

## The Role of a School Governor

There are approximately 22,000 school governors in Wales. They give their time, skills and expertise in a voluntary capacity, to help their schools provide children with the best possible education. Governing bodies are accountable for the strategic direction of their school and for the quality of education provided.

You will discover that many kinds of people become governors of schools. Like you, they will have a particular reason for serving on the governing body. Because of these different reasons all governing bodies have a core group of governors, consisting of:

- Parent governors
- Teacher governors
- Staff governors
- Local Authority governors
- The headteacher (acting in the capacity of a governor where this is his/her choice)

Governing bodies will also consist of some of the following governors, depending on the type of school:

- Community governors
- Additional community governors
- Representative governors
- Foundation governors
- Partnership governors
- Sponsor governors
- Associate pupil governors (secondary schools)<sup>1</sup>

### **Why become a Governor?**

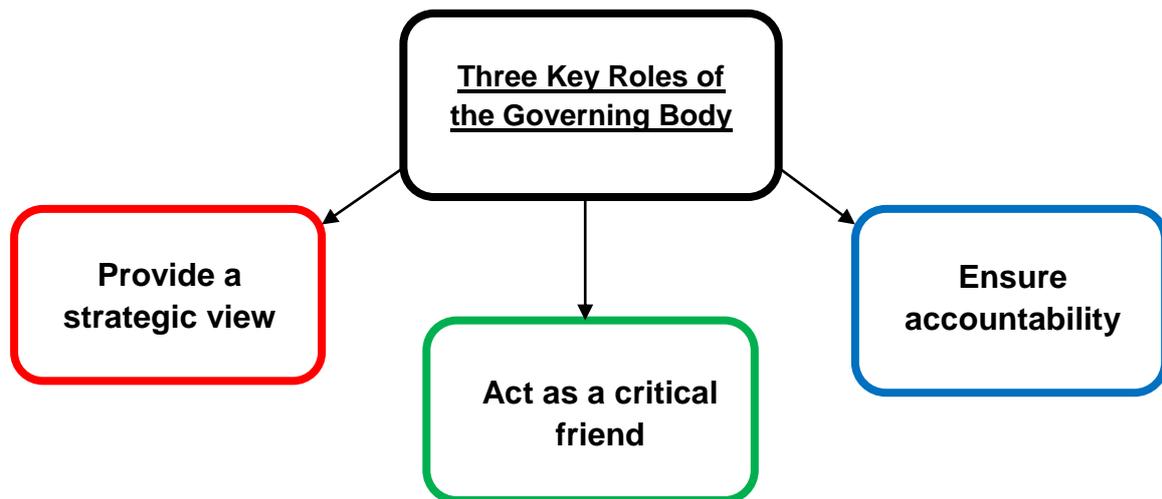
- To make an important contribution to education by supporting the school community, its staff and pupils and helping to raise standards of education
- To experience rewarding and challenging opportunities
- To help to develop your existing skills and also learn new ones
- To meet and work with new people
- To gain awareness of the education system

### **A Governor is a volunteer who:**

- has an interest in education;
- represents those with a key interest in the school;
- is part of a team which accepts responsibility for everything a school does;
- has time to commit to meetings and other occasions;
- is willing to learn;
- is able to act as a critical friend who supports the school but also challenges and asks questions about how the school works and the standards it achieves;
- acts as a link between parents, the local community, the Local Authority and the school.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.governors.cymru/publications/2018/08/29/categories-governors/>



### Core Responsibilities of the Governing Body

- Promoting high standards of educational achievement and behaviour
- Setting targets for pupil achievement
- Ensuring that all learners have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Determining the aims, policies and priorities of the school
- Determining and monitoring the school's budget
- Staffing – e.g. staff appointments, performance management
- Providing parents with information regarding the school
- Producing an action plan and monitoring progress following an inspection by Estyn
- The wellbeing and safeguarding of learners

### How does a Governor fulfil his/her duties?

#### Examples include:

- Attending meetings, committees and, perhaps, participate in small working parties from time to time
- Visiting the school
- Being linked to an area of the school's work
- Participating in decisions of the governing body
- Working within an agreed code of conduct e.g. Principles of Conduct for Governors of Schools in Wales<sup>2</sup>
- Maintaining confidentiality when required
- Undertaking training and development
- Being aware of the latest initiatives and developments in education

### Support and Training

For governors to carry out their responsibilities effectively and to a high standard they need to be trained appropriately.

A commitment to governor development is an important aspect of being an effective governing body but training does not just stop at the induction stage. There are a number of additional training courses available, provided by Local Authorities, to assist all governors to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively govern their school.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.governors.cymru/publications/2018/08/29/principles-conduct-governors-schools-wales/>

**Additional information, support and advice can be accessed from the following:**

**Local Authority Governor Support Office / Diocesan Authority**

- Newsletters
- Briefing documents
- LA governor training programmes and events
- Induction information

**Support can also be provided by the school for new governors from the headteacher, experienced governors and the clerk. Examples include:**

- School induction training
- Information provided by the school, e.g. prospectus, previous minutes, school improvement plan, newsletters
- Allocation of mentor governor from within the governing body
- Meeting with the headteacher and chair
- Information about the governing body – list of committees, calendar of governing body and committee meetings, a yearly cycle of work
- Training and development of governors – regular item on governing body agenda, audit of training undertaken by the governing body

**Some Useful Resources**

The Strategic Role - <http://www.governors.cymru/publications/2018/08/29/strategic-role/>

The Critical Friend - <http://www.governors.cymru/publications/2018/08/29/critical-friend/>

Governor Guide on Effective Governing Bodies:

<http://www.governors.cymru/publications/2018/08/29/governor-guide-effective-governing-bodies/>

Handbook for School Governors: <http://www.governors.cymru/handbook/>

Welsh Government - School Governors Guide to the Law

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