

The Heights Primary School

Governor Recruitment Pack



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Governor at The Heights Primary School.

The Heights Primary Trust is seeking to appoint two Governors to join its Board. We are keen to hear from those interested who have a strong motivation to support the school and feel they can give the time and energy needed for the role. To complement the skills of the current Board we are particularly keen to hear from people with finance expertise and also those with links to our local community.

The Heights Primary is a new, Government funded, non-selective, highly inclusive primary school for the Caversham Heights area. The school opened in September 2014 with 2 reception classes and a Year 1 class and was established in response to an increasing need for primary school places in Caversham. It has grown organically, with 2 new reception classes of 25 children per class having joined every year; we reached our full capacity of 350 children across Reception to Year 6 in September 2020.

After 7 years on a temporary site, the school relocated to a permanent site in Caversham Heights during the Summer of 2021. The new school offers us a greater range of facilities including a purpose built hall, activity studio, full production kitchen, Learning Resource Centre, group rooms, a multi-user games area and an artificially turfed outdoor play area. All of which is helping the children to continue to thrive.

We have a very committed and talented Board of Governors supporting our experienced Head Teacher Karen Edwards who has been with us since the school's inception. New governors will be joining at an exciting time now we are on our permanent site. Full training will be given as well as lots of support. We hope the information here is useful to you in your consideration of the role. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Ruth Rosewell

On behalf of The Heights Trust

1. Our Vision and Value

ASPIRE: Achieving Success Promoting Individual Responsibility and Excellence

The Heights Primary School will enable children to fulfil their own unique potential, growing into confident, capable individuals ready to thrive and achieve success in secondary school. We care for each child in a safe, inspirational and inclusive learning environment. We hope to instil within our pupils a love of learning and hope to support their academic, social, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical development by delivering on our core values:

- Thoughtfulness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Trust
- Compassion
- Commitment
- Co-operation
- Courage
- Positivity

At The Heights Primary we care for our children in an engaging, caring and secure environment. We provide a full and varied curriculum delivered by qualified and inspirational teachers to prepare our children for the future, as well as equipping them with the skills and enthusiasm they need to pursue learning for the rest of their lives. We are encouraging the children to become an integral part of the local community and have a sense of individual responsibility and worth.

2. Our governance structure and makeup

When The Heights Primary School was first established, obtaining the initial approval from the Department for Education was been driven by the members of The Heights Primary Trust. The governing body is now tasked with implementing the vision of the Trust, and therefore sets the strategic aims and objectives of the school, and monitors progress made towards achieving those. Our Headteacher, Mrs Edwards, is responsible for implementing the strategic plan of the governing body, as well as the operational aspects involved in running a school.

The members of the Board of Governors are officially “Trustees”. They are known day to day as “Governors”

Responsibilities of the Trust – The “Trust Members”:

- Holding the governing body to account, to ensure that the objectives of the Trust are met;
- Appointing new governors where necessary;
- Ultimately responsible to the Department of Education for the correct use of public funds and provision of a quality level of education.

Responsibilities of the Trustees/Governing Body - The “Governors”:

- Implementing the vision of The Heights Primary Trust;
- Ensuring the quality of education provision;
- Challenging and monitoring the performance of the school, acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher;
- Managing the school’s finances and risks;
- Ensuring that the school is operated in line with its Funding Agreement and complies with charity and company law;
- Appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay, in conjunction with the Headteacher.

3. Governor Job Description

Governors are volunteers. The Charity Commission defines Governors as the people responsible for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run.

The three core functions of the Board of Governors are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - This means that you need to make sure your trust has a clear idea of what it wants to achieve, and a plan for how to achieve it
 - Your role is to help set and embed your trust’s vision, ethos and strategy, and use these to monitor how the trust is doing
- Hold executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
 - This means you need to make sure that trust leaders are using their professional judgement properly and managing the performance of staff and pupils effectively
 - You also need to make sure that the information you get from your trust leaders is accurate

- Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and make sure money is well spent
 - Your role here is to monitor your trust's finances and make sure the trust is achieving value for money
 - Ultimately, you need to be sure that public money is spent correctly in the best interests of your pupils

Responsibilities

- Develop the trust's vision and strategy
- Establish a culture of high educational standards, which promotes staff and pupil wellbeing
- Set the trust's strategic aims and objectives
- Ensure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Monitor provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Monitor educational performance of academy, using a range of data sources
- Ensure stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff and the local community) are informed and consulted as appropriate
- Approve the budget for the academy trust
- Monitor and evaluate the trust's financial performance
- Approve and review trust policies, and hold staff to account for their implementation
- Ensure the trust is compliant with legal requirements, including that all statutory policies and documents are in place
- Make sure the trust complies with laws that apply to charities and companies, and with its funding agreement
- Carry out the appointment and performance management of the Head Teacher
- Be a source of challenge and support to the Head Teacher
- Monitor and evaluate the trust's staffing structure
- Monitor health and safety in the academy

Skills and experience

Essential:

- Critical listening and the ability to ask effective questions
- Strategic thinking

- Excellent communication
- Problem solving and analysis

Desirable:

- Understanding of data
- Finance and/or accounting knowledge
- HR experience
- Knowledge of education
- Leadership and management
- Risk management
- Evidence of community involvement (Caversham or other)

Benefits to you

Skills you will develop

- Strategic planning
- Experience on a board
- Holding senior leaders to account and ability to provide challenge
- Finance, and maintaining oversight of potentially multi-million pound budgets
- Analysing data
- Human resources and performance management
- Project management
- Marketing
- Communication and teamwork
- Decision making
- Problem solving

Time commitment

The time commitment for the governor role will vary depending on which subcommittees or voluntary additional projects and working groups you choose to get involved with. However, all governors must attend at least 3 of the 4 meetings of the full board meetings per year and the majority of the subcommittee meetings.

Usually governors sit on a committee focused on an area they have knowledge of, or are particularly interested in. The committee schedule is below.

Preparation for meetings includes reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders.

You will also be expected to undertake any training required to enable you to discharge your role effectively.

Governors are also expected to visit the school while it is open to pupils at least 2 times per year.

The term of office is 4 years.

Additional information

The Heights is a single Academy school and is both a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Academy Governors are therefore both charity governors and company directors, and must comply with company and charity law.

4. Meeting schedule in brief

- Full Governing Board Meetings are held four times a year on a Thursday evening from 7pm to 9.30pm.
- Governors are requested to sit on one or two subcommittees which meet as follows:
 - a. Curriculum Standards and Progress – Three times a year on a Friday 8am to 9.30am
 - b. Pupil & Staff Welfare- Three times a year on a Tuesday from 6.30pm to 8pm
 - c. Premises & Finance – Six times a year from 7.45am to 9.45am
- Additional meetings and ad hoc working groups are scheduled to meet the availability of those attending.

5. Application Process and Timetable

- Applications are welcome via our application form which can be found here - <http://www.theheightsprimary.co.uk/community-governors>
- Applications should be returned to the Clerk to the Governors at aileen.moore@theheightsprimary.co.uk and they will be reviewed by the Trust Members as they are received.
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- If you have any questions about the role or would like to speak to the Chair of the Trust before applying please email aileen.moore@theheightsprimary.co.uk
- All shortlisted applicants will be invited to have an informal tour of the school with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors.
- Interviews will be held with members of the Trust at the school.

6. Other information

- Our school newsletters will give you a flavour of day to day life in school. They are available on our website homepage
- Statutory information about The Heights Primary School can be found on our website here: <http://www.theheightsprimary.co.uk/statutory-information>
- Information about our current Governors is also on our website here: <http://www.theheightsprimary.co.uk/governors>