

Can you be our Parent Governor?

The role of the Local Governing Body:

From overseeing what your children learn in class to making sure that building projects are delivered, governors are at the heart of our school's journey. Governors work together to support the school to ensure that the pupils are able to achieve to the best of their ability. Each academy within the network of Ark's 34 schools has a local governing body (LGB) which usually consists of six to 15 governors. All governors are expected to attend our LGB meetings, which are held six times a year in school and do not last more than two hours. The core job of the LGB is monitoring the implementation of the Academy's educational and financial plans. Its focus is on the achievement of high standards, establishing and maintaining high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning. Governors are not involved in the day-to-day management of the school but the Principal should provide the LGB with sufficient information to make decisions and fulfil its responsibilities.

The role of a parent governor:

As a governor, you will bring the unique perspective of a parent to the school's governing body. You are helping to ensure that school meets the needs of **all** its pupils and enables **all** of its pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. You will not be representing individual concerns and you can make your own decisions, together with colleagues on the governing body. Parent Governors are appointed for a three-year term of office; this is a voluntary role, but there is an expenses policy to support you. Ark will give the new parent governor a structured induction, provide information and guidance on the role. All governors are required to undergo an enhanced disclosure DBS check and must agree to adhere to the Ark governors' Code of Conduct. See overleaf for more information.

What skills do I need?

This is a challenging and exciting role and you will learn new skills and extend existing ones during your time on the governing body. You do not need any specific skills or experience to start with. Governors do not need to be experts in the field of education; what they do need is a commitment to the school and in the welfare of the pupils as well as the time and willingness to get involved. And you must be confident in reading the documents that will be sent to you before each meeting.

The appointment process:

All parents, carers and guardians of children at the school are eligible to be candidates. If you would like to be considered, please complete the online form at <http://arkonline.tfaforms.net/2> by Friday 27 January 2017. If you would like any support completing this online form or would like to use a computer in school to complete it, please contact the school office. Please make sure that when you complete the form, you add your personal statement in support of your nomination. Applications will be considered by the Head of Governance in consultation with the Chair and Principal of the school and are likely to include a meeting with each candidate. Like all Ark governors, the parent governor will be formally appointed by the Head of Governance.

About Ark:

Ark is an education charity and one of the country's top-performing academy operators with 34 schools in our network. Our aim is to create outstanding schools that give every Ark pupil the opportunity to go to university or pursue the career of their choice.

Parent Governor: Role description

Role of governors

A successful and effective LGB will:

- Monitor implementation of the school development plan and school finances effectively
- Act as a critical friend, developing a strong and supportive relationship with the Principal
- Consult and respond to the views and concerns of parents and pupils
- Be knowledgeable about the school
- Use the skills of all members.

Governors will support the Principal and staff and will promote the interests of the academy and its pupils. The LGB can only be effective if it asks challenging questions and seeks sufficient information to make sound decisions.

All governors are expected to attend LGB meetings, which are held six times a year in school. In addition, you might be expected to join a committee or take on a 'link' role to understand a particular area of the school's activity, such as how it keeps children safe, provides for children with special educational needs and disabilities, or manages the school's finances.

Expectations of parent governors

As a governor, you will need to commit time to prepare for and attend LGB meetings, to take a share of tasks within the LGB and to take part in training. You will also be expected to visit the school as a governor – this can be a very different experience to visiting as a parent!

As a parent governor, you will bring your parental perspective to the LGB and, through your children, you will have first-hand experience of the curriculum.

As a Parent Governor:

- You are helping to ensure that the school meets the needs of all its pupils, not representing individual parents or their concerns.
- Other parents may approach you with concerns but you should not become personally involved in individual concerns, as this may jeopardise formal procedures. You should guide parents about appropriate lines of action and procedures.
- You do not need to express opinions or vote in a particular way because you have been pressed to do so by other parents.
- You are not there to promote the interests of your own children but of all children.
- Objectivity is essential.

You can complete your term of office if your child leaves the Academy and may resign at any time by giving notice to the Clerk to the LGB. Being a parent governor does not disqualify you from your usual rights as a parent including making a complaint.

Like all Ark governors, you will need to be loyal to the decisions made by the LGB and respect the confidentiality – even if you personally voted against a decision you must support the decision making process and take responsibility for the outcome.

You will also be required to declare an interest and may need to withdraw from specific discussions where you, a partner or close relative or associate stands to gain or where you are so close to a matter being discussed that it will be difficult for you to be impartial.