



Diocesan Board of Education

'The DBE empowers others to be courageous, equipping them to deliver excellent Christian education so that all will flourish to achieve their full human potential'



Foundation Governor Application Pack

Background Information

The population of the Diocese is approximately 805,000 people living in an area of nearly 700 square miles. Of the 43 dioceses in England, Coventry is 33rd in population size, 30th in land area, but 19th in population density. The diocese roughly equates to the City of Coventry and the County of Warwickshire. The diocese is divided into eleven deaneries. The deaneries are seen as key strategic structures for mission; with Area Deans and Lay Chairs being increasingly seen as key strategic leaders in mission. Across the diocese, there are 248 churches, 197 parishes and 132 benefices being served by 184 licensed clergy.

Within our parishes and deaneries, we have a total of 74 (soon to be 75) Church of England schools and academies, educating approximately 18,000 children and young people from pre-school to 18. The Coventry Diocesan Board of Education seeks to provide Church School education that enables every young person, of all faiths or none, to realise 'Every Child Matters' to God and to the Diocese. It is the pledge of the diocese to make this real for all the children and young people in our care.

By developing strong partnerships with all elements of the local community and the local church, the diocese aims to secure transformational educational provision for the pupils, both now and for the future.

The Role of Governors

School governance is the most important voluntary role in education. Many of our schools and academies are blessed to have some amazing governors who play a key role in raising standards but we need to ensure that ALL our diocesan schools and academies have that same support, so we need your help.

There are some tasks that, as Christians, we are called to do that are both transformational and rewarding. This is an opportunity to play a part in helping head teachers, schools staff and fellow governors to discover what God is doing in our schools and join in!

Anyone can become a governor; the only requirement is that you have the enthusiasm and desire to make a difference. Please could I urge you to prayerfully consider whether this might be for you.

Foundation Governors

Foundation Governors have a special focus on the school's Christian character. Foundation Governors in Church Schools are those appointed by the church authorities. In Anglican Schools the incumbent of the parish will be a member of the governing body, by virtue of his/her office – called an Ex-officio Governor. Other Foundation Governors will mostly be active lay people.

In **Voluntary Aided** schools, there will always be a **majority of Foundation Governors** – they must outnumber all the other governors together **by two**.

In **Voluntary Controlled** schools there must be a **minimum of 2** Foundation Governors but they **don't hold a majority**; they do have an important role in upholding the foundation of the school.

In Church of England Academies ex officio and appointed Foundation Governors continue to play key roles.

The Foundation Governors, in partnership with the rest of the governing body, and the Headteacher create a formal structure for **monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness as a Church School** to include all stakeholders.

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

One of the key questions asked by a SIAMS Inspector is ‘How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?’

The governing body is a vital part of the leadership of the school, and their role in developing the school as a Church School is inspected. The headteacher, staff and governors should work as a united team, dedicated to realising a shared Christian vision for the school.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do governors do?

- Governance in schools is about making a **positive impact** on the education of children.
- It’s about working towards **better schools and communities**.
- Contribute to the work of the governing body to **ensure high standards of achievement** for all children and young people in the school.

What responsibilities do governors have?

- Governors do not manage the day to day running of a school; rather they set the framework which should ensure the school is running effectively.
- Governors have 3 main areas of responsibility: setting strategic direction, creating robust accountability, ensuring sound financial practice.
- Responsibility for actions and decisions lies with the governing body as a whole and not with individuals.

Who can be a governor?

- Anyone aged 18 or over and living in the UK can be a governor.
- You don’t need to have children or be a parent of a child at the school to become a school governor.
- School governors come from all walks of life bringing a mixture of skills and experience to the role.

How are Foundation Governors nominated?

The Instrument of Government will say which church organisation has the responsibility for nominating Foundation Governors. It is common for there to be a mixture of nominating bodies – the local Parochial Church Council (PCC), the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE), the Deanery and sometimes the Bishop. It is the DBE in the vast majority of cases that is the appointing body.

What is the time commitment?

The average time commitment is 10-15 hours per term. This includes meetings, background reading and school visits.

How long will I be a governor for?

School governors have a term of office of four years but, as a volunteer you can resign at any time if your circumstances change.

What’s in it for me?

- It’s a chance to give back to your community, work as a team and make a positive impact on the education of children.
- You can expect to develop different skills eg budget control, project management, leadership and negotiation.

How do I get involved?

If you are interested in becoming a foundation governor, please complete the application form and return it to:

Mrs April Gold, Deputy Diocesan Director of Education, The Benn Education Centre, Craven Road, Rugby, CV21 3JZ april.gold@covcofe.org



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This form will be shared internally within the Diocesan Board of Education as part of the process for approval of Foundation Governor appointments. It will not be shared externally without your consent. Details of our privacy policy are available upon request.

Foundation Governor Application Form

Name (in capitals).....Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other

Address.....

..... Post code.....

Phone Number Email

Occupation.....(if retired, occupation before retirement)

Are you a Communicant Member of the Church of England? **Yes / No**

If no, what is your church affiliation?

.....

DBS number

new DBS check required (school to arrange)

Are you the parent of a child at the school? **Yes / No**

Is this your first term of office as a Governor? **Yes / No**

Are you related to any other member of the Governing Body or employee of the school? **Yes / No**

(If Yes, please provide name and relationship.....)

Are you Governor in any other school? **Yes / No**

(If Yes, please give name of school

Name of referee

Phone Number Email address

What is your experience of schools / education?

In what church activities are you involved? What is your pattern of worship?

Why do you feel you would make a good foundation governor?

Skills Audit

Please complete the skills audit below to give an indication of how your skills will complement the skill set of the governing body.

Knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours	Level of knowledge or skills/behaviour, rate on scale of:				
	No	→	→	→	Yes
	1	2	3	4	5
Strategic Leadership					
I am committed to improving education and welfare for all pupils.					
I understand current national education policy and the local education context.					
I have previous experience of being a board member in another sector or in another school.					
I have experience of chairing a board/governance board or committee.					
I am committed to the school's vision and ethos of the school.					
I am able to question and challenge, working as part of a team to identify viable options through collective decision making.					
I am able to work in a professional manner, avoiding conflicts, acting with transparency and integrity.					
I am confident I can identify when to see independent/professional advice.					
I have experience of stakeholder management and engagement including communicating with and taking account of the views of parents and pupils.					
I have experience of promoting community cohesion.					
I am proficient in prioritising, assessing and mitigating risk.					
I have experience of school sector risk management, including managing conflicts of interest/loyalty.					
Accountability					
I understand the importance of collecting high quality data and have expertise using data to interpret/evaluate performance and identify trends to target improvement.					
I have experience in curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment.					
I have experience of working with leaders to establish expectations for improvement and outcomes.					
I have experience of agreeing the range and format of information and data needed in order to hold leaders to account.					
I have experience of providing challenge to leaders on strategies for monitoring and improving behaviour and safety.					
I have an understanding of the board's duties in relation to safeguarding including Prevent.					
I have an understanding of special needs and disabilities (SEND).					
I have financial management expertise, with experience of funding allocation/budget monitoring and contributing to financial self-evaluation and efficiency drives.					
I have experience of basing funding decisions on organisational priorities and the ability to interpret financial data and question financial performance against strategic priorities.					
I have experience of procurement/purchasing.					
I have experience of property and estate management.					
I have experience of HR policy and processes, including employment legislation, recruitment, performance management and pay.					
I have experience of school sector HR policy and processes.					
I have experience of change management (overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure).					
I have experience of preparing for and responding to external oversight.					

Knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours	Level of knowledge or skills/behaviour, rate on scale of:				
	N o	→	→	→	Ye s
	1	2	3	4	5
I have experience of inspection and oversight in the school sector. Church of England School/Academy					
I am used to thinking and discussing about the interface of faith and social issues such as education.					
I bring strong links with a local church and/or the Diocese.					
I am able to sign the declaration on the application form with integrity.					
I will be committed to upholding the Christian ethos and values, including in my participation at all times.					
People					
I am willing to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties and responsibilities of a governor/trustee.					
I am a strong communicator and committed to building strong collaborative relationships.					
I could be described as a listener, and have patience when dealing with people.					
I am able to discuss sensitive issues with experience of conflict resolution and influencing consensus.					
I am able to demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviour and values, honesty, independence of thought and sound judgement. See Nolan Principles below.					
I am committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.					
I am willing to reflect, listen and learn from a diversity of views, to receive and provide feedback and accept impartial advice.					
I am more of an activist – preferring to do rather than wait.					
I can always be depended upon to fulfil any promise or duty even at a cost to myself.					
I am known as someone who is able to keep a confidence and recognise the importance of confidentiality in this role.					
Structures					
I am familiar with the strategic nature of the board's functions and how this differs from and works with others including senior leaders.					
I have experience of reviewing governance structures.					
I am committed to personal and professional development and have a record of attending relevant training for the roles I have undertaken.					
Compliance					
I have experience of complying with legal, regulatory and financial frameworks and statutory guidance.					
I understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities of a school/academy board member.					
The board will be responsible for ensuring the school/academy complies with a whole range of legal responsibilities. I have experience ensuring legal compliance in this way and a commitment to understanding the full range of legal responsibilities.					
I understand the importance of adhering to organisation policies, eg. on parental complaints or staff discipline issues.					
I have the confidence and ability to speak up when concerned about non-compliance.					
Evaluation					
I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses and committed to personal development.					
I have experience of evaluating board decisions and am willing to contribute to board self-review.					

Nolan 7 Principles of Public Life

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

I am willing to serve as a Foundation Governor for a term of four years from the date of my appointment, if approved by the Diocesan Board of Education.

- I agree to support and maintain the Christian Foundation and Voluntary Status of this school and to support the principles underlying the school's Trust Deed, by ensuring the school is distinctively Christian, and that Christian values, principles and beliefs are central to its ethos, curriculum, relationships and work.
- I agree to do all I can to familiarise myself with my duties as a Foundation Governor, and with the whole life and work of the school.
- I confirm that I am willing to attend Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses arranged by the Diocesan Board of Education and the Local Authority in support of and for the development of my role and duties as a Foundation Governor.
- I declare that, under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007, I am eligible for, and not disqualified from, appointment as a Governor see "Qualifications and Disqualifications for Role of Governor" information supplied on Page 6 of this form
- If at any time, I consider that I can no longer be bound by the terms of this declaration, I confirm that I will immediately submit my resignation.
- I agree to work within the Nolan Principles.
- I agree to a Criminal Records Bureau check being carried out in respect of my nomination as a Governor.
- I agree that Coventry Diocesan Board of Education may make the details on this form available to others involved in governor matters within the Diocese of Coventry.
- I am eighteen years of age or above.

Signed.....Date.....

Qualifications and Disqualifications for Role of a Governor

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

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

- fails to attend the governing body meetings – without the consent of the governing body – for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed (not applicable to ex officio governors);
- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim order, a debt relief restrictions order, or an interim debt relief restrictions order;
- has had his or her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to:
 - i) a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
 - ii) a disqualification order under Part 2 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
 - iii) a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - iv) 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 the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement, or 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 or young people;
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children;
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- is disqualified from working with children or from registering for child-minding or providing day-care;
- is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State;
- has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years before becoming a governor or since becoming a governor;
- has received a prison sentence of two years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
- has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more;
- has 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;
- refuses a request by the clerk to make an application to the Criminal Records Bureau for a criminal records certificate.

A person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor if they are an elected member of the LA or if they work at the school for more than 500 hours in any school year. In addition a person may not be **appointed** as a parent governor unless they are:

- a parent of a registered pupil at the school, or
- a parent of a former pupil of the school*, or
- a parent of a child of or under compulsory school age*, (Special Schools only - and with special educational needs for which the school is approved), or
- a parent with experience of educating a child with special education needs - Special Schools only

**For academies, appointments will only be made if the parent has a child registered at the school/academy.*

Full details of the Regulations covering the disqualification criteria can be found in [The School Governance \(Constitution\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#) or [The School Governance \(Constitution\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).