



Parents/Carers Information Sheet: October 2009

Governors at Houghton Primary School

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, every state school has a Governing Body, consisting of specified numbers of various categories of governors depending on the type and size of school. All governors in the UK are unpaid for their work—they are the largest volunteer force in the country.

Who can become a governor?

There are different categories of governors:

- Parent Governors: parents (ideally of children at the school, nominated and elected by parents)
- Staff Governors: members of the school staff (nominated and elected by staff)
- LA Governors: nominated by the Local Authority
- Community Governors: members of the local community (appointed by the rest of the governing body)

Although parent governors are nominated and elected by parents, they do not 'represent' parents on the governing body. E.g. they are not the 'voice' of the parents. This is the same for staff governors—they do not 'represent' staff.

How does the governing body work?

The governing body meets four times a year, as a **Full Governing Body**, where the ongoing business of committees, the governing body and the school are discussed, reported on and where decisions are taken by a majority vote. Most of the work of governors, however, is done at committee level, each committee meeting at least twice a term. At Houghton Primary School there are two main committees and a number of sub-committees:

Resources Committee (Sub-committees: Personnel, Finance, Property, Health and Safety, Phoenix Child Care business)

Curriculum and Community Committee (Sub-committees: Curriculum, Standards, SEN and Inclusion, Child Protection/Safeguarding, Community Links)

No governor can act alone. All decisions are made by the Governing Body either at full governing body meetings or when delegated to a committee.

The Governing Body is led by the **Chair**, elected by the Governing Body from within its membership. The chair of our governing body is parent governor, Kate Ruddock. Each main committee also has a chair. The chair of our Resources Committee is Charles Saunderson. The chair of our Curriculum & Community Committee is Sharon Speed.

The governors are supported in their work by a Clerk to the Governing Body. Our clerk is Diane Ashmore. She is newly appointed from the LA Clerking Service. The Clerk is considered an integral part of the Governing Body, although they are not entitled to vote. Their role is primarily one of providing advice and interpretation on the regulatory and administrative framework in which governors work, preparing and distributing minutes and agendas, keeping records and dealing with correspondence.

Governors are offered a full range of training opportunities by the LA to help them to develop the skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities.

What are the responsibilities of a governing body?

The headteacher of the school is responsible for day-to-day management of the school. The role of the Governing Body is to provide strategic management, and to act as a "critical friend", supporting the work of the headteacher and other staff. Schools have a delegated budget to cover salaries, running costs, maintenance and equipment; the Governing Body is responsible for managing this budget. They decide how many and what types of staff to employ, which equipment to upgrade or replace and what the priorities are for implementing new strategies and initiatives. Governors appoint the headteacher, and are involved in the appointment of other staff. Governors also have a role in monitoring the school's progress, and in setting annual targets for the school's performance and for the headteacher (and ensuring that the headteacher sets targets for other staff). Governors visit the school throughout the year to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. Their visits are focused and often relate to the School Development Plan (see last month's newsletter for this year's priorities).



Who are the governors at Houghton Primary School?

At Houghton Primary School we have 14 governors as follows: 5 Parent Governors, 2 Staff Governors, 3 Local Authority Governors and 4 Community Governors. Governors are appointed for a maximum of four years, this term is renewable. All governors can be contacted via the School Office.

Governor	Category	Committees	Term of office ends
Kate Ruddock	Parent	Chair of Governors Resources Committee, Curriculum & Community (C&C) Committee	February 2010
Sharon Speed	Parent	Chair of C&C Committee	July 2010
Mel Young	Parent	Resources Committee	February 2010
Amanda Cook	Parent	C&C Committee	July 2012
Sarah Emms	Parent	Resources Committee	October 2013
Charles Saunderson	Local Authority	Chair of Resources Committee	September 2011
Ann Banfield	Local Authority	C&C Committee	January 2011
Anthony Challinor	Local Authority	Resources Committee	June 2011
Andrew Read	Community	Resources Committee	September 2012
Rod Wilkins	Community	Resources Committee	January 2012
Amanda Waughman	Community	Resources Committee	September 2013
VACANCY	Community		
Georgina Young	Staff	Headteacher	N/A
Adrian Shepherd	Staff	Resources Committee	September 2012

A message from our Chair of Governors...



Hi - I am the new Chair of Governors, having taken over the role in September from Mel Young. As well as becoming chair, this term has also seen other changes - we welcome our two new governors: Amanda Waughman and Sarah Emms and also a new clerk to the governors, Diane Ashmore.

Our work for the year ahead includes ensuring Mrs Young and her staff continue to provide a safe and caring environment for our children to achieve their full potential. With the new build now having planning permission we expect to face new challenges but with everyone's support we hope to make the transition into the brand new building as smooth as possible.

I have enjoyed the first half term as Chair of Governors and look forward to continuing to work closely with the other Governors, Mrs Young and all the staff at Houghton and the children and parents of the school. If you wish to contact me please do so via the school office or via my email: kate.ruddock@virgin.net. You can also usually find me down the Key Stage 2 end of the playground on Thursdays and Fridays.

Kate Ruddock