

# School Governors make a difference

School governors are very important in helping to run local schools. They're the largest volunteer group in the country. In Cumbria we have over 4000 governors working in our 332 schools. That's a lot of people working as school governors doing something positive to make a difference to education in their communities.

**Would you like to join them?**



## All About Governors

### What do governors actually do?

A governing body “governs” the school in partnership with the headteacher. They ensure that all children and young people receive an education that helps them to achieve their full potential.

Governors work with heads and school staff to improve and develop their school. The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the headteacher. Governors give strategic direction and focus through agreeing plans and aims, setting budgets, deciding priorities, appointing staff, supporting the work of the school and challenging it to improve.

No special skills are required. The only essential is a keen interest and commitment to the school and the community it serves. Governors work as a team, to ensure that the school provides a good quality education. Individual governors have no power or responsibility. It is only the full governing body that has legal duties and powers and all governors share in that corporate responsibility.

### Who can be a governor?

You can if you have a keen and active interest in education and school improvement. Contrary to popular misconception it's not essential for volunteers to be parents. Anyone from any background who is aged 18 or over and has an average of 6 hours a month to spare is welcome to apply. Governors are ordinary people drawn from all areas of society. Our most effective governing bodies are those that have a mix of experiences from different cultures and age groups. The most important things which any volunteer can bring to the role of governor are time, commitment and enthusiasm.

### Do governors get any support?

Being a school governor can be a mutually beneficial role – not only does it benefit the education of children and young people but it also **gives governors the opportunity to develop new and existing skills.**

Training and support is available for governors in Cumbria at three levels – at school level, through training courses and work with schools organised by the Governor Support Team and through links with national support networks. Our Governor Support Team also produces a range of supportive guidance and reference materials.

Many Cumbrian employers are willing to allow employees time away from work to carry out governor business or training.

### What type of Governors are there?

Every school (including nursery schools) has a governing body that is made up of:

- Parents, elected by other parents with children at the school
- Teachers and other staff, elected by the staff
- People appointed by the Local Authority
- People chosen by the governing body from the local community
- People appointed by the church, in church schools and some other types of schools

### How can I be involved?

In Cumbria many community members are willing to take on the challenging and rewarding job of being a school governor. Nevertheless we always have a small number of vacancies as governors reach the end of their period in office. If you think that you could be interested in this role for more information please contact the Governor Support Team.

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Or get in touch with your local school.

