

Merridale Primary School

Aspen Way
Wolverhampton
WV3 0UP
01902 558760

Headteacher: Mrs Laura Towle

office@merridaleprimary.co.uk
www.merridaleprimary.co.uk
@merridalereads (on Twitter/X)



Date: Monday 9th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,
Parent Governor Vacancy

I am writing to you to invite you to stand for election as a parent governor or nominate another parent to do so. As a parent / carer of a pupil at Merridale, you are eligible to stand for election as a Parent Governor. So, if you have an interest in education and the development of young people, and feel that you could make a commitment, we would welcome your application.

In our school we have provision for 3 parent governor(s) and there is currently one vacancy.

The governing body, with the headteacher, has overall responsibility for the running of the school. Governing bodies have three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

To find out more about the role and whether you are eligible to apply, please visit the National Governance Association guidance here: <https://www.nga.org.uk/Governance-Recruitment/Be-a-school-governor-or-trustee.aspx>

No special qualifications are needed and the most important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the governing body's work. Training is available for all governors and this governing body has an expectation that those new to being a governor, attend free induction training.

Although unpaid, all governors at Merridale take their roles seriously. We are committed to attending a minimum of two meetings of the Governing Board each term, and each governor takes on a specific area of interest. Meetings are held on weekday mornings or early evening at school or can be attended remotely online if necessary.

The information attached to this letter (below) summarises the circumstances under which someone cannot serve as a governor. In addition, parents/carers who have paid employment in the school for 500 or more hours per academic year or who are elected members of the Local Authority, are not eligible to stand in these elections. Nominations must be from parents or carers with children at the school on the day that nominations close.

If you wish to stand for election, please click on the link below and complete the nomination form by **Friday 11th October 2024**. You should also include a short personal statement to support your nomination, which should be no longer than 250 words. Self-nominations are accepted but if you are nominating another parent, please seek their prior consent!

<https://forms.office.com/e/tJMPWb2jHr>

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Alternatively, if you would like to know more before submitting your nomination form, please contact Mrs Hitch at school and she will arrange an informal discussion with myself.

As a governor your contribution will be highly valued and you will join a very active and committed body of people who play a leading role in supporting the future of the school.

If there are more nominations than vacancies, the election will be by secret ballot. If that is necessary, voting papers will be sent to all parents together with details of the ballot procedure.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'L Towle'.

Mrs L Towle
Headteacher

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Governor Role description

Role purpose

Governors work together to carry out their core functions:

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Governors must also ensure that the governing body complies with all legal and statutory requirements. Governors should seek the advice of the clerk to the governing board and other professional advice as appropriate.

Governing body strategic responsibilities

Governing bodies work closely with headteachers and senior leaders. Headteachers are responsible for day-to-day management whereas the role of the governing body is strategic. As such, governors are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the school
- deciding the principles that guide school policies and approving key policies
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- setting the school's budget and ensuring it is managed effectively together with premises and other resources
- agreeing the school's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

Monitoring and evaluating school performance

Governors must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the school's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the school is operating effectively in line with these policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external reporting on all aspects of school performance
- asking challenging questions of school leaders in order to hold them to account

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- holding the headteacher to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies
- visiting the school to monitor implementation of the strategy and reporting back to the board (this could be in a link governor capacity)
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

Panels and committees

When required, governors are expected to serve on panels or committees in order to:

- appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the headteacher and make pay recommendations
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

Contribution to the governing body

Governors should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the governing body by:

- attending meetings (a minimum of three full governing board meetings and a number of committee meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior leaders and colleagues on the board
- getting to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

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Maintained schools: Qualifications and disqualifications to serve as a school governor

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election or appointment and cannot hold more than one governorship at the same school.

A person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor if s/he:

- is employed at the school for more than 500 hours in any 12 consecutive months;
- is an elected member of the Local Authority.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor or associate member if he or she:

- is a registered pupil at the school;
- has failed to attend governing body meetings at the school without the consent of the governing body, for a continuous period of six months;
- has been disqualified for failing to attend governing body meetings at the school without the consent of the governing body, for a continuous period of six months whilst serving as a foundation, local authority, co-opted or partnership governor at the school in the last 12 months;
- has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order;
- is subject to:
 - a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
 - a disqualification order under the Companies Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a county court administration order);
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which he was responsible; or to which he was privy; or to which he contributed or he facilitated by his conduct; or
- has been removed, under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children (under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999);

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- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction);
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008;
- is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- is disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29, or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 2 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 for child minding or providing day care;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- has been convicted of any offence and received a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before or since becoming a governor;
- has been convicted of any offence and received a prison sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
- has been convicted of any offence at any time and received a prison sentence of 5 years or more;
- has been convicted of an offence and sentenced to a fine under section 547 of EA 1996 (nuisance or disturbance on school premises) or under section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (nuisance or disturbance on educational premise) during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor;
- has refused a request by the clerk to the governing body to make an application under section 113B of the Police Act 1997 for a criminal records certificate.

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GUIDANCE NOTE

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(originally published by the Committee for Standards in Public Life Chaired by Lord Nolan)

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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PARENT GOVERNOR FACT SHEET

The governing body consists of parent governors, staff governor, the headteacher, co-opted governors and LA governor.

Our school has **three** parent governors.

Parent governors have all the same powers and duties as other governors. The governing body meets **twice a term**. If possible every governor joins at least one of our committees. These are responsible for different aspects of the school such as **Resources (including Finance, Premises, and Staffing) and Curriculum**. Committees meet **once per term**. We also invite governors to come into school occasionally during the school day so they can understand how the school operates and see improvements for themselves.

To be eligible to stand for election as a parent governor you have to have parental responsibility for a pupil at the school. Having "parental responsibility" is not limited to biological parents, but will cover you if you are a step-parent, foster parent, grandparent bringing up the child, or permanent partner of the child's biological parent.

A few people cannot be school governors; those who have been made bankrupt or who have been in prison for certain offences may not serve for some years afterwards. School staff are not eligible to stand as parent governors if they are employed for 500 hours or more per year. If you have any doubts as to your eligibility on any of these grounds, please contact the school office/headteacher.

Parent governors hold their post for a term **of 4 years**. A candidate for parent governor post must be a parent of a registered pupil at the time the election is held. However, parent governors do not have to resign if their children leave the school before their term of office has expired. A candidate is a representative member of the parent body rather than a delegate.

- Parent governors do not have to try to represent the views of all parents.
- They should communicate with them about issues that arise, but only in so far as is reasonable: not confidential matters.
- When decisions have to be made by the governing body, each parent governor is free to vote in accordance with his/her own views.

The Governance handbook and competency framework emphasises the importance of the skills, experience and personal attitudes brought by each governor. This can be found online at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925104/Governance_Handbook_FINAL.pdf

In addition, it is essential that all new governors attend the Induction Course provided by Governor Services for newly appointed governors so that you are fully aware of your role and contribute effectively to the work of the governing body team. You will also be invited to attend other regular training to build your governance skills over your term of office.