



Head Teacher: Mrs SA Welsh  
Augusta Close, Darlington, DL1 3HT, Telephone: 01325 240499, Email: admin@whinfield.net

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Whinfield Primary School; Governing Body - Nomination of a Parent Governor**

We have a vacancy for a Parent Governor the Governing Board of Whinfield Primary School. We are therefore requesting nominations from parents who are interested in serving on the Governing Body. A Parent Governor must be a parent of a pupil at the school at the time they are elected.

Please find enclosed with this letter further information on becoming a governor and a nomination form for prospective governors.

If you are interested in submitting a nomination, please complete the application form and return to the school office marked for the attention of the Headteacher by not later than **12 noon on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019**. Please read carefully the disqualification criteria on the reverse of the nomination form before submitting the application form.

Please note that you will need to be proposed by a parent of a registered pupil at the school. A spouse may nominate their partner. You are also invited to submit a short personal statement of no more than 50 words in support of your nomination. This statement will be circulated to all parents should an election be required. Only the first 50 words of any statement will be reproduced verbatim and personal statements that are considered to contain defamatory material will not be reproduced or circulated.

If an election is required, the election shall be held by secret ballot. Every person entitled to vote will have the opportunity to do so by post or, if preferred, by having their ballot paper returned to Whinfield Primary School by a registered pupil at the school.

If no one wishes to be nominated, the Governing Body will appoint a person who is the parent of a registered pupil at the school; or where it is not reasonably practical to do so, a person who is the parent of a child of compulsory school age. The term of office will be four years.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Stuart Collings our Chair of Governors. [S.collings@whinfield.net](mailto:S.collings@whinfield.net) and he can arrange a time to meet or discuss the role with you on the telephone

Yours sincerely  
**Governing Body**  
**Whinfield Primary School**



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### **Election of Parent Governor; information for applicants**

#### **Who is on the Governing Body?**

The Governing Body of Whinfield Primary School is made up of:

- Parent Governors - usually parents of registered pupils. Parent Governors are elected by the parents of pupils at the school
- Staff Governors - the Headteacher, teachers and non-teaching staff are represented on the Governing Body. Staff Governors are elected by all paid staff in the school.
- Co-Opted Governors - the governing board can co-opt professional members to advise and support the governing body in its strategic role.
- Local Authority Governor - As a maintained school Darlington Borough Council nominate a Local Authority Representative to serve on Whinfield Governing Board.
- Associate Governors - The governing body can appoint associate governors to utilise their expertise.
- The Headteacher is an ex-officio governor for the duration of her appointment at Whinfield.

#### **What does the Governing Body do?**

The Governing Body of the school is responsible for making strategic decisions about the school. This includes deciding on the ethos of the school, agreeing the staffing structure, setting and approving the budget and approving policies. However, governors are not involved in the day-to-day management of the school as this is the Headteacher's responsibility.

#### **What kind of people can become Governors?**

Subject to the restrictions below, any 'parent' of a child registered at the school at the time of election is eligible to stand for election to the Governing Body as parent governor. In accordance with the Children Act, a 'parent' includes any person who is not a natural parent of a child but has parental responsibility for them or any person who has care of the child.

Please note that elected members of the Local Authority in which the school is situated and anyone working at the school for more than 500 hours in any school year are not eligible for election as parent governors.

There are no formal educational or other requirements for governors and our governors come from all sorts of backgrounds. This helps to ensure that the Governing Body is made up of diverse people with a wide variety of experience and expertise. It is important that governors have an interest in ensuring all children receive the very best education, as well as a willingness to listen and learn. Governors also need to commit time to attending meetings and training sessions and respect the confidentiality of discussions and decisions.

#### **Why do we need Parent Governors on a Governing Body?**

Parent Governors are extremely important in achieving an effective and well balanced Governing Body. It is very important that parents stand for election to the Governing Body so that parents with children at the school are represented. Otherwise, a parent may be appointed to serve who has no children in the school and who knows very little about the school and its local community.

#### **What are Parent Governors expected to do?**

All governors are equal and no type of governor is any more important or influential than any other. All governors have a right to take part in discussions on all items and put items on the agenda for meetings. The only exceptions to the general rule occur where the child of the parent governor concerned is being discussed or the individual governor has some other



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direct personal interest in the matter, for example a financial or employment interest which is greater than that of the other governors. All decisions made by the Governing Body are made collectively and no governor can ever act alone.

Parent Governors are not expected to canvass the views of other parents to bring to the Governing Body nor to formally report back to other parents and they must vote in accordance with their own views. However, it is expected that parent governors will have a general awareness of other parents' opinions and concerns. Parent Governors must never override existing school systems, for example, relating to individual parental complaints.

#### **How long would I serve for?**

All our parent governors are elected for four years. Parents can remain on the Governing Body after their children have left the school for the remainder of their term of office, if they wish to do so. Governors may also be disqualified if they do not attend meetings of the full Governing Body for six months.

#### **What if not enough nominations are received?**

If no parents stand for election to the Governing Body, the other governors have to fill any outstanding vacancies by appointing a parent of a registered pupil at the school or where it is not reasonably practical to do so, a person who is the parent of a child of compulsory school age.

#### **What if there are too many nominations?**

If there is more than one candidate, an election must be arranged. A ballot form listing containing the name of each candidate and any supporting information will be drawn up. Every parent of a child at the school will be entitled to one vote for the vacancy. The ballot papers will be sent between school and home by the eldest child, unless absent, in which case it will be sent by post from school and may be returned by post or by a registered pupil at the school. Votes will be counted by the Clerk to the Governors and the Headteacher. Nominees will be invited to attend the count. In the event of a tie, votes will be recounted. If votes are still equal, the result will be determined by tossing of a coin. Once the election result is known, all parents will be notified.

#### **What support will parent governors receive?**

All governors are entitled to receive training appropriate to their role. Our Chair of Governors will work closely with any new governor to make sure that they are comfortable with their role and aware of training opportunities that will help to support their personal development.

#### **So what do I do now?**

If you are interested in being nominated for election to the Governing Body please complete the nomination form with a personal statement of no more than 50 words (this will be circulated to all parents if an election is required). You will also need to have your nomination form signed by another parent of a registered pupil at the school (this can be your spouse). Then, make sure you submit your form to the Headteacher by the deadline specified on the letter and nomination form.

We look forward to receiving your nomination...



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