The Role of the Parent Governor

A guide for Parents and Carers







Halley Primary School

Including all learners, achieving their best


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Parent Governors required

An exciting opportunity...

This is an exciting opportunity for two of our parents to become committed parent governors and support the school and act as a critical friend.

Halley is a welcoming, lively and diverse one-form entry primary school set within a warm community. We have a new Head this year and lots of exciting ideas for the future, which we want the parents/carers at Halley to help be part of.

If you have the drive, energy and ambition, why not join us?

If you are keen to work as part of a team to...

- ★ inspire, challenge and motivate all learners
- ★ shape the future of the school

...then you could be what Halley Primary School is looking for!

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This will be subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Complete the nomination form at the back of this booklet, including a short statement about yourself and a passport sized photograph, and return to the main office in an envelope.

The Parent Governor role

A vital role

Parent governors play a vital role on governing bodies, holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. Through the children, they have a first hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum, and how the school is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables parent governors to bring a different perspective to the strategic management of the school.

It is important for parent governors to establish a rapport with the parental body which elected him/her, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to school governance. Although being available to advise parents on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that parent governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

What is needed

Parent governors are representative parents rather than representatives of parents.

To effectively fulfil the role, parent governors should:

- ★ make themselves known to the parent body
- ★ try to attend in-service training sessions
- ★ listen impartially to concerns raised by parents
- ★ guide parents regarding appropriate lines of action and procedures
- ★ present a balanced view of issues, representing different sections of the community

Training and support

Although this is a very delicate role, there is ample support and training available.

Effective parent governors will find working alongside the other members of the governing body both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the governing body fulfils its duties to all children.

Getting the balance right

Achieving a balance between being the impartial representative parent and the often emotional issues relating to individual children's education, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance include:

- ★ make yourself available to parents
- ★ never press your own child's case at the expense of others
- ★ never promise to 'solve a problem' on your own
- ★ be wary of bringing an individual's issue to meetings without following the agreed procedures
- ★ abide by the agreed protocol regarding agenda items and Any Other Business
- ★ keep yourself aware of parental views and concerns
- ★ play an active part in governor meetings
- ★ help to prepare the report for the annual parents' meeting

Guidance on eligibility

Who is Eligible to Stand and Vote in Parent Governor Elections?

Parental Responsibility:

Who has it? (The Children Act 1989)

- Both married parents of a child even if not living with the child;
- Both divorced or separated parents of a child born when they were married;
- Where the child was born to unmarried parents:
  - (a) the mother
  - (b) he father where he has acquired parental responsibility through a Parental Responsibility Agreement or a Court Order;
- Any person appointed guardian by a court;
- Any person who has a Residence Order in respect of the child;
- Any person who receives the child under an Emergency Protection Order;
- Carers are also included as eligible, ie foster parents;
- In education law a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of their relationship to the child, is considered to be a parent. (Refer to 'Schools, "Parents" and "Parental Responsibility", published by DfES, June 2000).

Parents, who are also elected members of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets or are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in the academic year, are ineligible to stand for election as parent governors at that school, but are entitled to vote.

You are Ineligible to Serve as a School Governor if you:

- ★ are an undischarged bankrupt;
- ★ are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 during your period of office;
- ★ have in the previous five years (or since becoming a governor) been sentenced to three months or more in prison (whether this was suspended or not) without the option of a fine;
- ★ have in the previous 20 years been sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more;
- ★ have at any time been sentenced to imprisonment for five years or more;
- ★ have been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the five years prior to, or since, appointment or election as a governor;
- ★ are subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986(a), or to an order made under Section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986(b};
- ★ have been removed from a charity trusteeship by the Charity Commission or High Court on the grounds of misconduct or mismanagement;
- ★ are included in the list of teachers or workers prohibited or restricted from working with children or young persons (currently named list 99);
- ★ are unwilling to make an application for Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check if asked by the clerk;
- ★ have been disqualified from being a independent school proprietor, teacher or employee in any school by an Independent Schools Tribunal or the Secretary of State;
- ★ are the clerk to your own governing body;
- ★ are an elected member of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets;
- ★ are employed to work at the school for more than 500 hours in an academic year.



Nomination Form

I wish to serve as a Parent Governor and to be a candidate if an election is necessary. I can confirm that I am eligible to serve as a school governor.

PRINT FORENAME(S) ……

PRINT SURNAME ……

TELEPHONE NO. ……

EMAIL ADDRESS ……

CHILD'S NAME …… CLASS ……

DATE …… SIGNED ……

STATEMENT

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Continue overleaf if necessary

STATEMENT CONTINUED


A school guided by values that enrich and inspire.
Ambition
Resilience
Respect
Independence
Confidence
Health
Creativity



Halley Primary School

Including all learners, achieving their best

www.halley.towerhamlets.sch.uk | Halley Primary School, Halley Street, London E14 7SS
Tel: 020 7265 8061 | Fax: 020 7702 7637 | admin@halley.towerhamlets.sch.uk