



THE ROLE OF PARENT GOVERNOR

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

At Lord Grey Academy the Local Governing Body (LGB) that will be formed in September 2020, will be established as follows:

Staff Governor - Elected by the staff
Governor - Chosen by the Trust
Parent Governor - Elected by parents
Parent Governor - Elected by parents
Principal - Appointed by the Trust

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 appeal procedures, no governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the academy.

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.

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.

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.

Time Commitment

The LGB holds six meetings during the year, each lasting two hours. The meetings usually start at 9.30am. There are no sub committees but there will be a few ad hoc meetings/discussions that take place outside of the LGB meetings. This may equate to another four hours or so. Papers are normally published seven days ahead of the meeting and there will be some reading time required.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this role further jim.parker@lordgrey.org.uk

Jim Parker**June 2020**