

Parent & Staff Governor Election Procedure St. Adrian's Catholic Primary School



**‘To Learn, To Love, To Live as a Community of
God with Christ as our Teacher’**

www.stadrians.herts.sch.uk

Approved by: Full governing body

Date: 9th December 2020

Next review due by: December 2021



Parent Governor Election Procedure

1. Parent and Staff Governor elections: timing

The aim must always be to ensure that governing body business is conducted with as many governorships as possible filled and as many parents/staff as possible enfranchised.

Parent and staff governor elections should therefore be held as soon as practicable after a vacancy arises, though where a vacancy arises in the summer term, an election early in the autumn term, before the first governing body meeting of the school year but with the new intake of parents/staff, would be appropriate.

Where an impending vacancy is known about, it may be possible to hold the election before the vacancy actually arises, to avoid a gap.

2. Parent Governor Election

2.1 Who is eligible?

In most cases, it will be obvious who is a parent, but if there is uncertainty, for the purpose of the election of a parent governor, the following definition is used:

'Parents (including carers) of registered pupils at the school (not Nursery) are eligible to stand for election for parent governorship at the school.'

"Parent" is defined for the purposes of the Constitution Regulations as including "any individual who has or has had parental responsibility for, or cares or has cared for, a child or young person under the age of 18". It includes a person with whom the child lives, or who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. The reference in the definition must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child on a settled basis.

A child may have more than two 'parents' as defined above and all of them would be entitled to stand or vote in an election. However, schools are not required to take extraordinary steps to track down parents.

If insufficient parents stand for election, the governing body can appoint parent governors.

A person is **disqualified** from election or appointment as a parent governor if they are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year or if they are an elected member of the Local Authority at the time of election or appointment.

2.2 Term of office

The term of office for parent governors is four years, unless the governing body has agreed a shorter one and this is specified in the instrument of government. Parent governors must have a child registered at the school on the date they are elected, but do not have to resign their governorship if their child subsequently leaves the school before their term of office is completed.



Parent Governor Election Procedure

2.3 Pre-election publicity

Appropriate publicity needs to be given when a vacancy needs to be filled. Parents will be advised that there is a vacancy for a parent governor. A letter/email will be sent to all parents enclosing a nomination form and setting out clearly:

- (a) eligibility to stand
- (b) the timetable for each stage and
- (c) that the successful candidate will be subject to a pre-appointment check and may have to undergo a criminal background check. An example of such a letter is attached to this guidance.

Documents relating to the election may be provided in translation, or in other formats, on request.

2.4 Nominations

Nominations from parents will be self-nominations. Parents will be invited to supply, with their nomination paper, a short personal statement for circulation to all parents if an election be required. This statement should not exceed **80 words and this limit will be strictly enforced** in all cases.

Parents will be asked to obtain the name of a seconder, who should be the parent of a registered pupil at the school. Parents will be given 14 days for the return of nomination papers.

If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, then any candidate/s will be deemed elected unopposed and it will not be necessary to proceed to an election.

If there are more candidates than vacancies, it will be necessary for an election to take place. If there are vacancies remaining after elections, the governing body has a duty to appoint the appropriate number of parent governors.

2.5 Conduct of the election

The Headteacher undertakes the role of Returning Officer and as such has overall responsibility for organising the election.

The election of a parent governor is conducted on a simple majority basis. In the event of a tie, the result is determined by the toss of a coin or the drawing of lots, at the returning officer's discretion.

At each election every parent (*see above for guidance on who is a parent*) is issued with one ballot paper, irrespective of the number of children they have at the school. The ballot paper lists the names of all the candidates and gives clear guidance on eligibility to vote and on the number of votes which may be cast. Parents are entitled, if they so wish, to register one vote for each vacancy.

A closing date and time must be specified, which will allow parents sufficient time to return ballot papers. One week is the usual period.



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The ballot is secret. The returning officer ensures:

- that steps have been taken to prevent copying of ballot papers, such as the use of coloured paper and the inclusion of a distinguishing mark (eg the school stamp)
- that a record is kept of the number of ballot papers issued.

The double envelope system is a way of preserving the secrecy of the ballot while still allowing hand-delivery of the completed ballot paper. It works like this:

- The voter places his/her marked ballot paper in a blank envelope and seals it. The voter makes no mark whatsoever on this envelope
- The voter places this envelope in another envelope and seals it
- On the back of this outer envelope the voter writes his/her name and signature and year group of oldest child in St Adrian's
- The voter hands this envelope in to the school office
- As soon as possible after receipt, the outer envelope is checked to ensure eligibility and is then disposed of securely
- The blank inner envelope is placed in the ballot box to await the count.
- The ballot box should be kept in a secure place.

In cases where the double envelope system is used but not universally adhered to, the returning officer must make a judgment as to whether, taking into account all the circumstances, a particular ballot paper should be counted.

Parents will be given the opportunity to vote by post, but the normal system will be to get ballot papers to and from parents by means of the pupils. If a pupil is absent from school when the ballot papers are issued, a ballot paper will need to be posted, or otherwise delivered.

Schools can choose to send ballot papers by email however votes cannot be accepted by the same means; as this could compromise the anonymity of parents.

Proxy voting is not allowed.

If a ballot paper is inadvertently spoiled (or lost by the pupil) a duplicate may be issued by the returning officer.

An election is not invalidated by an individual's failure to receive or to return a ballot paper.

2.6 The Count

The count will be conducted by the returning officer at a time and place which has been notified to all candidates and parents. The candidates, or their nominated representatives, should be invited to be present, but the election is not invalidated by the absence of one or more of the candidates. The returning officer opens and counts the voting papers in the presence of witnesses (normally the candidates and a governor not standing in the election) and is the person to determine whether a ballot paper is valid, spoiled or not genuine.

The count will take place as soon as possible after the poll closes (e.g. poll closes at 3.45 pm, count at 4.00 pm). Uncounted votes will not be stored overnight once the poll closes.



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2.7 After the election

Parents and governors will be notified in writing (which may be by email) of the outcome of an election by the headteacher as soon as possible after the election. Parents will be told the name/s of the successful candidate/s. The result will be recorded in the governing body minutes. The name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the successful candidate/s should be notified to the clerk as soon as possible for adding to the database.

Where, in the absence of sufficient candidates, the governing body appoints one or more parent governors, that fact, and the identity of the appointed parent/s, as well as being recorded in the governing body minutes, should be notified to parents as soon as possible. The clerk should be sent details (name/address/email/telephone number/date of appointment) of the new governor/s immediately so they can update the Governance database and trigger a request for a welcome pack to be sent.

Voting papers should be retained securely at the school for six months against a possible challenge.



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Parent Governor Election Procedure

Dear Parent

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR/S

There is/are [a] vacancy/ies for [a] parent governor/s on this school's governing body. If you would like to stand for election please complete and return the attached form to the school office by am/pm on You will need to ask another parent of a pupil at the school to sign the form.

Please be aware that regulations require everyone elected or appointed to a governing body to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check. This is to ensure the safety of the pupils. If you are elected and you subsequently decline to undergo such a check, you will disqualify yourself.

Please give brief details about yourself (**not more than 80 words**) on the form. If an election is needed these details will be copied and sent to all parents with the ballot papers. **Please note that the 80 word limit will be strictly enforced and result in additional wording being deleted.**

If the number of nominations is the same as or less than the number of vacancies, then the people nominated will be deemed elected unopposed. If there are not enough nominations, the governing body has the duty to appoint parent governors to fill the remaining vacancy/ies.

The governing body has determined that the term of office for a parent governor is year/s. If you are elected you may serve the full term of office even if your child leaves the school before your term of office finishes.

If an election is necessary we will send you a ballot paper on

Only parents of children registered at the school (not Nursey) are entitled to stand or vote in the election. A parent who is paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year or is an elected member of the LA may **not stand** for election.

Each parent will be sent one ballot paper regardless of how many children they have at the school, and each parent will have one vote per vacancy. The ballot will be secret and you will be notified of the result as soon as possible afterwards.

In most cases it will be obvious whether you are a parent. For the purpose of the election of a parent governor, a parent is:

Parents (including carers) of registered pupils at the school. "Parent" is defined for the purposes of the Constitution Regulations as including "any individual who has or has had parental responsibility for, or cares or has cared for, a child or young person under the age of 18". It includes a person who the child lives with or who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. The reference in the definition must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child on a settled basis.

If you have any questions about whether you are eligible to stand or vote in the election or about anything else in this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head-teacher

enc

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Parent Governor Election Procedure

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR/S AT ST Adrian's Catholic Primary School

NOMINATION FORM

Your name
(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address
.....
.....

I have a child at the school and hereby nominate myself for election as a governor. I understand that if elected I will have to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check. Biographical details (**80 words maximum**) for circulation with the voting paper are given below.

Signature

Seconded* by:
(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address
.....
.....

Signature

*The seconder must be a parent of a pupil at the school.

Biographical details (80 words maximum)

Your completed nomination form must be returned to the school office by:

Date..... Time.....am/pm



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Parent Governor Election Procedure

Dear Parent

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR(S)

There is/are vacancy/ies for parent governor/s on the governing body. The following parents have been nominated:

-
-
-
-

A ballot paper is attached, together with a personal statement from each candidate who supplied one.

Only the parents of a pupil currently registered at the school may vote.

For the purpose of the election of a parent governor:

"Parent" is defined for the purposes of the Constitution Regulations as including "any individual who has or has had parental responsibility for, or cares or has cared for, a child or young person under the age of 18". It includes a person who the child lives with or who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. The reference in the definition must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child on a settled basis.

Here's what to do:

1. Place a **X** against up to names (not more than one vote per vacancy).
2. Put the completed ballot paper in a blank envelope and seal it.
DO NOT SIGN THE BALLOT PAPER OR THE ENVELOPE.
3. Put this envelope in another envelope.
4. On the second envelope write your name in **BLOCK LETTERS** and your signature.
5. Return it to the school office by am/pm on

We will record the fact that you have voted and then place the unmarked envelope in the ballot box. The votes will be counted at school immediately after the close of the election, in the presence of the candidates and....., a governor of the school. We will notify you of the result as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

enc

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ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR/S AT..... SCHOOL

BALLOT PAPER

There are vacancies for parent governor/s.

Candidates (in alphabetical order)

1. Place a **X** against up to names (not more than one vote per vacancy).
2. Put the completed ballot paper in a blank envelope and seal it.
DO NOT SIGN EITHER THE BALLOT PAPER OR THE ENVELOPE.
3. Put this envelope in another envelope.
4. On the second envelope write your name in BLOCK LETTERS and your signature.
5. Return it to the school office by am/pm on