

Governor's Newsletter November 2009

We thought it might be useful to tell everyone who we are and what we do. So as Vice Chair and parent governor I had a go at doing it.

Why do we need school governors?

Schools are run by a governing body working together with the Headteacher and senior management team to ensure all pupils get a good education. All types of people can become school governors. No special qualifications are required, but you must be 18 or over on the date when you are elected or appointed. Governors are not responsible for the day to day management of Norton Free School; this is the responsibility of the Headteacher and senior management team. Parents and carers are welcome to attend governors meetings as observers (subject to the rules regarding confidentiality) and ask questions and the start of the meeting.

At Norton Free we have 13 school governors. We are:

CLlr Ian Auckland - Chair of Governors LEA appointed

Claire McGourlay - Vice Chair and parent governor

Father Geoffrey White - Church Appointed Ex-Officio (by virtue of Geoffrey's position)

Dan Thaw - parent governor

Alan Hirst - parent governor

David Schoon - parent governor

Shaun Day -LEA appointed

Manohor Raju - Deputy Head of Meadowhead school- Community Governor

Jill Noble - PCC appointed

Lynne Murray - Church representative Foundation Governor

Lyndsay Gray-Teacher representative

Dave Beeley - Non teaching staff representative

Analisa Smith: Deputy Head-observer

Community Governor-Vacancy (we have tried to fill this post but have been unsuccessful)

Our Pictures are on the doors of the classrooms that we are linked to.

What do school governors do?

The governing body of a school is responsible for ensuring that it is run to promote pupil achievement. Its duties include:

- setting strategic direction, policies and objectives
- approving the school budget
- reviewing progress against the school's budget and objectives
- appointing, challenging and supporting the Headteacher

What is involved?

- Governing bodies make their decisions based on the advice of committees that deal with specific issues like the school's curriculum, premises or finances. If you are a governor, you will be asked to serve on a committee where you have an interest or can make a contribution.
- The amount of time involved for each governor varies between schools. However, in a typical month in a typical school you can expect to spend at least six to eight hours on your duties.
- Being a governor is a serious commitment as you have a legal responsibility for the school, but it is rewarding.

Membership of Norton Free Committees is as follows:

- **Personnel including recruitment of all staff**

Claire McGourlay, Ian Auckland, Jill Noble, Father Geoffrey. We are responsible for recruitment and any personnel matters.

- **School Development Curriculum and Pupil Wellbeing**

Dan Thaw, Manohar Raju, Lyndsay Gray, Lucy Hawkins, Lynn Murray, Jill Noble

- **Pay, Finance and Premises**

Ian Auckland, Shaun Day , David Schoon, Dave Beeley, Claire McGourlay, Jonathan Camm, Alan Hirst. We manage the budget , pay and make sure the building is run efficiently.

- **Linked Areas**

Special Needs: David Schoon

Health and Safety: Dave Beeley

Child Protection-Safeguarding Champion: Dan Thaw

Training Governor-Lynne Murray

Performance Management of the Headteacher: Ian Auckland, Claire McGourlay, Jill Noble.

Literacy and Numeracy: Jill Noble

Gifted and Talented: Father Geoffrey White

What is the Role of the Chair and Vice Chair?

The role of the Chair (and Vice-Chair in the Chair's absence) is extremely varied and can include the following:

- to make sure that the governing body's affairs are conducted in accordance with the law;
- to report any urgent action taken on behalf of the governing body, making sure it is fully explained and supported;

- to ensure that meetings are run effectively - making sure that they start and finish on time, that agenda items are properly introduced, that people are encouraged to contribute and that decisions are taken when necessary and minuted;
- to help the governing body work as a team - by recognising and using people's strengths, delegating effectively, clarifying objectives and using the whole governing body by creating committees and small groups to develop new ideas, work out plans of action and to cover contentious or difficult areas of planning.
- to work with the Head - be available to the Head, make time to listen to concerns and give constructive advice, talk through disagreements before governing body meetings, work together on effective school policies;
- to carry out any duties delegated by the governing body, be seen in school regularly, attend school functions or make sure another governor represents them, work with the LEA, be accessible to other governors, staff and parents, meet governors from other schools;
- to use time effectively, their own and other people's - plan the year's cycle of meetings and a timetable for action and reports - plan for effective meetings;
- to make it clear that all governors must accept collective responsibility for decisions taken at governors' meetings.

Miss Button has control over the day to day management of the school and if you feel you need to talk to someone about anything concerning your child/ren then in the first instance see the class teacher, then Miss Button and then one of governing body if your problem is not resolved. Miss Button's door is always open and please feel free to make an appointment and come in to see a class teacher or Miss Button. Also the governors are always open to you contacting us via the school office or in the playground-we are here as governors of your child's school and if you have a problem, concern, idea or praise then please tell us as one thing we don't have is a crystal ball! Well not yet anyway....

The Chair, Cllr Ian Auckland is happy to be contacted as follows:

Office 0114 2735059, Home 0114 2740474, mobile 07720045630, e mail ian.auckland@btinternet.com or even a letter through the door at 250 Norton Lane.

Or the Vice chair in Ian absence Claire McGourlay - c.mcgourlay@shef.ac.uk.

We would like to invite all parents to a talk on Norton Free Strategic Plan on Friday 11th December at 9.00am. This will give the Head and Governors an opportunity to share where we would like to take the school in the future and how you can be a part of this challenge.

Refreshments will be provided.

Thanks

Claire McGourlay- Mother of Abigail Y5 and Owen Y1 (Parent Governor for 5 years)

On behalf of the Governing Body of Norton Free Church of England Primary School
Governing Body December 2009