires (as identified through your skills audit).

Within your **toolkit** you will find a template letter and a poster that you can use to promote the opportunity, so perhaps ask local employers if they would be happy to share these with their employees, encouraging them to join your board. Local employers may also be willing to share the recruitment video in your **toolkit** with employees and other businesses/contacts locally (perhaps via social media).

Online communities, for example, LinkedIn, can be another source for your board to establish contact with a diverse range of local groups:

[linkedin.com](https://www.linkedin.com)

Simply type in the name of your area/ community into the LinkedIn (or equivalent) search bar, select 'Groups' – and you will be able to see a range of online communities near to you.

You will be able to see the group name and the number of members belonging to the group.

Click into the online community that you would like to contact and you will then be able to message Admin, asking if it might be possible to share your online community letter (in your **toolkit**) and the recruitment video, with the group's members.

Online communities can be a very useful resource – not only with respect to recruiting individuals who have the skills/knowledge you are seeking, but to assembling a board of governors who bring a diverse range of perspectives.

Some boards also choose to advertise their vacancies on Hampshire County Council's **Education Jobs Hampshire** website.

Your headteacher will provide the log-in information required or may be able to arrange for the school's admin team to place the advert on your behalf:

[hampshire.education-jobs.org.uk/
Account/Login?returnUrl=/VacancyForm](https://hampshire.education-jobs.org.uk/Account/Login?returnUrl=/VacancyForm)

Task governors on your board to consider the individuals they know, both socially and professionally.

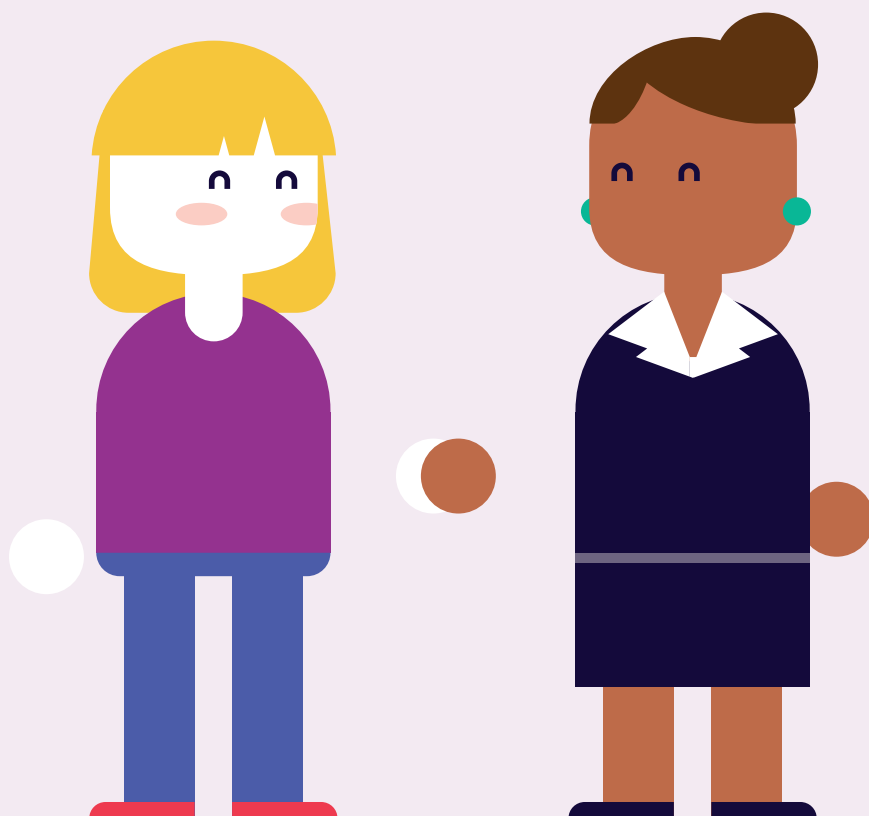
When did they last take a moment to consider the people that they know, in the context of ‘would they be an asset on our board as a governor?’

We probably interact with potential governors on a regular basis but have not thought to ask them if it is a role they would be interested in. Current governors are best placed to explain the role and the wonderful opportunity it presents to make a difference for the children in our communities.

Invite interested individuals into school

for a walk around (agreed with your Headteacher of course) and an informal conversation about the role of a school governor. Prospective governors may not have been into a school for many years, with a school environment being an unfamiliar setting for them.

For those considering applying for a governor role on your board – this might help them to feel more comfortable with submitting their application form.



Recruitment of Local Authority (LA) governors

Local Authority (LA) governors are nominated by the local elected member (county councillor for the ward the school is in) and, if deemed suitable, appointed by the governing board. An individual eligible to be a staff governor at the school may not be appointed as an LA governor. Like all other members of the board, LA nominated governors are there to act in the best interests of the pupils at the school and not the body that nominated or elected them.

Local councillors are well connected within your community and may be able to identify a suitable candidate to nominate for the LA vacancy. Your clerk should contact the elected member to inform them of the vacancy and ask if they have someone they could nominate. Using your school's postcode, you can quickly identify your local councillor at:

hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/councillors

For those academies that have a LA post on their board, they should contact Governor Services to discuss filling the vacancy.

It may be that your board has already identified a suitable candidate to become your new LA governor, in which case

your clerk will need to seek your local councillor's nomination for the applicant, prior to appointment by the board.

Guidance is available at:

hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/governors/volunteer/guidance-lea-appointment

If an application has been passed by Hampshire Governor Services to the board for consideration for an LA vacancy, then in the first instance you should ask your clerk to seek nomination from the elected member. They should not be appointed to an alternative vacancy on the board.

It is important for boards to have a LA governor in post, so if you identify an applicant that has the skills/knowledge required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any other eligibility criteria you have set, then please do consider them for this post, prior to choosing to appoint them to an alternative position.

The strategies detailed in the co-opted governors' section (above) will also assist you with identifying applicants suitable for the LA governor role.

Recruitment of parent governors

Parent governors are elected by other parents at the school. Subject to disqualification criteria, any parent (including a person with parental responsibility or a carer) with a child registered at the school is eligible to stand for election as a parent governor. Parent governors may continue to hold office until the end of their term of office, even if their child leaves the school.

Hampshire Governor Services' website details all the information you require to advertise and recruit to your parent governor post(s). In addition, your **toolkit** provides you with a template letter and poster that you can use to advertise any parent governor vacancies.

Should there be more applicants than posts, then the website page also gives details with respect to running an appropriate parent governor election:

hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/governors/volunteer/appoint-parent-governor

When did you most recently advertise your vacant parent governor post(s)?

The autumn term will see your school/academy with a new cohort of children – and therefore parents/carers who may enjoy the opportunity to be more involved in school life. January can also be a good time to advertise vacant positions, as many of us look to engage in new ventures

as we enter a new year. If you have been unsuccessful with recruiting parent governors in recent weeks/months, then please do not give up. Advertise again at the earliest opportunity because individuals' circumstances change periodically – perhaps presenting an opportunity for them to take up a voluntary position that they were unable to do so before.

School staff members may also be a source of identifying prospective parent governors. They know the parents/carers well and may be able signpost you to a parent for a conversation and for you to be able to encourage them to apply (**whilst your parent governor application window is open**).

Some people lack confidence or feel that they cannot bring anything to the table and this prevents them from applying. An informal chat may assist with overcoming these barriers.

Are there future events where governors can attend and talk with parents?

School events such as parents' evenings, fayres, parent coffee mornings etc, can also present opportunities for governors to engage with parents and to identify prospective governors.

Have you considered liaising with the pre-schools in your local area? There will be many parents whose children will join your school in the future. This is an

opportunity to raise the profile of governance with parents – and to stimulate some interest in the role – with a view to them applying to join your board as a parent governor (once they are eligible to).

It may be too, that through this activity, you are able to identify individuals who may be suitable candidates for other governor roles.



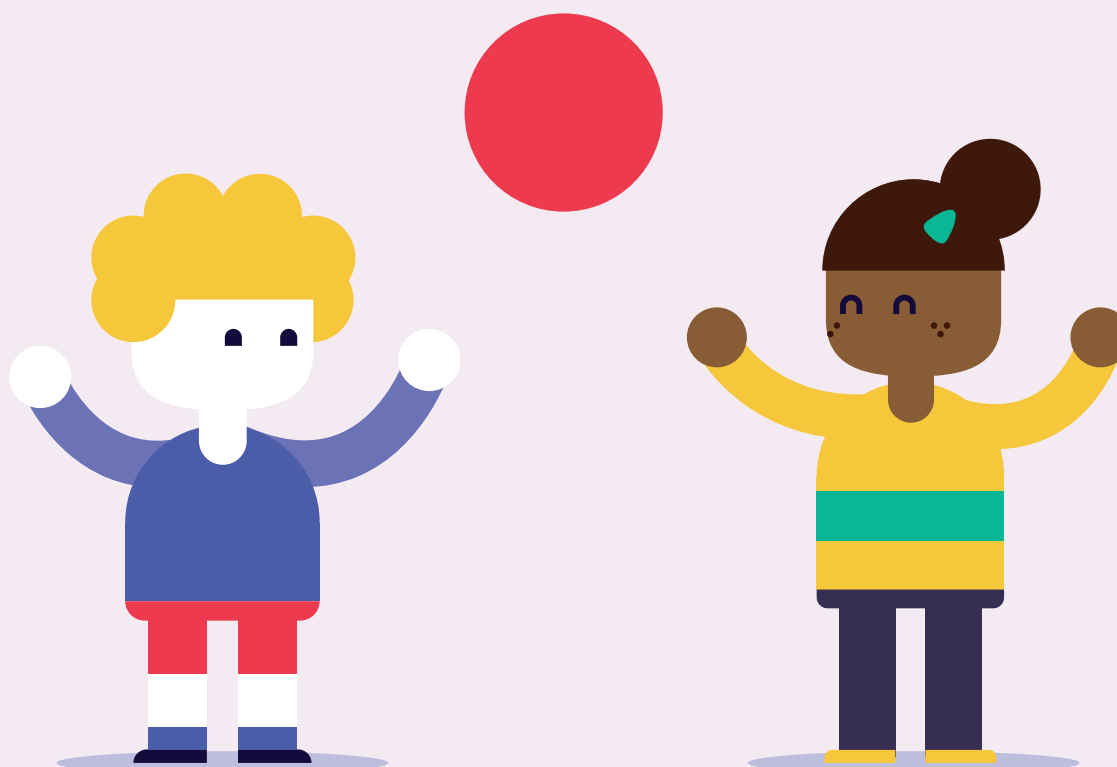
Appointment of a staff governor

Teaching or support staff who, at the time of election, are employed by either the governing body or the local authority to work at the school under a contract of employment, are eligible to be staff governors. Staff governors are elected by this same category of school staff. They cease to hold office when they cease to be employed at the school.

Staff governors bring a unique perspective to the board and give an insight into the day-to-day activities in school, which can be useful to the board when discussing and taking strategic decisions.

For a staff member, the opportunity to sit on the board of governors can be an effective strand of their Continuous Professional Development (CPD), enabling them to see first-hand how and why strategic decisions are taken. This can be particularly useful as an element of CPD for those staff members who aspire to leadership positions.

If you are carrying a staff governor vacancy – ask your headteacher to identify a staff member whose membership of the board might contribute to their professional development.



Recruitment of foundation governors

Foundation governors are either appointed or take the role by virtue of an office that they hold (e.g. they may be a Vicar within the local parish). Where appointed, the appointment is made by the person identified in the instrument of government (usually the school's founding body, church or an organisation other than a local authority).

In Hampshire, foundation governors are usually nominated by the local parochial church council and appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education for a four-year term of office. The Board of Education formally appoints foundation governors and must be assured all foundation governors have the skills needed by the governing board to ensure the success of the school. Foundation governors in particular, have a duty to ensure the school upholds and develops its distinctive religious character.

If you are carrying foundation governor vacancies, get in touch with your local parochial church council or diocesan representative to discuss opportunities for recruitment:

portsmouth.anglican.org
winchester.anglican.org
pwwat.org

Your ex-officio foundation governor may also be able to recommend suitable applicants from within the community.

Do consider, with the permission of local clergy, placing advertising flyers on the internal notice boards or newsletters of local churches and asking clergy to highlight these.

Perhaps too, arrange to have a stall/stand at church events, such as Christmas and summer fayres, promoting the role of a foundation governor. If there are other local schools in need of governors, then maybe explore pooling resources and working together (for example, running a joint coffee morning, setting up a joint event) to promote the opportunity to those attending.



Recruitment of partnership governors

Partnership governors are appointed by the governing body. Individuals are only eligible to be nominated as a partnership governor if the person nominating them believes that they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

The governance board must first try to appoint partnership governors from those nominated by:

- the appropriate diocesan authority in the case of a Church of England or Roman Catholic school;
- the appropriate religious body in any other case;
- the parents of registered pupils at the school and such others in the community served by the school as they consider appropriate where the school doesn't have a religious character.

As with LA governors, the board still has discretion in whether or not to appoint nominees. The decision should be based on whether they have the skills needed to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

Please use the **resources** provided in your **toolkit** (template letter, poster and recruitment video) to promote your partnership governor post(s) with suitable community groups.

Providing a contact name and number on any advertising materials gives anyone interested in the role the opportunity to speak with a governor and to find out more about the role and responsibilities of governors/boards.



Recruitment of community governors

Community governors make up a significant proportion of the membership on management committees (Pupil Referral Units (PRU)/Alternative Provision) and boards will seek to recruit appropriate individuals from the community who will bring the knowledge/expertise required.

Community governors are appointed by the governance board and usually live or work in the community of the school and bring their own specific expertise to the table. Community governors can be nominated by parents, although cannot be parent of a child/children that attend the school.

Management committees should first be

looking to appoint representatives from local schools or community members who are involved with the young people using the Alternative Provision.

Your board may choose to engage with staff members from schools served by the school/PRU, as they will have a significant interest in ensuring that the provision/outcomes meet the needs of the children in the community.



Diversity

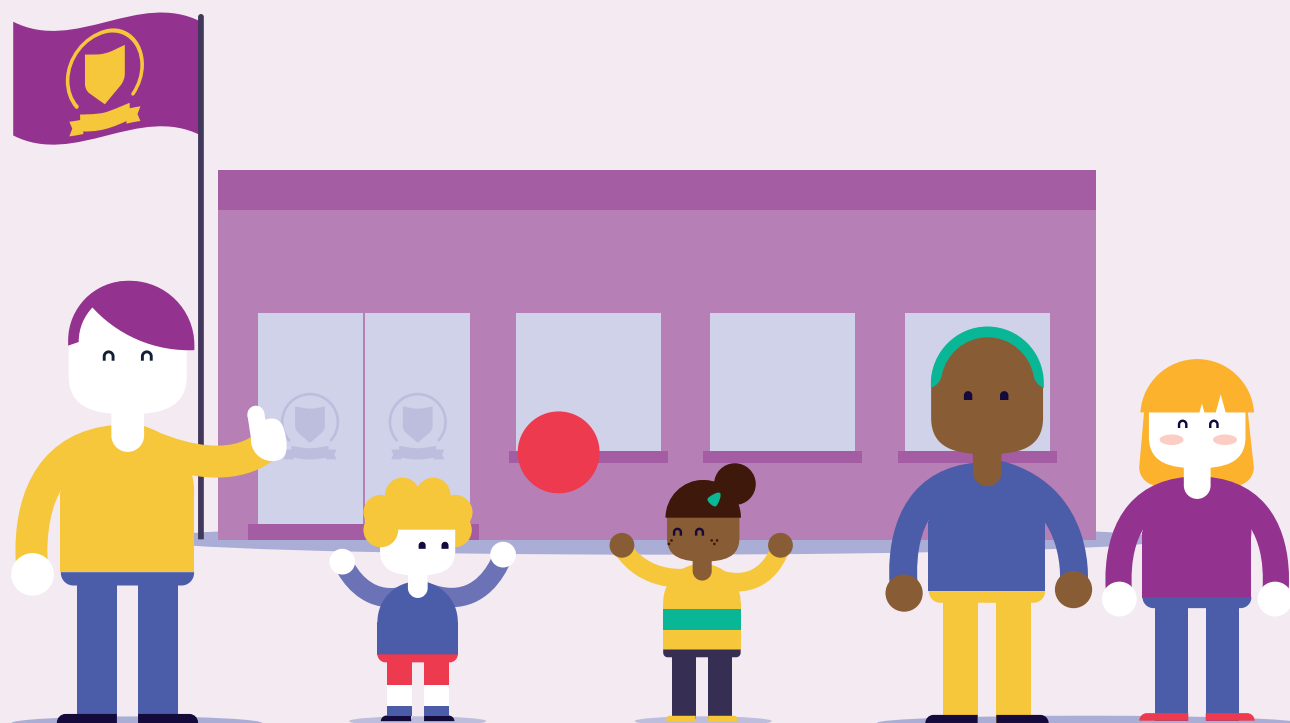
When recruiting to your board, consider the opportunity that this presents with respect to bringing a diverse range of perspectives to the table.

A diverse governing board is a stronger board, reflecting school communities, the county and the country.

Diversity can take many forms, from culture and nationality, to age, gender, race, sexuality, educational background and more.

Consider approaching the LinkedIn community (or equivalent), local volunteer groups, universities, in fact any organisation or group, where you may be able to attract applicants with a diverse range of experiences/perspectives.

When recruiting to your board, there is a real opportunity to create an interesting and enriching environment for everyone, which will certainly bring benefits to the provision for the pupils in your school.



Finally

Please do make use of the **recruitment action plan** that forms part of your **toolkit**.

It will be useful if recruitment actions can be agreed by the board periodically (perhaps termly), with the RIG or your chosen recruitment lead on the board, retaining oversight of progress that is being made with recruitment activities.

Recruitment of governors is a whole board responsibility, and whilst we are hopeful that the **toolkit** will support you with your recruitment activities, it will be important for all governors to be pro-active and to contribute toward securing suitable new applicants for your board.

Play to your strengths

Who on your board can attend school events, with a view to promoting the parent governor role to the parent body?

Who is IT savvy and can reach out to groups/organisations/the community through websites such as LinkedIn and social media platforms?

Is there a member of your board that has connections or can form links with local businesses and organisations?

We can all bring something to the table.

And remember to promote the **opportunity** to join **Hampshire's school governance community**, to meet new people, learn new skills and to **make a difference** for children across the county.

We wish you all the best with your recruitment activities and we look forward to welcoming your new governors into our fantastic volunteer community.