

## APPLICATION PACK FOR NOMINATION AS THE COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR AT THE FIVE ISLANDS SCHOOL

The Local Authority (LA), through an agreed process, nominates a governor known as an LA governor to serve on the governing body of the school providing education for the children and young people in its care – the Five Islands School. This process includes the matching of skills, knowledge and experience of individuals to the needs of the governing body.

Appointments are subject to receipt of a completed Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which confirms suitability for the role of school governor.

Thank you for showing an interest in giving your commitment, time and energy to ensuring that all the children and young people on the Isles of Scilly have the very best opportunities to reach their potential. As the local authority governor, the role you will play in school improvement is highly valued.

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 head teacher and other members of the school leadership team by negotiating stretching targets for improvements in standards and monitoring progress towards them and overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

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 body will be in delivering outcomes for children in the wider community.

This document outlines the role, our expectations and an application form. While the normal term of office is 4 years please do not feel put off from applying if you can only offer a shorter period of commitment. The LA Governor can resign at any point.

All nominations will be considered by a panel of elected members and senior officers at the Council of the Isles of Scilly. The nominee(s) who are considered to be able to contribute to the work of the school will be put forward to the Five Islands School Governing Body who will have the final decision on the appointment subject to a DBS check.

## ROLE OF ALL GOVERNORS

No governor can act on his/her own without proper authority from the full governing body. As a local authority governor, you are a member of the governing body, a corporate body which:

- sets the strategic direction for the school by setting the school's values, vision and aims;
- constantly seeks to promote high standards of educational achievement for all pupils by setting high expectations, and asking challenging questions;
- monitors, challenges and reviews progress towards targets and the school improvement strategy;
- supports the headteacher and senior leadership team but challenges their expectations and holds them to account for the performance of the school;
- ensures accountability including consultation with key stakeholders as appropriate and making information available to the community.

## ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR

Local authority governors work as part of the governing body team to promote high standards of educational achievement for every child. As the local authority governor, you are a representative of the local authority; expected to behave with integrity and never to bring the reputation of the school or the Council into disrepute.

Awareness and understanding of the Council of the Isles of Scilly's priorities and policies will enable you to be appropriately informed when debating priorities at school level. The perspective you bring is about how the school fits into the wider provision of education, and you play a key role in 'linking' the governing body to information about children's services, educational developments and wider Council priorities.

LA governors should feel able to represent the specific views of the local council to the governing body during discussion. However, having done so, they will vote as they see fit in the interests of the school and its children. As a nominee of the LA, they should demonstrate a commitment to equality and inclusion.

#### WE EXPECT LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS TO:

- get to know the school and visit the school in action;
- attend full governing body and relevant committee meetings, preparing for meetings beforehand so they are well informed and can play an active part;
- recognise the corporate status of the governing body and the concept of collective responsibility.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

The local authority can nominate any eligible person as a local authority governor, but it is for the governing body to decide whether their nominee meets their eligibility criteria.

We welcome applications from any eligible person, including those based on the mainland, who can demonstrate the qualities expected.

There are also some other grounds that govern eligibility set out in the next section.

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND DISQUALIFICATIONS

General grounds:

- Registered pupils cannot be governors at their school
- A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of election or appointment
- A person cannot hold more than one governor post at the same school at the same time.

Grounds that apply to particular categories of governor:

- A person is disqualified from being an Authority/Local Authority governor if they are eligible to be a staff governor.

Grounds that arise because of particular failings or actions on the part of the governor:

- A person is disqualified from being a governor of a particular school if they have failed to attend the meetings of the governing body of that school for a continuous

period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend, without the consent of the governing body. This does not apply to the headteacher or to foundation governors appointed by virtue of their office.

- A foundation, local authority, co-opted or partnership governor at the school who is disqualified for failing to attend meetings is only disqualified from being a governor of any category at the school during the twelve month period starting on the date on which they were disqualified.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office if that person:

- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order, debt relief restrictions order, an interim debt relief restrictions order or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced
- is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986, a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, or an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order)
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body
- is included in the list of teachers or workers considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children
- is disqualified from working with children or from registering for childminding or providing day care
- is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years before becoming a governor or since becoming a governor
- has received a prison sentence of two years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor

- has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- has been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the five years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor
- refuses a request by the clerk to make an application to the Criminal Records Bureau for a criminal records certificate.

## TIME COMMITMENT

Governing bodies meet a minimum of three times per year, usually once each school term in the evening. Smaller groups of governors often sit on committees who also meet once or twice per school term. Meetings usually last between one and two hours. Supporting papers will also need to be read prior to the meeting.

Most governors will give between 6 to 8 hours per school term to their governor duties. You are appointed as a local authority governor for a term of four years unless the school's Instrument of Government has specified a lesser period of time. You may resign at any time by giving written notice to your Clerk of governors. A governor is disqualified from holding office if they fail to attend governing body meetings without the consent of the governing body – for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed.

Local authority governors must be able to demonstrate commitment to their ongoing training and development and to getting to know the school well. In addition to meetings, you will also be expected to visit the school in action. This is an essential part of your role, particularly in relation to monitoring and evaluating. Often governors are invited to attend school events such as assemblies and sports days.

Induction is essential if new governors are to understand their role and make an effective contribution to the governing body so there is an expectation that the successful applicant will attend induction training within 3 months of appointment.

Under employment law, employers must give employees who are school governors reasonable time off to carry out their duties. The employee and employer have to agree on what is reasonable. Employers may give time off with pay but do not have to do so.

The Local Authority Governor is also expected to familiarise themselves with local authority priorities and be willing to keep their knowledge up to date. In order to enable this it is required that the successful appointee attend and present at the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Children's Committee which is held 3 times a year and to attend a liaison meeting with the Chairman, Chief Executive and Senior Manager – Services to our Community (DCS and DASS) on the same day. This will enable good communication and more importantly ensure that the LA Governor can ensure an educational perspective to the wider strategic issues relating to children and young people including safeguarding, health and youth justice.

## EXPENSES

The role is taken on a voluntary basis but the Local Authority will fund all reasonable out of pocket expenses (e.g. travel, accommodation) on the production of evidence of expenditure.

## EXPERIENCE

Local authority governors should have expertise or life experience which will contribute to the success of the school, eg:

- business or professional expertise;
- experience as a school governor or other voluntary role;
- experience of working with children or young people.

## SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

The Local Authority governor will be able to demonstrate:

- a passion for school improvement and raising standards to enable every child to achieve their potential;
- commitment to working as part of a team;
- commitment to fulfilling the role responsibly, eg. time to attend meetings, read the paperwork and visit the school.

## VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Local authority governors must agree to:

- sign the Governing Body Code of Practice
- respect confidentiality and the need to act with circumspection, including using social networking sites responsibly;

- work as part of a team and express their views openly, courteously and respectfully;
- record any business interest in connection with the governing body's business in the school's Register of Business Interests and declare any potential conflict of interest.
- draw to the attention of the Senior Manager – Services to our Community any serious concerns about matters likely to impact adversely on the standards of achievement of the pupils or their safety. It is a statutory requirement for all governing bodies to conduct the school or with a view to raising academic achievement and promoting pupil welfare.

Local authority governors are also expected to sign the Code of Conduct for the governing body on an annual basis and uphold The Seven Principles of Public Life

## THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

(originally published by the Nolan Committee)

### **Selflessness**

Holders of the public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

*The Committee of Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations.*

## **COMMUNICATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

You can provide relevant information to the governing body about Local Authority views and policies, when appropriate. If, however, an issue comes to a vote, you should vote on the basis of what you consider to be in the best interests of the school.

The work of the governing body is recorded in the minutes which should be made available to all interested parties apart from confidential items (Part 2 items). The minutes should be available in the school for anyone to read. As a local authority governor you are free to report any decision in advance of publication of the minutes if you are sure that you are not breaching a confidence of the governing body and that the information you are presenting is accurate and that it is appropriate for you to report the decision.

Note - you would be breaching the confidence of the governing body if you reported how individuals voted, comments made by individuals or individual discussions. When reporting on decisions taken by the governing body you should use 'we' and not 'they' as you are part of the decision making group.

Even if you personally voted against the final decision you must support the corporate decision making process and take ownership of the outcome.

**For further information please see the latest Five Islands School Ofsted inspection report**  
**<http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/133554>**

To apply for the role of LA Governor, please fill out the attached application form and return to [ahick@scilly.gov.uk](mailto:ahick@scilly.gov.uk) by 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015.