

# BECOMING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR

*for people from all walks of life*

2013/14





### Would you be a school governor?

- Anyone over 18 can volunteer to be a governor;
- No formal qualifications are needed;
- Governors are volunteers from all walks of life; and
- Everyone has experience and skills to offer.

Governors are not education experts.

They work in partnership with school staff to provide the best possible standards of education.

Being a governor can be a rewarding experience.

It offers the opportunity to work with others to help young people to achieve their full potential at school.

### What makes a good governor?

- common sense and the ability to work in a team;
- an interest in education and young people;
- patience, energy, enthusiasm and some spare time; and
- a willingness to listen, learn and to undertake training.

We have over 1200 grant-aided schools.

Every school has a Board of Governors which includes parent and teacher members, members who represent the origins or owners of the school and members from the general public with an interest in education.

A Board of Governors needs a mix of ages, life skills, experiences and aspirations.

Specific skills in areas such as finance, human resources, child welfare and special educational needs are valuable.

The Board of Governors plays an important role. It provides:

- strategic management;
- constructive challenge; and
- accountability.

The Principal is responsible for the day to day management of the school. The Board of Governors is involved in the selection and appointment of the Principal and ensures that the school delivers a good education for its pupils and promotes high standards of education and achievement.

The Board of Governors sets the aims of the school and allocates and controls the school budget and has other important responsibilities.

Boards of Governors generally meets once each school term or once each month usually in late afternoons or evenings but this can vary. They can set up committees to deal with particular issues, eg finance or staffing, which meet more frequently.

A Governor is appointed in a voluntary unpaid capacity for a 4 year term of office. He/she can resign at any time. Travel expenses may be claimed for attendance at training sessions.

Through problem solving across areas such as finance, staffing, pupil welfare and curriculum development, every governor can expect to learn something new.

Training will be available for Governors through a new Regional Governors' Support & Training Service.

### About our Schools

Controlled Schools are nursery, primary, secondary, grammar and special schools. Most primary schools were originally set up by the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Churches in Ireland. A few primary and secondary schools have adopted an integrated ethos.

Voluntary Maintained Schools are nursery, primary and secondary schools. Most are Catholic in ethos. The others include Irish Medium schools and a few primary schools with different origins.

Voluntary Grammar Schools cater for pupils aged 11–18. They usually have large enrolments, which can increase the responsibilities of, and the challenges faced by, the Board of Governors. These are self governing schools.

Grant Maintained Integrated Schools are primary and secondary schools with an integrated ethos. These are self governing schools.

### How can I become a School Governor?

You can complete a formal application form to be a Department of Education (DE) Governor.

DE selects governors for:

- controlled nursery, grammar and special schools;
- most voluntary maintained schools;
- voluntary grammar schools; and
- grant maintained integrated schools.

or

You can complete a formal application form to be an Education and Library Board (ELB) Governor.

The ELBs select governors for:

- all controlled schools; and
- all voluntary maintained schools.

It is proposed in new legislation currently under consideration by the NI Assembly that the new Education & Skills Authority will become responsible for the governor appointments currently made by DE and the ELBs.

### Further information is available via the following contacts:

#### **DE Governors**

Contact: Paula Sandford ☎ (028) 9127 9404 or  
Lorraine Coulter ☎ (028) 9127 9933

💻 [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

#### **Department of Education**

Education Governance Team  
Rathgael House  
43 Balloo Road  
Rathgill  
BANGOR BT19 7PR

#### **ELB Governors**

Contact: Paula Maguire ☎ (028) 9056 4112

💻 [www.belb.org.uk/governors](http://www.belb.org.uk/governors)

#### **Belfast Education and Library Board**

40 Academy Street  
BELFAST BT1 2NQ

Contact: Karen White

☎ (028) 2565 3333

💻 [www.neelb.org.uk](http://www.neelb.org.uk)

#### **North-Eastern Education and Library Board**

County Hall  
182 Galgorm Road  
BALLYMENA BT42 1HN

Contact: Phil Stewart

☎ (028) 9056 6216

💻 [www.seelb.org.uk](http://www.seelb.org.uk)

then link to 'School Managers'

#### **South-Eastern Education and Library Board**

Grahamsbridge Road  
BELFAST BT16 0HS

Contact: Lorraine Livingstone

☎ (028) 3751 2504

💻 [www.selbcass.org/governors](http://www.selbcass.org/governors)

#### **Southern Education and Library Board**

3 Charlemont Place  
ARMAGH BT61 9AX

Contact: Angela Montague

☎ (028) 8241 1291

💻 [www.welbni.org](http://www.welbni.org)

#### **Western Education and Library Board**

Campsie House  
1 Hospital Road  
OMAGH BT79 0AW

### Other useful contacts include:

- your local school
- in the case of a controlled school which has Church (transferor) governors:

#### **Transferor Governors**

Secretary: Reverend Ian Ellis


 (028) 9023 1202

Your local church, or  
The Transferor Representatives Council  
Education Centre  
Church of Ireland House  
61–67 Donegall Street  
BELFAST BT1 2QH

- in the case of a Catholic voluntary maintained school with Trustee governors:

#### **Trustee Governors**

Contact: Ciaran McKenna


 (028) 8775 2116

 [www.ccmsschools.com](http://www.ccmsschools.com)

Your local Parish Priest, or  
The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools

 (028) 8775 2116

Armagh/Clogher/Dromore Diocesan Office

 (028) 7126 1931

Derry Diocesan Office

 (028) 9042 6972

Down and Connor Diocesan Office

