



## Being a governor at Claremont

There are over a quarter of a million people who volunteer as governors in state schools in England. They help support and guide the leadership of their schools, and thereby make a vital contribution to the schools' work. If you join us at Claremont, we hope you will find being a governor a hugely rewarding role, helping our school to provide a high-quality education for children in our community.

Being a governor also provides an excellent opportunity for personal development, building your skills and experience in areas like project management, budgeting and working as part of a senior team.

### **What do governors do?**

First off, we should emphasise that you don't need to have education experience. Your outside view, the skills you bring and your willingness to get involved are what we want. The governor role is strategic rather than operational. Together with the Headteacher, the Governing Body has overall responsibility for the running of the school supporting and challenging the school's leadership team to drive school improvement. Governors are also involved in deciding school policies, allocating the school's budget and appointing senior staff.

The government describe the role as being that of a critical friend. They define the 3 core roles of a governing body as:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

### **What does this mean in practical terms?**

This is a brief overview of what the governors at Claremont are asked to do:

- Attend meetings of the full board and subcommittees: at Claremont there are normally a total of 8 of these a school year and they are usually from 4-6pm;
- Looking at information and evidence on the school's progress and discussing with school leaders;
- Visiting the school to see plans and strategies working in practice: we normally do this 3 times a year, during school hours;
- Listening to the views of staff, pupils and parents;
- Making decisions about issues such as pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary matters;
- Undertaking induction training and ongoing development.

### **Am I the right sort of person?**

There is no right person. We are looking for someone who is keen, who wants to get stuck into the role and help. Our board members at the moment include an advertising exec, a nurse, a management consultant, a sales person and an ex-teacher. Different backgrounds, different roles, but we all want to contribute. If you want to, then governing could be for you.

### **Will I be supported?**

Absolutely. We provide induction training and we have a buddy system where more experienced governors guide newcomers. Obviously, it's a learning experience: new procedures, a whole new set of acronyms, and it will be different from your current workplace. But that's what makes it so interesting.

### **What's it like?**

[Watch this video](#) of Chris, a co-opted governor, explaining his experience of starting out as a governor.

### **A really important safeguarding note**

Claremont Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We always ensure all governors clear the enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check prior to joining the board.

### **Questions?**

Email Jason Livingston, Chair of Governors, at [Chair@claremont.kent.sch.uk](mailto:Chair@claremont.kent.sch.uk)