

How to... *be a School Governor*



Sutton

take part

Introduction

This leaflet will tell you more about the role of a school governor, the skills and qualities you need and how to go about becoming one.

What is a school governor?

School Governance is the most important volunteering role in education. Governors work in partnership with school staff to provide the best possible standards of education and help children throughout the school to realise their aspirations and expectations.

A school governor is a person aged 18 or over who is a member of a schools governing body and is responsible for the overall running of a school. Most schools have on average 9 to 20 governors on their governing body.

A school's Governing Body is made up of governors representing:

- **The local community**
- **The Local Authority**
- **Parents of children in the school**
- **School staff**



What does a school governing body do?

Governors are involved, to a greater or lesser extent, with everything to do with school, its pupils, staff, parents and buildings. The Head teacher is responsible for the day to day running of the school and will also be part of the school governing body. There are major areas of involvement for governors which are;

- **The Curriculum** – this is everything that happens to a child at school – not just lessons
- **The National Curriculum** – Governors share responsibility with the Local Authority and head teachers for ensuring the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in their school
- **Finance** – Schools are responsible for their own budgets and the governing body has overall responsibility for it.

- **Pupil discipline** – Sometimes it is necessary for pupils to be excluded from school and the governing body has to hear appeals against exclusions by parents when they occur.
- **Staffing** – Governors decide the number of staff and make decisions on pay. They are also directly involved in the appointment of the head teacher and deputy head and other key staff.

Governors usually spend 6–8 hours per month during term-time at meetings and reading, but this can vary quite significantly depending on the needs of the school and how much time you have to give.

Meeting times vary, and some duties can only be dealt with during the school day.

What do I need to become a governor?

No particular qualifications or experience are needed. You do not need any formal qualifications, just an interest in the school, some energy and enthusiasm and some time to commit to the role. You are not expected to be an expert on education and training is available to help you learn about your role.

You can be a school governor at the school your

child goes to, the biggest individual group on any governing body is parents, normally elected as parent governors (although they can also be community governors). However, if you prefer you can volunteer to be a governor at another school.

A governor term of office is normally 4 years. This time is agreed in advance, but if your circumstances change you can resign. Many governors do more than one term and can serve for a very long time.





What skills are required to be an effective governor?

- Someone who is enthusiastic and committed
- Someone who cares about improving childrens' educational attainment and general well being.
- Someone who works well in a team and is happy to contribute ideas and help make decisions
- Someone who can stand by collective decisions even if he/she held a different point of view
- Someone who keeps up to date with information about their community and their role.

Sutton has a governors training programme which you can find more about by going to the sutton council web site – **www.sutton.gov.uk**

Where can i find out more?

- visit the School Governors' One-Stop-Shop to find out more and download an application form: **www.sgoss.org.uk**
- Visit Sutton Councils web site **www.sutton.gov.uk** under School Governance
- Contact Sutton Governor Support Service on **020 8770 6696**
- It is also useful to talk more with your local schools to see if they are looking for school governors.





Sutton Take Part provides other information about being an active citizen and runs several training programmes to meet the needs of Sutton's residents and community groups.

For more information on this please go to **www.suttontakepart.org.uk** or contact the Active Citizenship coordinator at **info@suttontakepart.org.uk** or call **020 8644 2867**

