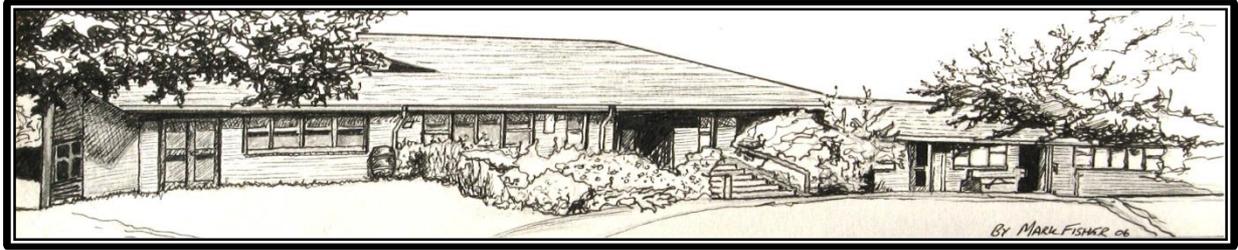


Every Child Matters
Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School



The Work of Your Governing Body

Introduction

Why do people choose to become governors? The reasons people from the community choose to become governors will vary, but all have the same common goal – to improve the outcomes of all pupils at the school. It is this common goal that bonds the governing body together to work to understand, challenge and support the staff, pupils and parents at Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School.

The governing body is expected to make a measureable impact on school improvement and form part of the leadership and management team of the school. As Chair, it is my role to provide direction on how the governing body is going to achieve their strategic aims and to ensure that every governor has an effective part to play.

This guidance has been produced to help new and existing governors understand how the governors at Sedlescombe work effectively and collaboratively together. In addition to this document, all governors should read the 'Governors' Handbook' produced by the Department for Education (DfE) which is the comprehensive guide to the expectations and duties of governors and governing bodies.

<http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Legislation,policies-and-procedures/Government-advice-and-guidance/Governors-Guide-to-the-Law.asp>

It is with great pleasure that I welcome new governors to the governing body. All governors give their time voluntarily and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support and commitment to make the school a vibrant, inspirational learning environment and a school that we can be truly proud of.

Andrew Ratcliffe
Chair of Governors

Respect for Everyone and Everything

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The Role of Your Governing Body

The Department for Education (DfE), have set out in their Governors' Handbook, that 'governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions' as follows:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.

In addition to these strategic functions, the governing body must ensure that statutory policies are in place and regularly reviewed.

It is really important to understand that governors are not there for the operational management or day-to-day activities of the school. That responsibility and decision making rests with the headteacher and senior management team. Governors must have a good understanding of the school, its staff, activities and challenges in order to provide effective governance.

Governors provide challenge, guidance and support to the Headteacher in achieving the school's educational aims. This means that governors:

- Set the strategic direction for the school
- Set and manage performance management objectives for the school, Headteacher and staff
- Support the Christian character and ethos of the school
- Are accountable for the school's financial performance
- Act as a point of escalation in the resolution of disciplinary or behavioural matters
- Appoint the headteacher and assist in staff recruitment

What Does Your Governing Body Do?

The strategic objectives are set in the summer for the governing body to work towards and these are outlined in the School Improvement Plan (SclP) and School Evaluation Form (SEF). The governing body prepares their own Governor Development Plan (GDP) for the academic year ahead.

The Clerk to the Governing Body

The governing body has a Clerk who provides support by helping with agendas, attends meetings, writes the minutes, provides advice and ensures the governing body are working in accordance with their statutory requirements.

Full Governor Meetings

All governors meet approximately once a month in a full governors meeting. The dates for meetings are set a year in advance and are available on the governor calendar.

The governing body determines and decides the strategic direction of the school at full governors meetings in order to bring about an improvement in the outcomes for all pupils who attend the school.

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Head and Chair Meetings

The Head, Chair, Vice Chairs and Clerk meet regularly. These meetings allow issues to be raised and moved forward in between the full governor meetings (including the school's strategic objectives and the progress and attainment of the school).

Governor Roles

All governors have link roles. This provides an individual focus for each governor and ensures that every aspect of the school is being monitored for progress. The link roles are always aligned to the School Improvement Plan and for this academic year are as follows:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Finance – Mike Taylor
- Safeguarding – Mike Dixon
- Training – Nicola Anderson
- Health and Safety – Andrew Ratcliffe
- Christian Distinctiveness – Kevin Mepham and Rachael Talbot

School Visits

Once a governor has discussed and chosen their link role, they are free to carry out the research and relevant training to understand their area as much as possible. This is where a governor's individual commitment comes in to full effect.

Once ready, a governor can organise with the headteacher and relevant members of staff, a suitable date to visit the school. The school visit should be focussed on an area of the School Improvement Plan (ScIP). A monitoring visit form should be filled in before and after the visit so that the results of the visit can be recorded and shared with the governing body.

It is important to recognise that governors are not inspecting the school or making judgements. The governors' role is to understand how the areas for improvement highlighted in the ScIP are being addressed. During the school visit, a governor is free to talk to staff and pupils to gain a clear picture of improvement and development.

It is expected that each governor will make at least three to six visits to the school throughout the academic year.

The Composition of the Governing Body

In 2015, the governing body reconstituted in line with the statutory requirements of the Department for Education. This meant that the number of people on the governing body reduced from 15 to 10. By having fewer members the governing body are able to be a more cohesive skill-based team, with each member actively contributing to the effective running and improvement of the school.

Governor Category	Number
Headteacher	1
Elected Parent Governors	2
Local Authority	1
Elected Staff Governor	1
Foundation Governors (including the vicar)	2
Co-opted Governor (replaced community governor)	3
Total	10
Associate Governor	1

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The Categories of Governor are:

Parent Governor

- eligible by having a registered pupil at the school, elected by other parents at the school

Staff Governor

- elected by the school staff from the teaching and support staff at the school,

Headteacher

- governor by virtue of their office

Local Authority Governor

- nominated by the local authority, appointed by the governing body

Foundation Governor

- appointed by the Diocese and includes the vicar who is a governor by virtue of their position

Co-opted Governor

- appointed by the governing body and can be anyone from the community who, in the opinion of the governing body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school

Associate Governor

- appointed by the governing body from the community who, in the opinion of the governing body, have the particular skills required by the governing body to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school

All governors should have the appropriate skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

Governors also have a specific role to preserve and develop the school's Christian character and to ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with the local Diocese. The categories and numbers of governor are described in the School's Instrument of Government but are shown in outline in the above table.

The names of the current governing body are available to view on the school website:

<http://www.sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk>