



Exeter Diocese Board of Education

"Committed, in partnership with governors and staff, to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people"

Governors Welcome Pack





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Dear

I would firstly like to thank you for becoming a Foundation Governor in a Church of England School in the Diocese of Exeter and welcome you to a family of 132 schools and academies. I hope that you will soon feel very much part of that family and that of your school.

The information in this pack is not exhaustive and subject to change; we will endeavour to keep you up to date with any changes in policy and procedure. There is an expectation that you will attend training courses provided by both ourselves and the Local Authority which clerk to governors will have details.

While each governor brings a different and valid perspective to the governing body and has a different role to play because of their particular skills, talents and experience, an understanding of the corporate role and shared goals is vital if a governing body is to be effective.

Being a foundation governor of a Church School brings particular responsibilities. The information in this pack is designed to guide you through these, most of which will fall into place as you become accustomed to the role.

I hope you will find the work both enjoyable and rewarding

Yours sincerely,

Philip Mantell
Diocesan Director of Education

Foundation Governors

Foundation Governors represent the historic link with the original establishment of the school and its distinctive religious character.

All Church of England Schools are required to have foundation governors. The exact composition of the Governing Body is determined by its Instrument of Government (a copy can be obtained from the clerk).

In Voluntary Aided schools foundation governors form the majority of the governors. This reflects the financial contribution made to the maintenance and improvement of the buildings, and the requirement that Voluntary Aided schools must provide Christian religious education and worship in accordance with the schools Trust Deed. In Voluntary Controlled schools foundation governors are in the minority. In the Diocese of Exeter foundation governors are appointed in the following way:

- The ex-officio foundation governor has a right of office and is usually the incumbent clergy unless a substitute governor has been nominated by the archdeacon
- Foundation governors appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education

Foundation Governors usually serve a four year term of office which may be renewable. The Church's interest in education stems from a philosophy that education is not just about acquiring knowledge which will enable children to earn a living in a competitive world. It begins from a position that this is God's world and everything in it has value. Religious education is important, but it is not the only subject which reflects spiritual values. The whole curriculum is given value by being considered in this way. To quote Archbishop William Temple – "Education is about fullness of life".

Foundation Governors are valuable and important to the ministry of the Church, providing the links between the parish, school and diocese. As for any ministry to which people are called, there will be a need for continued professional development such as training to enable them to keep abreast of the changes and developments in the education field and to deepen understanding on any number of issues which a school may face. Every Local Authority provides a variety of general courses for all school governors, and in addition the Diocesan Education team holds sessions for staff and governors of Church schools periodically throughout the diocese.

In addition Foundation Governors, like all other Governors ensure that there is the best possible environment for children's learning and development, maintain and improve standards in the school, respect and involve parents and provide effective governance

The Governing Body

Governing bodies have a combination of appointed or elected governors. The composition of the governing body is set out in the school's Instrument of Government.

Parent Governors	elected from among parents of children and young people at the school
Staff Governors	elected from among the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school. The headteacher is an ex-officio member of the governing body
Local Authority Governors	appointed by local authorities (Devon, Torbay and Plymouth)
Co-opted Governors	appointed by members of the governing body.
Foundation Governors	appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education or other organisations as specified in the Instrument of Government. One of the Foundation Governors is an Ex-officio (has the right of office) and the position is usually taken by the Incumbent of the Parish.
Associate Members	appointed by the governing body to add expertise to committees of the governing body. Associate members are non voting for decisions of the full governing body.
Clerk	Not a voting member. The Clerk issues papers, writes and circulates agendas and minutes for meetings. The Clerk is a very important member of the governing body



What being a school governor involves:

- Formal meetings of the governing body – the law requires governing bodies meet at least three times a year but many meet at least twice a term
- Reading – between meetings governors need to read minutes of the last meeting, agenda of the next meeting supporting papers and documents
- Committee meetings or working parties – most governing bodies have established committees to undertake various aspects of their work
- School visits – governors need to visit their school for focussed monitoring and to experience the school in action. Most schools have a policy on visits
- Training courses – governors should aim to keep themselves well informed and up to date by attending relevant courses arranged by the Local Authority and the Diocese. The Diocesan Education office will send you details of your induction training and other training available
- Staffing – involvement in appointments, discipline and redundancy
- Financial management – Governing bodies have a duty to set a balanced budget and to monitor and keep spending under review. Schools usually agree a cycle of budget management linked into the School Improvement Plan.
- Governing bodies should also ensure financial integrity and that their school achieves value for money
- Pupil exclusions – governors may sit on panels to consider pupil exclusion
- Policies – ensuring that the school has the correct policies which are approved by the governing body
- Your contributions – the most important quality that you bring is an interest in the school and in the education of young people together with the skills and knowledge that you have acquired through your life, such as parenting and/or some expertise in a particular area

Most governing bodies have established committees and appointed link governors to carry out the detail of their work. The areas generally covered by committees are premises, health and safety, curriculum, staffing and finance and they offer an ideal way to put particular skills that you have acquired to good use.



Governing Body meetings

The regular full governing body meetings are important for:

- Determining strategy
- Fulfilling statutory obligations
- Making decisions
- Reviewing performance
- Considering school problems
- Encouraging the governing body to work as a team

Meetings are effective when:

- They start on time
- Items on the agenda are properly introduced and explained
- The governors have all read the reports to be considered, and prepared their comments on the reports
- Everyone is encouraged to participate and is listened to
- It is clear what actions are taken, by whom and when

You can play your part by:

- Preparing well for the meeting – read the agenda and other papers
- Taking papers with you to the meeting
- Making relevant contributions to the discussions
- Listening to the contributions of others
- Accepting the decisions made by the governing body are a collective responsibility
- Noting any tasks you have agreed to carry out and then fulfilling them
- Joining a committee and/or becoming a link governor and taking a special interest in a particular area of school life. You might be asked, on rare occasions, to sit on a pupil or staff discipline committee

Please remember that if you are unable to attend a meeting you should always tender your apologies to the Clerk.

Governing Body meetings are not usually open to the public. Visitors may attend meetings by invitation but maybe asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed.

Governors must observe confidentiality at all times regarding proceedings of the governing body, voting at meetings and from their visits as school governors.

Governors' responsibilities

Governors are the strategic leaders of the school – the governing body has overall responsibility for the way the school is run, promoting the highest standards of achievement for its pupils.

Governors should establish a strategic framework for the school by:

- Set the aims and objectives for the school
- Set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- Set targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- Monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- Be a source of challenge and support to the headteacher
- A commitment to the distinctive ethos of the school and an awareness and commitment to the quality of RE teaching and the provision for a daily act of collective worship

The Governing Body's responsibility to the Diocese

- Notification of impending vacancy for a senior leader
- Notification of proposed alterations to the buildings in Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies
- Notification if there are any changes in the organisation of the school e.g., federation, amalgamation, conversion to academy etc.
- Notification of any major issues
- Notification of any changes to the Governing Body

Useful Information for Governors

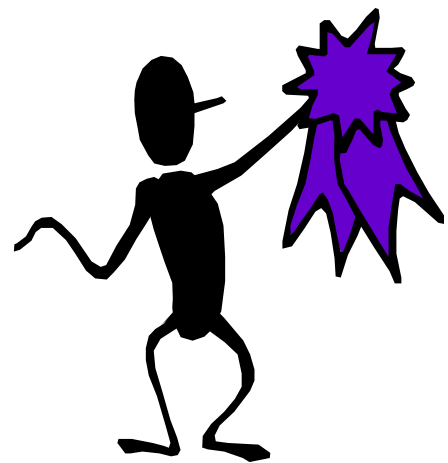
- The Governors' Handbook
- The schools Instrument of Government, as required by law
- Lists of members of the governing body, committees, working parties, memberships and terms of reference
- Calendar of Meetings, terms dates and other major events during the school year
- Schools current prospectus
- Schools current School Improvement Plan (or summary)
- Most recent Ofsted and SIAMS reports
- Minutes of the last two full governing body meeting
- Agreed induction/procedures and arrangements

Top Tips for Governors

- Governor's work as a team and accept collective responsibility
- Governor's must always observe confidentiality, especially on staffing and pupil discipline
- All governor's have equal status
- Governor's need to make a difference and make their views known
- Governor's must attend meetings
- Governor's must not raise issues relating to individual children or employees
- Governor's must not speak out about governing body decisions in public
- Governor's must always be prepared for meetings – read the paperwork beforehand
- Governor's need to be committed and willing to give the time needed
- Governor's must not leave all the work to the head and chair

The rewards of being a governor

- The knowledge that you are helping raise standards of educational achievement for children and young people
- Having an opportunity to use your experience and expertise to help improve the quality of children and young peoples' learning
- Having a sense of purpose and achievement in the community as well as being a partner and involved in the community
- Having the opportunity to develop new skills



DIOCESAN CONTACTS

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For information on Schools Admissions, Appeals and Matters of Governance contact:

Christina Mabin
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School Governance and Admissions Adviser
Tel 01392 294938

Sarah Owen
governance@exeter.anglican.org
Governance and Admissions Support
Tel 01392 294938

For information on academies contact:

Janine Waring
01392 294923
janine.waring@stchristophersmat.org

For information on Property Services for VA schools please contact:

Peter Armstrong
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Tel 01392 294952

The main focus of the Diocesan Education Team's work is to provide advice and support to the 131 Church of England schools in the Diocese. We offer training and development opportunities for Headteachers, senior leaders, staff and governors.

Below is a brief summary of the range of services we provide:

- Professional support for Headteachers in leadership and school management.
- Assistance to schools in providing good quality Religious Education and worship.
- Support and advice for RE and Collective Worship Co-ordinators.
- Training and development in the spiritual and moral dimensions of the curriculum.
- Advice and training on the Christian ethos of Church schools.
- Advice on the recruitment and appointment of senior management staff and RE specialists in secondary schools.
- Support arrival and induction of new Headteachers.
- Training and support for school inspections with particular reference to SIAS.
- An annual conference for Headteachers and school leaders.
- Website resources for all schools www.exeter.anglican.org
- Development of training materials and resources.
- Updating schools on National Society developments.
- Support for under-performing schools in conjunction with the Local Authority.
- Support for Extended Services.
- Support for the development of Church/school/community links.
- Signposting schools to key services and working with other key organisations as appropriate.
- Research and innovation linked to Church school leadership.
- Development of special projects
- Succession planning

Support for Church schools

The education team liaises with the National Society and other key organisations to protect and promote the interests of Church schools. We also work closely with Local Authorities at all levels to support Church schools.

Telephone advice

Telephone advice is available during normal office hours (9.00 – 5.00 Monday - Friday) 01392 294938.

Future Plans and Vision

These include:

- Initiatives and projects to support and Celebrate the Christian distinctiveness of our schools.
- Support for parishes and schools developing integrated Mission Communities around the county in line with the Diocese's *Moving On* Strategy.
- Away days and retreats for heads, governors, staff and pupils.
- Induction for senior leaders new to Church schools.

Other useful contacts and websites

Inspections

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

The principal objective of a SIAMS inspection is to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England School. The inspection process focuses on the impact that the Christian ethos of the Church School has on the children and young people who attend. Church Schools will employ a variety of strategies and styles, which reflect their particular local contexts or church tradition in order to be distinctive and effective. Towards this objective the Inspectors will seek answers to 4 key questions

- How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners
- What is the impact of collective worship on the school community
- How effective is the religious education (in VA schools and academies)
- How effective are the leadership and management

The inspector works with the school to assess the effectiveness of the school's own self-evaluation, and will report on the school's established strengths and identify areas for ongoing development. A major consideration of the SIAMS inspection is how the school recognises values and nurtures the spiritual dimension of children's experience and growth. Foundation governors are usually involved in the inspection process. They contribute to the school's self-evaluation process over a period of time, and meet the inspector during the course of the inspection day. The Diocese will offer training to support Foundation Governors in their role.

Church school buildings

There are a number of differences between Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools when it comes to school buildings and dealing with building matters

In all Church of England schools the buildings and the land on which they are situated will be owned by a Trust. In many cases this will be the Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance or the Incumbent and Churchwardens but maybe a local historical trust. Playing fields are usually owned by the Local Authority. The Governing Body is responsible for the maintenance of the building and work in this area is often delegated to a sub-committee who report to the Governing Body. In a Church of England Academy all funding is currently received from the Department for Education, however consent for all building works MUST be obtained from the trustees.

In a VC school all funding is covered by the main budget or other grants: there is no contribution from the Governing Body and building advice is available from the local authority Property Services.

In a VA school routine repairs are funded from the main budget but the Governing Body is responsible for 10% of the cost of the projects funded by Devolved Formula Capital. Support for building, financial and Insurance matters is available from the Property Services office 01392 294952

Glossary of useful acronyms

A Level	Advanced level qualification also known as the 'gold standard' of the education system particularly when threatened with reform
AE	Alternative education, methods of teaching with roots in philosophies removed from the mainstream
AfL	Assessment for learning, a collaborative approach between the teacher and student
AoC	Association of Colleges
APP	Assessing pupils' progress, developed to help schools apply AfL
AQA	An awarding body offering a range of qualifications also known as the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance
ASCL	Association of School and College Leaders
ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
AWPU	Age-weighted pupil unit, a measure used to distribute funding to schools
BME	Black and minority ethnic
BSS	Behaviour Support Service, local authority-run body providing training and service to schools to tackle behaviour issues among children
BTEC	Business and technology Education Council founded in 1984 as a vocational qualification-awarding body
C&G	City and Guilds
CAF	Common assessment framework, a standardised approach used by practitioners to assess students needs and how these should be met
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CASE	Campaign for State Education, an organisation demanding equality for all children in the education system
CAT	Cognitive abilities test, assesses ability and academic potential in students
CEM	Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, Durham University, a large independent provider of student assessment
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Continuing professional development, including on-the-job training
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau (now called the Disclosure and Barring Service – see DBS)
D&T	Design and Technology
DCPO	Designated child protection officer, the role may also be known as the designated child safeguarding officer
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DLO	Desired Learning objectives (or outcomes)
EAB	Examinations Appeals Board part of OfQUAL set up in 1999 to ensure that exam grades are fair and accurate
EAL	English as an additional language
EBac	English Baccalaureate
Ebd	Emotional and behavioural difficulty
EFL	English as a foreign language
EIP	Education improvement partnerships cluster of organisations and schools working together to improve achievement locally
EO	Education Otherwise organisation that supports people who home-school
EP	Educational Psychologist (Ed psych)
ESOL	English for Speaker of other languages
ESW	Education social worker
EWO	Education welfare officer

EYCS	Early Years and Childcare Service
EYFSP	Early years foundation stage profile
FF	Fair funding
FFT	Fischer family trust, a charity that provides estimates of student performances
FSM	Free school meals
FTE	Full time equivalent