



Why be a school governor?

I joined the Uplands Primary School Governing body 18 months ago and it's been a fantastic role to undertake. Although I am a Co-opted Governor and do not have children at this school, I have been so impressed with how the school is run, the real sense of care and community spirit across the school even in the recent times of change and Ofsted. So why should you consider being a Parent Governor?

Joining the Governing Body gives great insight to how the school is run, and what the school is doing beyond the set curriculum, it's also a good opportunity to help shape the strategic plans for improvements and developments within our school, and it is wonderful to see these plans come to fruition.

So, what is really involved when volunteering to be a Governor?

There are several key meetings to attend at the school (usually in the evenings) as a full governing body to hear the updates from the previous weeks, months, or term within the school across all subjects. This gives the Governors a clear overview of all the various activities that are happening both within the classrooms and across the school but also provides an opportunity for the Governors to challenge where it's appropriate to ensure the school continues to strive to deliver the best for the children. The meetings are only a couple of hours, but the agenda is usually full, so there are reports and documents to read in advance to ensure the meeting is run smoothly and provide time in the meetings for questions.

In addition to the Full Governing Body meetings which happen **6 times** a year (usually one per half term), each Governor will be a member of either a Finance Committee or Standards Committee which provides more in-depth information on the running of the school through separate meetings over the year. Each Governor may also be aligned to a curriculum subject (e.g., PSHE, Music, Languages etc) but you don't need to be an expert in it, it just requires you to meet with the lead teachers for those subjects and ensure there is a clear plan for the academic year and review progress from across the school. This may involve coming into the school during the school day, but this is lovely to see how the children are interacting with their friends and teachers which you may never get to do as a parent. New governors are allocated a more experienced governor mentor and a full range of in person and virtual training courses are provided to equip you with the skills you will need.

Being a Governor is not about running the school; we can offer advice, challenge, and feedback but we are not there to direct or dictate. We are also not there to do fund raising, the PTA are already so good at doing this!

What else should know?

Being a Governor does require commitment to attend the meetings and challenge in a positive manner; and time to read the preparation documents in advance, which can be a juggle if you are a parent of the children or work as well, and this is something to consider before stepping forward. However, it is immensely rewarding to help shape the future of Uplands Primary school for the best of all the children, the teachers and community.

You will be allocated an experienced governor on joining to help you navigate the meetings, what is needed and to just be there to answer any questions you might have. If you have not worked in a school environment before, sometimes the language or acronyms can be a little confusing, but the governors are all there to help and support.

If you have a passion to see Uplands Primary *be the best it can be* and help shape the future of our school and your children's future, then do volunteer, we would love to have you on board!

Written by: Laura Burton – Co-Opted Governor