



## Governor FAQ'S

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### ***What does the governing board do?***

The governing board is a group of volunteers with diverse backgrounds who help with the continual development and improvement of the school in order to create the best outcomes for the children. We have a supportive role and are not there to judge or interfere, rather to constructively challenge the staff and head teacher in order to encourage them to be their best, and to come up with appropriate ideas, plans, visions and solutions. Some board members are parents and some are not (co-opted). Whilst the head teacher is ultimately responsible for running the school, the governing board are responsible for head teacher recruitment and monitoring their performance.

### ***What is the difference between a parent governor and a co-opted governor?***

A co-opted governor doesn't have to have any connections to the school, i.e. has no children in attendance there, but has the personal skills that could help the governing body to perform effectively - like someone outside looking in. A parent governor represents the parent community and will have a child or children at the school, therefore will have the perspective of other parents.

### ***Do I need a background in education?***

Although it can be helpful, it's not essential as full, supportive training will be given. Often it is beneficial to not be from an educational background so that different skillsets can be brought to the group.

### ***What skills do I need to be a governor?***

All you need is some well-managed time, passion, a love of little people and a willingness to learn. That's it in a nutshell.

### ***How will I be supported when I join the board?***

There is an extensive induction when you first join, in which you will get to meet the other governors, the head teacher and the chair of governors, all of whom will support you in getting to know your new role. The team are very aware of the amount of jargon and acronyms for newcomers, and are there at any time to help you understand this. There is no such thing as a silly question so ask lots of them!

### ***How much time will I be expected to commit?***

It varies, so be sure in advance that this fits in with your schedule. There are 4 evening governing body meetings throughout the year, and you will also be assigned to a sub-committee whose termly meetings you'll be expected to attend. There are a lot of pre-reads such as policies, head teacher reports etc, and this is all discussed at the

governing body meetings. There are very quiet periods, but there will then suddenly be a lot of reading to do in a short space of time. You will be given plenty of notice of the meetings which should help you to manage your time. The board are respectful of the fact you aren't being paid for this, but still expect that you will stick to your commitments. You will also be involved in an annual program of classroom observation visits. This is one of the most exciting and rewarding parts of the role and full training is provided. You are generally linked with a specific teacher or curriculum subject, and the visit is planned well in advance. They generally take about half a day plus preparation time, and you have a legal right to request unpaid time off from work (though your employer is not obliged to permit this so you may need to be able to find some flexibility for this aspect).

### ***Are there regular training sessions?***

Yes, there are a lot throughout the year, usually with at least two options so they can be worked around your schedule. Most are virtual but some are face-to-face, giving you the opportunity to meet and socialise with the board, plus members from other schools in the area. Some courses are mandatory, but most are there for you to choose so you can go for what interests you. A training brochure comes through yearly via email and the courses are easy to book.

### ***Do I need to be vetted?***

Yes. In any environment where there are vulnerable people, especially little ones, this is a safeguarding necessity so must be done before you start. DBS checks are processed and paid for by the school.

### ***Will I be invited to visit the school?***

Yes! Outside of meetings there are lots of opportunities to meet the children and staff and see them in action, and you will be welcomed and encouraged to do so. Governors have recently begun a new process of classroom monitoring visits to see the hard work staff put in by coming into classes and seeing how the school vision and plan are implemented in real-time, and how it impacts on learning. This happens twice a year, and there are many other opportunities besides this to get involved. Just ask the head teacher or governing body chair and they will make visiting arrangements for you.

### ***How many governors are there at Stathern?***

The governing board at Stathern Primary School has a target of 12 members including the head teacher, parent, staff and co-opted governors. Many of them have been there for a long time and have committed a lot to the school. They all have a passion for their role, which shows when you meet them. They will nurture and inspire you in your governing journey to be passionate to committing the same.

### ***I'm anxious about starting a new role I know little about with such knowledgeable people. Will I be welcomed and supported with my concerns?***

Yes! A quick email or call at any time and another governor will be there to talk things through with you. Everyone has had occasions where they've found themselves out of their comfort zone, but all board members are able to say as such and be understood. Don't worry, you'll be in good hands!