



Five Stones Learning Federation The Role of Parent Governor



Vision

"Life in all its fullness"

Our vision guides us in all that we hope to be, enabling every part of our community to grow and develop. This means growing in body, mind and spirit in order to flourish and experience the joy and hope of, 'life in all its fullness' (John 10.10).

This can on occasions be a difficult role and sometimes one that is misunderstood, not so much by parent governors themselves but by those that elect them i.e. parents. Parent governors are representative parents rather than representatives of parents. As such they do not have to try to represent the views of all parents, and in any event will find it difficult if not impossible to do so. Nevertheless, they should as far as is reasonable try and communicate with parents about issues that arise and at meetings of the governing body provide other governors with a sense of how parents are feeling on any given matter. However, when decisions have to be made by the governing body, each parent governor is free to vote in accordance with his/her own views and must try to judge what is in the interests of all the pupils.

The important thing to remember is that once a decision has been made, irrespective of whether parent governors supported it or not, then their loyalty is to the governing body and they should not get into a position of taking sides with individual or groups of parents against the governing body.

One particularly difficult aspect for parent governors is in the area of complaints. Often parent governors are seen by other parents as the conduit through which they can complain. If a parent has a complaint about some aspect of what is happening in school, or about a member of staff, then the role of the parent governor is to explain the policy and procedures agreed by the governing body for dealing with complaints - the school will have a policy for this purpose. It is not the role to get involved in dealing with the complaint. Do not get involved in the detail of the complaint itself or express an opinion on whether you feel the complaint is justified. You may be called upon at a later stage to make a judgement on the validity of a complaint as a member of the Complaints Committee. In which case it is essential that you are seen as independent and unbiased.

What else can parent governors do? The governing body as a whole has a responsibility for communicating with parents, but in some instances, where the governing body has specifically delegated them to do so, parent governors can get involved in producing a parents' newsletter. This is normally done in conjunction with the Headteacher or other school staff as they also need to provide information to parents.

Clearly the role of the parent governor is an important one and this is recognised in the composition of governing bodies where parent governors form a large part. Therefore, it is essential that parent governors play a full part in the work of the governing body as they along with all governors are a link with one of the key stakeholders in the school community i.e. parents.