



29 September 2023

Dear Parent

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS: NOMINATIONS

There is a vacancy for a parent governor to serve on the governing body of this College. We are very keen to encourage parents (or people with parental responsibility) of registered students to nominate themselves to fill these places. Details of what you will need to do to be nominated are given on the reverse of this letter.

Parent governors are elected by and from other parents and are vital to our governing committee. They share equally with other governors the responsibility for carrying out the governing body's wide range of responsibilities. Governors do not run the school day to day, as their role is at the strategic or policy-making level in the school. You do not have to be an expert on education to be a school governor, and we value the experience that all governors bring to the role but we are particularly keen to hear from individuals who have an understanding, experience and skills in the following areas: policy, financial and legal services. Further details of who can be a governor and a description of the role of governor is attached.

If you join our governing committee, you will serve for a four year term and you can continue to the end of the four years even if your child/children leave the school. Being a governor does take up time. There are at least three governing body meetings each year but you will also need to set aside time to prepare for meetings, for visiting the school, undertaking training and participation in working groups.

To find out more about what being a governor at this school is like, you can contact, Ann Robinson-Ruddick, Governance Clerk at ann.robinson@bhcet.org.uk who will be very willing to answer any questions.

If you would like to take the opportunity to put yourself forward as a candidate, you may only do so on an official form, so please complete the attached Nomination Form and Governor Eligibility Self Declaration Form by **Thursday 19 October 2023**. If it is necessary for there to be an election, I will contact you to let you know about the arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Kane

M Kane
Principal



Who can be a parent governor?

All those who have parental responsibility and are over the age of 16 are eligible to stand for election.

There are some circumstances that disqualify an individual from serving as a school governor. If you wish to stand, you will be asked to complete a self-declaration of eligibility form to state that there are no reasons for being disqualified from serving as a governor and provide evidence of identity and address if required.

The position of Governor may give you privileged access to pupils. In line with Article 78 of the Trust's Articles of Association, if elected it will be necessary for you to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) vetting check. Refusal to agree to a DBS application being made disqualifies a person from holding or continuing to hold office as a Governor.

How to nominate yourself

If you would like to put your name forward then please complete and return the attached Nomination Form and Skills Audit. You should use the space provided on the form to write a brief personal statement (300 words maximum) to support your nomination.

If the number of nominations is the same as or less than the number of vacancies, all candidates will be elected unopposed.

If there are more nominations than vacancies, an election will take place. The statements of all candidates will be typed in a standard format and circulated to all parents with ballot papers.

Description of Governor Role

Whilst Governors are not Directors or directors of the Trust and therefore are not subject to the normal legal responsibilities of charity Directors, Governors are expected to act in good faith in the best interests of the Trust and the Academies for whom the Trust has responsibility. This means Governors have a responsibility to do the following when dealing with matters for the Academy:

- To ensure compliance with any legal obligations;
- To act in a way which is compliant with the charitable object of the Trust, its Articles of Association and the Scheme of Delegation, including the Diocesan Memorandum of Understanding;
- To act with integrity and to avoid any personal conflicts of interest and not to misuse any Trust or Academy funds or assets;
- To act prudently in the financial management of the Academy, avoiding putting any assets, funds or reputation of the Academy or the Trust more widely at undue risk;
- To exercise reasonable care and skill, using personal knowledge and experience to ensure the Academy is well run and efficient;
- To act responsibly, getting advice from others, including professional advisors, where appropriate.

There is specific emphasis on the obligation on Governors to avoid conflicts of interest and to act prudently in the **Academies Trust Handbook** and Governors must be especially careful where they may have a personal interest in a matter which involves either the Trust



or the Academy. Familial relationships at Governor and leadership level are discouraged. Governors must comply with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy.

Governors must act independently and in the best interest of the Trust even if those interests conflict with those of the body or organisation that might have appointed or nominated them to serve on the local governing committee. The role of a Governor is unpaid (except for the reimbursement of reasonable expenses).

Governors are appointed for a term of 4 years and can be reappointed on the expiry of such term provided that no Governor is to be appointed for more than 3 terms of office. Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop and will be practising Catholics.

Specific Duties of the Governors

The specific tasks and responsibilities of the Governors (and the local governing committee) are to.

- decide the Academy's strategic vision and uphold the Academy's distinctiveness and unique Catholic character, in harmony with the Trust's strategic vision and ethos;
- support senior leadership team generally and with specific emphasis on target setting, pupil monitoring and analysing progress data to inform curriculum and budgeting priorities;
- approve of Academy development/action plan;
- approve any significant capital expenditure;
- oversee expenditure ensuring the Academy works within its budget and implement the Trust's risk and financial management policies ensuring probity, prudence and efficiency;
- play an active part in the recruitment of the headteacher by the Trust Board;
- support the senior leadership team in the development and review of an appropriate staffing structure;
- support the headteacher in the recruitment and performance management of personnel;
- responsible for staff welfare and well-being, supporting the senior leadership team in monitoring absence and sickness;
- promote collaboration with other schools in the Trust;
- develop and review delegated school policies (e.g. admissions, pupil behaviour, safeguarding);
- provide advice and feedback to the Directors, ensuring the Academy is meeting the needs of its community;
- undertake all and any appropriate community consultation;
- provide a point of contact for parents, carers and other members of the local community, maintaining an effective link to the wider community;
- evaluate its performance ensuring appropriate training and development so that knowledge, skills and behaviour are appropriate for a dynamic education environment.

Individual Governors may be given primary responsibility for particular functions such as standards/school improvement, budgets, safeguarding, community liaison and communication with the view to matching skills and experience to functions. This will not



affect collective and overall individual responsibility and accountability but Governors are expected to use their skills and experience in the fulfilment of their duties.

Core Competencies and Skills

The following are the core competencies and skills expected of all Governors:

- To work as a team;
- To attend meetings and be prepared to contribute to discussions and commit to agreed actions;
- To be respectful of the views of others and to be open to new ideas and thoughts;
- To treat all confidential information confidentially;
- To act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and complying with the Trust's Conflict of Interest policy;
- To develop a deep understanding of the vision and ethos of the Trust and its Academies and the roles played by all individuals in fulfilment of the Trust's mission;
- To understand the policies and procedures of the Trust and how these flow down to the Academies;
- To support the Trust in public and act as an ambassador of the Trust and the Academies;
- To commit to training and skills development;
- To be ready to ask questions;
- To be focused on problem solving and be ready to learn from past experiences;
- To adhere to the Nolan **Seven Principles of Public Life**.

Personal Qualities and Values

The role of a Governor is challenging but should be rewarding. Governors are expected to be held in high regard and to provide an example to others. As such, Governors will have the following qualities and values:

- A desire to create positive change and life experiences for young people;
- A deep seated commitment to the aims and objectives of the Trust and the Catholic Church;
- A willingness to devote time and energy;
- An ability to build productive and supportive professional relationships;
- A commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices;
- An understanding of the importance of keeping children safe;
- An ability to think and act strategically;
- An ability to use financial and workforce data to inform decision-making;
- Appropriate levels of literacy in English;
- A person who is reliable, acts with integrity and is capable of good independent judgement;
- Is able to satisfy any requirements set by the Trust Board and the Bishop.

A regular skills audit will be undertaken and Governors should expect to be able to articulate their contribution to the success of the Trust and the Academies.