

# The Role of Parent Governors



**SYWELL CE**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sywell CE Primary School  
Overstone Road  
Sywell  
Northants  
NN6 0AW

Telephone: 01604 644565

Email: [bursar@sywell-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk](mailto:bursar@sywell-ce.northants-ecl.gov.uk)



Peterborough Diocese  
Education Trust



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# PARENT GOVERNORS

## Why have Parent Governors?

The current model of governance in academies/schools is a stakeholder model; that is those people who are representative of all those groups that have a vested interest, or a stake, in the effective delivery of education and care in an academy/school. This includes the parents of children at the academy/school.

Parent governors play a vital role on our Academy Governance Committee (AGC); they have the unique position of a parental viewpoint of our [Academy] [School]. Through the children, they have a first-hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum and how the [Academy] [School] is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables parent governors to bring a different perspective to the governance of the [Academy] [School].

It is important for parent governors to establish a rapport with the parental body that elected them, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to [academy] [school] governance.

Although being available to advise parents on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that parent governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the [Academy] [School].



## Representative not Delegate

Parent governors are representative parents rather than a representative of parents. Sometimes it can be difficult to separate any personal issues or experiences from those of being a governor.

To effectively fulfil the role, parent governors should:

- Make themselves known to the parent body;
- Attend training sessions;
- Listen impartially to concerns raised by parents;
- Guide parents regarding appropriate lines of action and procedures. Ensuring that they understand that the parent governor is not elected to represent their personal views;
- Present a balanced view of issues, representing different sections of the community;
- Deal with any personal issues in the same way as any other parent, not through the role of governor.

Achieving a balance between being the impartial representative parent and the often emotional issues relating to individual children's education, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance include:

- Making yourself available to parents;
- Never pressing your own child's case at the expense of others;
- Never promising to 'solve a problem' on your own;
- Being wary of bringing an individual's issue to meetings without following the agreed procedures;
- Abiding by the agreed protocol regarding agenda items and any other business;
- Keeping yourself aware of parental views and concerns;
- Playing an active part in AGC meetings.
- Observing PDET's AGC Code of Conduct

## Critical Friend

It is the role of all governors to act as a critical friend to the [Academy] [School].

Parent governors often have lots of contact with the [Academy] [School] and can sometimes find this aspect of the role challenging as it requires them to put personal feelings aside and participate in meetings in the interests of the [Academy] [School] as a whole.

This requires good judgement and though it is not always an easy role to fulfil there is ample support and training available. Effective parent governors will find working alongside the other members of the AGC both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the AGC fulfils its duties to all children.

## Sources of Information

As a parent governor, it will be helpful to ensure that you know as much as possible about your role. In addition to attending training, some of the sources of information that you may find useful are:

- The Trust's Scheme of Delegation
- The document entitled 'The role of the AGC'
- Code of Conduct
- The Peterborough Diocese Education Trust's (PDET) Academy Governance Committee Handbook
- PDET Website.

