



# **TUDHOE LEARNING TRUST**

## **DIRECTORS**

### **ROLE PROFILE, RESPONSIBILITIES, RECRUITMENT STRATEGY & POLICY**

Prepared by: Kimberley Ivory

Review date: December 2018

## **The Academies Act 2010**

Schools which convert to Academies under the above Act, are run by companies limited by guarantee called 'Academy Trusts'. Like any other company, Academy Trusts are registered with Companies House. The Academy Trust is also an exempt charity, which means that it is not registered with the Charity Commission but must abide by charitable law.

What documents govern Academy Trusts?

### **Memorandum and Articles of Association**

Like all companies, the Academy Trust has 'Articles of Association' ('Articles') which are the rules that govern the running of the company.

The Articles set out the Object (or purpose) of the company. All Academy Trusts have at least one Object, which is to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a school(s) which shall offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Academy Trust must use its resources exclusively in pursuance of these Objects.

### **Funding Agreement**

This is the contract between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education for the running of the school(s) as an Academy. It sets out the principles of how the Academy Trust will be funded and, in return, the responsibilities and obligations required of the Academy Trust.

Academy Trusts running more than one Academy (known as Multi Academy Trusts) will have a 'Master Funding Agreement' and 'Supplemental Funding Agreements' for each of the Academies it runs.

### **Lease**

For non-church Academies or for Church of England Academies where some land is owned by the Local Authority (usually playing fields), there may be a 125 year lease between the Local Authority and the Academy Trust for the use of the Local Authority land for the purposes of running the Academy.

### **Who are the Members?**

Members of a company limited by guarantee (like the Academy Trust) are the equivalent of shareholders in a company limited by shares. They are the 'guarantors' of the company and promise to pay £10 towards the debts of the company in the event that the Academy Trust is wound up.

Members have limited but important powers under the Articles. These include the right to wind up the Academy Trust, amend the Articles, change the name of the company, appoint other Members and appoint and remove one or more Directors. However, Members should not interfere with the day to day operation of the school or approach Directors or the Head teacher on an individual basis in their role as a Member.

### **Who are the Directors?**

In all Academy Trusts, the individuals appointed to make strategic decisions about the day to day running of the company have three names:

- Directors - because the Academy Trust is a company;
- Trustees - because the Academy Trust is a charity; and,
- Governors - because the Academy Trust is responsible for running the school(s)

This can be very confusing as the documentation used to set up the Academy Trust and the Department for Education guidance for Academies uses these three titles interchangeably, depending on the context. For the purposes of this document, we shall refer to the Directors/Trustees/Governors of an Academy Trust as 'Directors'.

Directors are made up of a diverse range of individuals. The Members will always appoint one or more Directors. Others might be appointed by parents, staff or by other Directors from members of the local community. The Head teacher (for single Academies) or the Executive Head teacher (for Multi Academies) will also often be an ex officio Director, which means they will be a Director for so long as they remain in post. The Articles will stipulate the number and types of Directors, which the Academy Trust should have.

The Directors come together to form the Board of Directors ('Board'), sometimes also referred to as the Board of Trustees or Governing Body. The Chair of the Board of Directors will usually always be a Member of the Academy Trust.

In Multi Academy Trusts, each Academy may have its own 'Local Governing Body' ('LGB') or 'Advisory Body'. These have a similar status to committees of a maintained Governing Body and the only powers they have are those that are delegated to them by the Board of Directors. This is normally formalised into a 'Scheme of Delegation'. The ability to delegate additional responsibilities or remove responsibilities is not static and the level of delegation can be reviewed to meet changing circumstances. For example, if a school was judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' after previously being judged 'Inadequate', it might be appropriate for the LGB to be given more delegated powers by the Board.

Individuals serving on an LGB or Advisory Body may or may not be Directors of the Academy Trust. It is common for them to be referred to as 'governors', although technically the Governors of an Academy Trust are the Directors/Trustees.

## **Responsibilities**

As a Director of the Academy Trust, you will share equally with the other Directors the responsibility of running the Academy Trust and, in turn, the Academy(s) it runs. Directors have very similar responsibilities to governors in a maintained school, including the three core strategic functions of ensuring:

- That the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Academy Trust and the Academies it runs are clearly defined;
- That the Head teacher and/or Executive Head teacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school;
- The sound, proper and effective use of the Academy Trusts financial resources.

In addition, Directors must ensure that the Academy Trust pursues its objectives, is compliant with both company and charity law and has due regard for any other relevant legislation or regulations.

The role of Director is to take ultimate responsibility for the Academy Trust's resources, including the recruitment and employment of staff, land and building matters, the admission of pupils and Academy finances and funds. Directors are also accountable to the Secretary of State for the academic and educational standards in the Academy(s) and the performance of its pupils.

In Multi Academy Trusts, it is usual for the Board to delegate some of its responsibilities to a Local Governing Body in each of the Academies. However, Directors remain ultimately responsible. It is also worth noting that Directors of Multi Academy Trusts are responsible for all the Academies run by the Academy Trust and are not there to 'represent' a particular Academy school.

Under the Companies Act 2006, Directors have a number of general duties which are owed to the Academy Trust. These include:

- Duty to act within powers - obey the Academy Trust company's constitution and decisions taken under it;

- Duty to promote the success of the Academy Trust - act in the Academy Trust's best interests
- Duty to exercise independent judgement - remember you remain responsible for the work you give to others;
- Duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence - be diligent and well informed about the Academy Trust's affairs.
- Duty to avoid conflicts of interest - avoid situations where your interests conflict with those of the Academy Trust. When in doubt disclose potential conflicts quickly. **In Multi Academy Trusts, directors must ensure that there are no conflicts between their duty to the Academy Trust and to individual schools. A Director must ensure they consider and promote the needs of each individual school for the benefit of the Academy Trust and not simply focus on achieving the best outcome for one particular school.**
- Duty not accept benefits from third parties - be honest and remember that the Academy Trust's property belongs to it and not to you or its Members;
- Duty to declare an interest in a proposed transaction or arrangement

### **How much commitment is involved in being a Director?**

Board meetings are expected to be held at least three times a year, although many Academy Trusts hold more frequent meetings and/or have in place committees which Directors may be asked to sit on.

Like governors of maintained schools, Directors need to take a full and active role in the strategic running of the Academy(s) and monitor the operational running of the Academy(s) by the Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team. This may include regular visits to the Academy(s).

### **What would my liability be as a Director?**

As the Academy Trust is a legal entity in its own right, claims would normally only be brought against the Academy Trust and not against individual Directors. Only in very rare occasions will individual governors be held personally responsible for a decision. These sorts of claims are very rare and normally fall into one of two categories:

- Breach of duties under charity law, company law and education law (or a Funding Agreement)
- Criminal breaches relating to an individual's role as a Director

However, it is usual for Academy Trusts to have Directors' insurance to mitigate against Director's breaches of duties where they have acted in good faith.

### **How are Tudhoe Learning Trust Directors selected?**

The role of Director of Tudhoe Learning Trust is a very important one and each application will be considered on its merits.

The Board of Directors of the Trust meets where appropriate, will consider applications on behalf of Members of the Academy Trust. Please be aware that not all applications will be accepted as appointment is dependent on the experience and expertise of each applicant and the skills and experience needed by the Academy Trust. Applicants will be informed of the decision promptly after the meeting.

All new and reappointments of Directors will normally be required to provide an acceptable Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and s128 check against prohibition orders for those involved in the management of a setting.



## TUDHOE LEARNING TRUST



PERSON SPECIFICATION - Trust Director			
Category	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
<b>Education, Qualifications and Training</b>	Sound basic education.	Profession.	Application
<b>Experience</b>	An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Directors within company and charitable law.	Experience of at least one of the following broad areas is preferred: finance, risk management, business management, Human Resource, education, land, trust or building matters, law.	Application / Interview  Application/ Interview
<b>Attitudes and Abilities</b>	<p>Effective communication skills;</p> <p>Ability to work independently but also effectively as part of a team;</p> <p>An ability to hold others to account for their professional practice;</p> <p>Ability to and experience of scrutiny;</p> <p>Strategic vision;</p> <p>Sound judgement;</p> <p>Willingness to contribute to one or more committees</p>		Interview / Application  References
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	A commitment to the Academy Trust and its Objects including the ethos of the Academy Trust;		Interview
<b>Working Arrangements</b>	A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to Trust business		Interview/ Application Form



## Tudhoe Learning Trust



JOB DESCRIPTION	
<b>Job Title:</b>	Director
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Chair of Directors
<b>Place of Work:</b>	ANY OF THE TRUSTS SITES WITHIN COUNTY DURHAM
<b>Hours:</b>	As and when required by agreement.
<b>Salary:</b>	Voluntary position - some expenses may be paid with the agreement of the Chair.
<b>Job Summary</b>	
<p>The role of a Trust Director is to ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Academy Trust and the Academies it runs are clearly defined; That the Head teacher and/or Executive Head teacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school and there is sound, proper and effective use of the Academy Trusts financial resources.</p> <p>In addition, Directors must ensure that the Academy Trust pursues its Objects, is compliant with both company and charity law and has due regard for any other relevant legislation or regulations.</p>	
<b>Duties and Responsibilities</b>	
<p><b>In general terms, the responsibilities of a Trust Director are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To safeguard and promote the values of the of the Academy Trust;</li><li>• Ensure the quality of educational provision;</li><li>• Challenge and monitor the performance of the Academy(s) and keep the focus on school improvement;</li><li>• Supporting the Senior Leadership Team and be a critical friend;</li><li>• Employ staff and be involved in staffing structures and recruitment;</li><li>• Be accountable for standards, attainment and outcomes for young people and ensure the Academy Trust is accountable to the public for what it does;</li><li>• Contribute to the LGB's role in giving clear strategic direction and ensure that the Academy(s) responds to the needs of pupils, parents and the wider community;</li><li>• Critically evaluate the performance the Academy(s) and, where applicable, hold the LGBs to account</li><li>• Establish clear and effective lines of communication with other Directors, Members and the LGBs;</li><li>• Ensure that all policies are regularly reviewed;</li><li>• Agree the financial budget and the auditing of Academy accounts, ensuring sound financial management;</li><li>• Carry out Board business effectively, including induction of new Directors and a commitment to the continued professional development of Directors.</li></ul>	

## TRUST GOVERNOR / DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

### 1. Introduction - Recruitment and retention

#### Background

This document has been produced to help schools, with the support of the Trust, to tackle the area of governor recruitment and retention. It contains tips, suggestions and ideas which schools may wish to follow through at a local level. It also provides an opportunity to share good practice by encouraging schools to provide information about what has worked for them.

Governor recruitment activity can take place on four levels:

1. National promotions initiated by the Department for Education (Academy Ambassadors and Inspiring Governance)
2. LA-wide promotions initiated by the LA
3. School promotions initiated by individual governing bodies
4. Face to face recommendations by individual governors to friends and colleagues

Whilst all of these are equally valuable in raising awareness and generating interest, the more personal the approach the more effective it is likely to be.

Recruitment and retention should not be considered as an isolated activity to undertake only when a vacancy occurs. A governing body that is seen to work well as a team, doing a good job and making a real difference is an ideal recruiting agent.

There is no definitive answer to the question of how best to ensure that governing bodies remain at full strength at all times. What works well in one area may not be as effective in another; so perhaps the best way to address governor vacancies is to make available a variety of potential suggestions and solutions that can supplement the knowledge and expertise that already exists locally. This guide contains a number of tools to assist you in your recruitment activities.

Governor vacancies reduce the effectiveness of governing bodies because it limits the range of experience available to the school and increases the workload of other governors.

Schools serve their local community and it is therefore important that the governing body reflects that community.

The school and its community will be better served where the governors bring the perspective of the community to their decision-making and where the community feel connected to the school through the governing body. Stakeholder groups, such as parents, school staff, people from the local community, the LA and, in the case of certain schools, the foundation body, reflect those with an interest in the school.

Vacancies result in the relevant stakeholder group being under-represented and this, in turn, disturbs the balance between the groups.

## 2. Stakeholder groups:

**Parent governors** are elected by parents of pupils at the school and must be parents themselves of a child/children on the school roll at the time of the election. Such governors do not have to stand down at the time their child leaves school, but may wish to do so. Parents who are elected members of the LA or paid to work at the school for 500 hours or more in a school year are disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor.

**Community governors** are chosen by other governors. Such governors should reflect the widest possible spectrum of the local community; business and commerce; the ethnic minority community. This is particularly helpful if they have specialist knowledge of aspects related to management, for example finance, personnel resources, estates and building management etc. Hopefully a balance of interests, knowledge and experience can be achieved on the governing body and members should if possible be drawn from the full geographical area the school serves. Governors from the ethnic minority community can help the school develop relevant equal opportunities and cultural issues. Authority governors are appointed by the Local Council. They are often members of political parties and it is desirable if they are local Councillors or people who are known for their involvement as detailed above under Community Governors.

**Staff governors;** at least one staff governor (in addition to the headteacher - see below) must be a teacher, but if no teacher stands for election, a member of the support staff can be elected to take that place. If a governing body has three or more staff governor places, at least one staff governor must be a member of the support staff; but if no member of the support staff stands for election, a teacher can be elected to take that place. If they leave the school they must stand down from the governing body and a replacement elected.

**Headteacher** can choose whether to be a full member of the governing body or not. In either case s/he has the right to attend all meetings of the governing body and this would be desirable; however, if a headteacher chooses not to be a member of the governing body there will always be a staff governor vacancy.

**Foundation governors** are appointed to voluntary school governing bodies to represent the interests of the church authority or voluntary organisation which provides the school.

**Sponsor governors** are appointed by the governing body. Persons who give substantial assistance to the school, financially or in kind, or who provide services to the school can be appointed by the governing body as sponsor governors. Sponsor governors must be included on the Instrument of Government.

## Filling governor vacancies

Once you have identified your vacancy post(s) you will need to take the necessary action to attract candidates. The following pages contain ideas and suggestions to help the recruitment process from advertising the vacancy to appointing the successful candidate.

### 3. Governor Recruitment Good Practice

- Plan for a balance of experience - new governors can bring a fresh insight into the work of the governing body
- Undertake a skills audit and maintain a skills register. Ask governors to complete an appropriate proforma. The skills register will help you to decide what qualities and experience you would ideally be seeking from new governors
- Plan to fill particular skills, gaps or under representations (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age, disability)
- Regularly review the starting times of full meetings and committee meetings. Are they a barrier to recruitment for some potential governors?
- Create a positive image - high profile governor activity will encourage others to come forward
- Ensure your written and verbal communications from the school to parents and the community give a real flavour of the work of the governing body
- Check that appropriate communications are jointly signed by both the headteacher and chair of governors
- Consider reducing the size of the governing body if this is legally possible, rather than carry semi-permanent vacancies. A high turnover of governors or carrying a number of longstanding vacancies can give out negative signals when trying to recruit others

#### Publicity

- Make your recruitment material user friendly. Try to avoid jargon and exclusive language
- Stress that decision-making is collective. No governor has to go it alone. Mention that training, support and expert help is always available
- Don't put people off by being too specific about the skills and experience you are seeking from new governors. General publicity should indicate that a wide range of complementary skills is being sought without seeming that "only professionals need apply". If you have the luxury of being able to choose from a number of candidates then it may be appropriate to consider the specific skill requirements such as finance or personnel
- Be realistic about the time commitment. Neither understate nor overstate, but find the right balance between ensuring candidates know what they are letting themselves in for and not overplaying the responsibilities and time commitment
- When seeking parent governor nominations, ensure the letter to parents is friendly and highlights the importance and rewards of being a governor and explains why parents need a voice on the governing body.
- Ensure your publicity dispels any misconceptions about the role of school governor - there are no age restrictions (other than being over 18)
- Publicity may need to be given in other languages besides English, to encourage members of ethnic groups to stand

#### Activity

- Improve the likelihood of filling vacancies effectively by taking time to get to know the prospective governors before deciding to appoint. Involve as many experienced governors as possible in the process for appointing Community/Sponsor governors.
- Consider issuing a regular newsletter explaining the issues discussed by the governing body and the reasoning behind decisions taken. Also publicise outgoing and incoming governors.
- Get the pupils involved in a school activity about governors which will involve parents and the local community e.g. designing a poster, drawing pictures of current governors
- Ensure that an article from governors appears regularly in school newsletters to parents

- Be honest when talking to potential governors. It is not “just 3 meetings a year” but it is interesting and worthwhile
- Ensure your school makes early contact with anyone interested in becoming a governor - and keep them in touch with the progress of their application

#### **Responding to enquiries**

- Generating enquiries from potential new governors is only the start of the recruitment process. Converting initial interest into commitment is the part that really matters
- A friendly, informal response puts people at ease and can alleviate concerns they may have about putting themselves forward
- Your response should leave them in no doubt as to how much you appreciate and value their initial interest
- The speed of your response will reflect the value you place on the enquiry and create the right impression about how your governing body conducts its business
- The choice of follow-up may involve: - an informal meeting with the chair or other representatives of the governing body - an informal visit to the school with an opportunity to meet with the chair and headteacher - an invitation to attend a forthcoming governing body meeting as an associate member
- Make potential governors aware of the training options once they become governors - and be willing to explain to them issues that may be clear to those who have served as governors for some time

#### **4. Possible locations / events for displaying recruitment leaflets and posters.**

Below is a suggested list of locations where schools can advertise vacancies on governing bodies and promote the work governors are carrying out in schools. Schools should select those that would have the most positive impact on their recruitment strategy and negotiate with the relevant organisation.

- School reception areas and outward facing doors and windows • School or village fete
- Sports day
- Prize giving or speech day
- Parents evening
- Open days
- PTA events (e.g. car boot sale, BBQ, barn dance)
- Local library
- Doctors’ and dentists’ waiting rooms
- Hairdressers and barbers
- Recreation centres
- Sports clubs and gyms
- Parish notice boards
- Village halls and community centres
- Church halls and church notice boards
- Local post offices and shops
- Local businesses
- Bank and building society branches
- Estate agents

#### **5. Information sheet for employers of people who are considering becoming school governors**

##### **Suggested format**

##### **Background**

School governors represent the largest volunteer force in the country. Devolved local management of schools over recent years has influenced both the day-to-day managerial function

of headteachers and the more strategic role of governing bodies. One consequence of this development is that governors recruited from the business community are highly valued for the skills, experience and objectivity they bring to decision-making.

### **Characteristics and role of school governors**

Governors are lay people who have an interest in the role of schools in society and wish to make a positive contribution to their communities. Governors tend to have enquiring minds, the ability to contribute to debate and planning and the confidence to ask the questions that need to be asked. A governing body's overriding responsibility is to promote continuous improvement in the performance of the school. This requires effective strategic management involving the establishment of a development plan, the setting of challenging but achievable targets and the interpretation of management information to accurately assess progress and determine appropriate action.

### **Benefits**

The benefits of recruiting governors from the business community flow in many directions. Schools and therefore the pupils, community and local economy, can gain as improved management leads to improved performance and academic achievement. Employers can benefit from staff developing their strategic management competencies and applying these back in the workplace. Employees can help to discover their own potential whilst at the same time helping our children achieve theirs.

### **Recruitment process**

Tudhoe Learning Trust recognise that the most effective recruitment messages are those delivered by supportive employers in encouraging staff to consider school governorship. We can support this with promotional material including posters and leaflets.

### **Parent governor elections**

- All parents of registered pupils at the school must be informed about any parent governor vacancy, the need for an election, their right to stand for election and to vote for the candidate of their choice. The election must be made by secret ballot. Parent governor ballots may be either by post or by 'pupil post'. If 'pupil post' is used, care should be taken to ensure that the returning envelope does not identify the voter. If the number of parents standing for election is equal to or less than the number of places available, those parents will automatically become governors. (Parents who are elected members of the LA or paid to work at the school for 500 hours or more in a school year are disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor)
- The school's admissions register will include a list of parents of pupils at the school. Usually one vote per parent is allowed, regardless of how many children they have in school

### **Staff governor elections**

Both teaching and support staff paid to work at the school are eligible for staff governorship. Staff governors are elected by the school staff and must be paid to work at the school; volunteers are not eligible. The headteacher is a member of the governing body by virtue of his /her office and counts as a member of the staff governor category

### **Elections**

- In most schools the responsibility for running the election is delegated to the headteacher who will need to decide: - when and where the election will be held - how nominations should be made - what voting method will be used

- The headteacher (if he or she has delegated authority to hold the elections) may set qualifying dates for candidates to stand for election. No requirement can be imposed as to the minimum number of votes that need to be cast for parent, or staff governor elections
- Parents, staff, the LA and the governing body (as appropriate) should be told the result of the election. The ballot papers should be kept for a while in case the election is challenged. Parents should be told how the new parent governor may be contacted
- Wherever possible, places for parent and staff governors must be filled by election; however, if insufficient parents stand for election the governing body may appoint:
  - a parent of a registered pupil at the school; or if that is not possible
  - a parent of a former pupil at the school; or if that is not possible
  - a parent of a child of or under compulsory school age
 This also applies to community, special schools and foundation special schools; (first 2 criteria same) with the additional criteria being:
  - a parent of a child of or under compulsory school age with special educational needs for which the school is approved, or if that is not possible - a parent with experience of educating a child with special educational needs
- A person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor of a school if they are an elected member of the LA, or if they work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year.
- The governing body should make sure that the clerk tells the LA of any governor changes. The LA need these details to help them discharge their statutory duty to provide information and training for all governors of maintained schools in their area

## **7. Governor induction - good practice**

The quality of the induction process is vital in terms of new governors' first impressions, their progress towards effectiveness and the likelihood of their serving a full term or more. Never leave new recruits to 'sink or swim'. Governors should think back to when they were the novices trying to come to terms with unfamiliar terminology, a roomful of new faces and a pile of heavy reading.

### **Induction considerations before the new governor's first meeting**

A number of best practices are recommended as follows:

- An informal introductory telephone call by the chair of governors expressing thanks, and giving a brief background to the main issues being discussed by governors. The chair should also explain how the committee structure works and how governors can become involved in these
- A letter from the clerk advising dates, venues and timings of the next meeting and enclosing a copy of the School's Instrument of Government / Guide to the Law / Welcome pack
- A letter from the Governor Support Team (GST) detailing the training available from the LA
- Allocation of an experienced governor to be mentor or 'buddy'
- Mentor to meet up with the new governor for a friendly informal discussion and perhaps arrange to travel together to the first meeting or at least meet up outside so as to arrive together
- Mentor to meet new governor at school for a brief discussion on governors' roles and responsibilities in the context of the minutes of the most recent governing body meetings
- An informal introductory meeting with the headteacher to incorporate a brief tour of the school
- Forward a copy of your governing body welcome pack or arrange for this to be handed over at the first meeting

Suggested items for a governing body's welcome pack

- Plan of the school building

- School prospectus
- Minutes of recent governors meetings
- The most recent OFSTED report
- School improvement plan
- Copy of the governing body code of conduct (if one has been adopted)

## **8. Induction considerations at the time of the first meeting**

The first few minutes of the initial meeting can be very daunting for newcomers. It is important that new governors' are welcomed, feel valued, and are encouraged to get involved in the work of the governing body quickly and effectively.

The chair of governors is key to making this happen. By following this checklist, chairs can be sure that new governors are quickly brought into the team, stay on the governing body and are able to play a useful role

- Ensure your school's Welcome Pack has been issued
- Ensure an appointment has been arranged for the new governor to visit the school
- Ensure a buddy/mentor has been allocated and is introduced to the new governor before their first meeting
- Ensure the buddy/mentor understands their support role • Introduce everyone to the new governor at their first meeting
- Find out their interests and expertise and ensure they are appointed to a committee/ allocated to a link role/ adopted by a class or department
- Ensure governors are identified (by badges or name plates) for at least 2 meetings following the appointment
- Encourage the new governor to attend relevant training events
- Encourage the new governor to speak at his/her first few meetings
- Encourage the new governor to ask questions if they don't understand
- Ensure that all jargon or educational shorthand is explained for the first few meetings

### **Mentor checklist**

Some of the above can be undertaken by the mentor / buddy allocated to the new governor. Below is a checklist which could be used by the mentor.

- Contact the new governor before his/her first meeting-introduce yourself and arrange to meet up 5 minutes before the first meeting
- Talk to the new governor about what being a governor involves
- Sit by the new governor at their first few meetings and introduce her/him to other governors before the meeting
- Issue your school's welcome pack for school governors-or at least ensure the governor has a copy of relevant documents - School Improvement Plan, prospectus
- Stay behind for 5 minutes after the first meeting and go over anything the new governor hasn't properly understood
- Encourage the new governor to attend relevant induction courses accompany the new governor if appropriate
- Ask new governors to provide brief details about their expertise which can be entered on file and matched to "gaps" in experience / knowledge on committees / working party roles
- Point out any areas within the school designated to support governors e.g. governors library / resource box / filing cabinet / notice board Recruitment and retention of governors: A good practice guide 11

## **9. Governor retention - good practice**

Becoming or maintaining a balanced and effective team is a key internal task of a governing body. Two readily identifiable indicators of such a team are:

- a very low resignation rate for governors in their first term of office (discounting those whose circumstances have significantly changed)
- a good proportion of experienced governors who are happy to serve additional terms of office (where it is appropriate to do so)

If the turnover rates for your own governing body are a cause for concern, consider the following list of questions:

- Are new governors brought up to speed and fully contributing within the first year so that they can offer, and feel that they offer, full effectiveness during their remaining term of office?
- Do governors focus fully, and expend all their energy, on the key responsibilities of a governing body? (Strategic view, critical friend, accountability)
- Does the governing body achieve things and make a real difference to the school or does it feel more like a debating society?
- Do governors play to each other's strengths or draw attention to weaknesses?
- Is there an atmosphere of mutual support, trust and encouragement and recognition that governors are unpaid volunteers? There may often appear to be unequal contributions by individuals where contribution is assessed on a narrow range of measures. Always look at the wider picture before making judgements about individual effectiveness. Some people have more spare time and can visit the school more often. Others may have a very high level of a professional skill such as accountancy or personnel and contribute this willingly wherever possible
- Are governors given, and do they accept, their share of responsibility? There is a danger of under-utilised governors becoming demotivated and deciding not to see out their terms of office. Similarly, over-utilised governors may become demotivated themselves by what they see as passengers
- Are governors encouraged to attend training?
- Is priority given to training that will improve teamwork and effectiveness?
- Are governors aware of the training and support available through the LA for improving governing body effectiveness?
- Are cliques and internal politics tolerated or is action taken to head these off at an early stage?
- Do experienced governors keep an eye out for colleagues who appear to be struggling to contribute? Is time and effort taken to find out why?
- Does the governing body contact governors who resign to find out if there was anything the governing body could have done to keep them?

## 10. Succession planning

- As with governor recruitment, the appointment of a new chair of governors, vice chair, chair of a committee or a governor with specific responsibilities should be a planned activity. This avoids disruption should such a position become unexpectedly vacant
- Ideally, a governor interested in becoming a future chair should gain experience chairing a committee at an early stage, with vice chair being the next logical step
- Training courses for specific positions can also be attended by those interested in taking further responsibility
- Succession planning should be discussed at least once a year as an agenda item and on a regular informal basis between the chair and vice chair.

## 11. Governing body recruitment and induction policy - (Suggested format)

The Governing Body of \_\_\_\_\_

Governor recruitment

1. The School will permanently display details about the role of the school governor in public areas

2. At least once during each school year, an opportunity will be provided for anyone interested in the role of governor to visit the school
3. Members of the governing body shall be in attendance on this occasion to discuss and explain the role and duties of the governing body and to identify those who wish to pursue their interest in being a governor
4. Should someone express a desire to become a governor, and there are vacancies on the governing body, the chair of the governing body shall inform the appropriate authority so that the relevant appointment or election process may commence
5. Should someone express a desire to become a governor, and there are no vacancies on the governing body, that person's interest shall be recorded. The chair of governors shall be empowered to invite that person to attend, as an associate, the next appropriate meeting of the full governing body
6. Publicity for the event shall take the following forms and be organised by the school:
  - a) A letter to all parents
  - b) A letter to local employers
  - c) Notices in the school, Community and shop notice boards
  - d) Local media
7. A successful recruitment policy will depend on parental and external perceptions of the governing body's role of effectiveness. The appendix of this policy suggests various means whereby these issues may be addressed.

#### **Governor induction**

1. The chair of governors shall contact the new governor and discuss the role of the governing body, its method of operation and answer any initial queries, which the new governor may have.
2. The Governor Support Team (GST) shall send a letter of welcome and a governor's welcome pack to the new governor.
3. The headteacher shall invite the new governor to visit and be given a tour of the school. The new governor shall also, at this point, be provided with a list of all staff and their duties/responsibilities.
4. A "mentor governor" shall be appointed who shall be responsible for introducing the new governor to other members of the governing body at the first full governors' meeting attended by the new governor. The "mentor governor" shall also sit with the new governor at meetings of the full governing body to explain any technical matters for the new governor.
5. The period of the mentorship shall continue for as long as the new governor and the mentor governor shall deem necessary.
6. The mentor governor shall, in consultation with the new governor, arrange with the link governor such training as is appropriate for the new governor.

#### **Policy adoption**

This policy was adopted by the governing body of \_\_\_\_\_

At its meeting on \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Policy review**

The application of this policy shall be reviewed by the full governing body three years from its adoption date

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of governors)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Governing Body of \_\_\_\_\_

Every opportunity should be used to demonstrate that governors are fully involved, and play an active and important role, in the daily life of the school. Actions under this heading could include:

1. Ensuring that governors are invited to all school events such as parent evenings; any school production, display or celebration; any visit to the school by dignitaries or other parties.
2. Encouraging, where appropriate, the issuing of invitations to governors by children from the school.
3. Confirming and publicly recognising the attendance of governors at school functions.
4. Taking all necessary steps to ensure that governors receive copies of any newsletter or similar documents issued by the school; and that such items include public reference to the fact of it being copied to governors.
5. Involving, where appropriate, members of the governing body on staff training days.
6. Publicising the role played by those governors who are able to voluntarily help in the classroom.
7. Publicising the training undertaken by governors so that the school community can feel confident that they have the knowledge, experience and understanding to carry out their role effectively.
8. Ensuring that meetings of the full governing body are conducted in a welcoming and inclusive manner, with each governor being given an equal opportunity to contribute to the meeting and having their opinions treated with respect.