



Dear Parent

As chair of governors I am pleased to welcome you and your child to The Walnuts School. Whether your child is with us for a short or long time every one at The Walnuts School will do everything they can to help them fulfil their potential.

With 175 pupils we are quite a small school and take pride in getting to know parents and children as individuals as soon as possible.

As with all schools we have a governing body and we actively encourage new parents to join and be part of that process. The governing body works with the head teacher and the staff at the school to make sure that the school provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. Governors work in partnership with the head teacher to set the strategic direction of the school. Governors are not expected and should not make day to day decisions about how the school is run. That is the role of the head teacher and senior staff. Governors have three main roles: to provide strategic direction for the school; to act as a critical friend to the head teacher and to ensure accountability.

Being a governor also gives you an opportunity to meet other parents and form friendships. I enclose an information sheet with more details about what the role involves and about why you may want to consider this.

The school is able to cover the costs of mileage to and from meetings and help with child care costs whilst you are at meetings.

We currently have a vacancy for a parent governor, if you are interested in applying for this role and want to know more please give me a call.

Yours sincerely

Carol Head
Chair of Governors

01908 526431

Becoming a School Governor at The Walnuts School

As a governor you will need to get to know your school, this will help you understand the impact of the decisions that you make will have. There is an extensive **governor programme** designed to ensure that governors' training needs are met. In addition to this there will be the help and support of colleague governors together with advice from the head teacher and the LA to help you become familiar with your role as quickly as possible.

What do governors do?

The governing body works with the head teacher and the staff at the school to make sure that the school provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. Governors work in partnership with the head teacher to set the strategic direction of the school. Governors are not expected and should not make day to day decisions about how the school is run. That is the role of the head teacher and senior staff. Governors have three main roles: to provide strategic direction for the school; to act as a critical friend to the head teacher and to ensure accountability.

How much time is involved?

This will vary depending on the number of governing body meetings and the amount of committee work you choose to do. Governors work as a team and as such the amount of time that each governor can give to the role will vary. In addition to meetings governors need to get to know their school. This will be done by visiting the school for events, focused visits and attend the more informal activities taking place in school, for example open days, assemblies, school fetes and concerts. The majority of meetings tend to take place in the evenings, but this will be agreed by all members of the governing body.

Why become a school governor?

By becoming a school governor you will:

- Have an opportunity to gain new skills
- Work as part of a team
- Help ensure that every child at The Walnuts reaches his/her potential
- Play a vital part in raising standards and achievement
- Make an important contribution to your community

Do I need any special qualifications?

You do not need any special qualifications other than to care about children and young people's education, have an interest in the community, a willingness to learn new skills and some spare time!

How is the governing body made up?

Every school has a governing body which in size from usually 9 to 20. Some governors are elected by parents or staff, some are appointed by the governing body itself and some are appointed by the local authority or religious foundations. This is to help the governing bodies reflect the communities that they serve. The composition is determined by the instrument of governance which has been agreed by the governing body.

What training will I receive?

The LA runs an 'Induction Day for New Governors' course each term to equip new governors with a basic knowledge of their roles and responsibilities. In addition there is a comprehensive support and development programme also run by Milton Keynes Council.

At The Walnuts the governing body has a process for the induction of new Governors that may include school visits and initial welcome meetings.

What is the Governor Development Programme?

The Governor Development Programme offers a wide range of training and development opportunities. It exists to:

- assist governors to undertake their roles and responsibilities confidently and effectively;
- ensure that up to date information guidance and training is available to all governors;
- enable governors to understand and develop their role in contributing effectively to raising standards of achievement in schools;
- disseminate information to governing bodies which is relevant and understandable;
- provide guidance on educational and procedural issues and share examples of good practice.

What should I do if I am interested?

Call Carol Head, Chair Governors on Milton Keynes (01908) 526431 to discuss informally or

Look on Milton Keynes council web site <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/mkgovernors/> where there is a lot more information.