

Election procedures for governors

Parent governors and staff governors

The local authority is responsible for the organisation of parent and staff governor elections in maintained schools although in practice the responsibility for the conduct of parent and staff governor elections in individual schools is delegated to the headteacher, as returning officer.

Elections are conducted in accordance with the procedures agreed by the local authority and are set out in the documents below.

Election of parent governors (word)

Information on numbers, eligibility, procedures in event of a vacancy, counting votes, definition of parent and who can be a parent governor and who cannot. Also includes parent governor nomination form.

Election of staff governors (word)

Information on numbers, eligibility to vote, general procedures in case of a vacancy, who can and who cannot be a governor and the election itself. Also includes staff governor nomination form.

Key points

Unfortunately legislation does not allow for any electronic elections - the same as general elections.

- For nominations(not ballot papers) you should consider use pupil post or other comms to all parents. If the exact required number of nominations or less are received, then there is no requirement for an election.
- The impact of Covid on elections – whilst schools are dealing with Covid then please ensure that any election is in line with your school's risk assessment

Information updated in the guidance below (November 2021):

Added paragraph to election of parent and staff governors on the use of social media:

- Information on the nomination form should make clear that the use of school social media channels for campaigning purposes are not permitted. We also do not recommend the use of personal social media accounts to be used as part of any election campaign, however, if permitted, clear parameters for acceptable use should be outlined as part of the nomination process information.

Paragraph 2.3 in Election of staff governors updated to read:

- 2.3 When to stand down - Staff governors will no longer be eligible to remain as a staff governor once they cease to be employed by the school.

For academy trusts, the terms of office of elected parent local governors on local governing boards and elected parent trustees will be determined by the articles of association. If carrying out elections, we recommend the above guidance is followed.

Chair and vice chair

The governing board must elect a chair and a vice-chair.

There are no regulations prescribing the election process as it is believed that governing boards are best placed to decide how to organise this, but those standing for election should withdraw from the meeting when a vote is taken.

Governors who are paid to work at the school, for instance the headteacher and staff governors, cannot be elected as chair or vice-chair.

Election of chair and vice-chair

Guidance on procedures around the election of chair and vice-chair.

Related services

School governance development 2025/26

Contact:

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