

Governors

School governors are members of their school's governing body, which is known as a 'corporate body'. A corporate body has a legal identity that is separate from its members and as a result, individual governors are generally protected from personal liability as a result of the governing body's decisions and actions provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith.

Individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the governing body except where the whole governing body has delegated a specific function to that individual or where regulations specify a function is to be exercised in a particular way. School governors are drawn from different parts of the community and can be parents and staff or from the LA, the community and other groups. This helps ensure the governing body has sufficient diversity of views and experience but does not mean governors of a particular category represent that group on the governing body. For example, parent governors do not represent the parents at the school and do not report back to them.

Responsibilities

The governing body has a range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Its responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Setting targets for pupil achievement
- Managing the school's finances
- Making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based
- Appointing staff
- Reviewing staff performance and pay.

The governing body has considerable discretion as to how to discharge its responsibilities but is required to constitute itself in line with the regulations and to appoint a chair and vice chair. The governing body may delegate certain of its responsibilities to certain governors or committees of governors, although in general, it is not compelled to do so.

Roles and actions

There are a range of roles and actions the governing body or individual governors need to consider:

- Constitution of the governing body – the governing body must be constituted in line with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003. These regulations cover the number and type (category) of governors that make up the governing body.

- Terms of reference of the governing body – more information can be found on this website about the different categories, roles and committees that can be involved with being a governor. In brief, the different categories are:

1. Parent governors: selected by election (or appointment if insufficient people stand for election) and drawn from parents and carers of children at the school
2. Staff governors: selected by election from teaching and support staff paid to work at the school
3. Community governors: appointed by the governing body to represent community interests
4. Authority governors: appointed by the local authority
5. Foundation governors (not community schools): appointed by the school's founding body, church or other organisation named in the school's instrument of government
6. Partnership governors (foundation schools only): replace foundation governors if the school does not have a founding body
7. Sponsor governors: discretionary category appointed by the governing body from individuals who have made significant (financial) contributions to the school
8. Associate members (not governors): appointed by the governing body to attend committee meetings and/or full governing body meetings due to their particular skills or experience.

- Roles of governor – the governing body must appoint a chair and vice-chair and may wish to make a number of other specific appointments to lead on certain aspects of the school.
- Committees of the governing body – the governing body can delegate certain of its responsibilities to committees or individual governors.

Information from DfE Website <http://www.education.gov.uk/a0056694/categories-and-roles-of-school-governors>