



Finding the right Foundation Governors

This document is issued by the Diocesan Board of Education for those people who are considering nomination as a Foundation Governor of a Church of England School.

Foundation Governors are nominated:

- a) by the parish
- b) in some instances by the Board of Education;
- c) in a few instances by a local trust.

The Ideal Candidate

- practising Christian within the Anglican foundation
- active within the church, possibly involved with church groups
- interested in being a governor and aware of the commitment needed
- community involvement
- experience relevant to the role of governor e.g. management or financial expertise, ability to work as part of a team, some understanding of the role of governor
- someone prepared to make a substantive contribution to the school and the community
- being prepared to take up governor training run by the Diocese and to disseminate this back to the Governing Body

Fulfilling the Role of Foundation Governor

- able to attend meetings, usually in the evening
- able to be involved with sub committees of the Governing Body as well as full Governing Body meetings
- working with Head Teacher, co-ordinators and other Governors and in particular with Foundation Governors, feeding information into the self-evaluation process for the Statutory Inspection for Anglican & Methodist Schools (SIAMS)
- undertaking monitoring visits in school on behalf of the Governing Body and then reporting back to meetings
- involved with monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship and Religious Education with the relevant coordinators and the head teacher
- understanding that they are there to support and protect the Christian character of the school, in keeping with the trust deed

Appointing Foundation Governors Who Are Not Regular Church Goers

Clergy or Lay Leaders should meet with all candidates who they do not know and talk to those who are proposing them to ensure a suitable appointment (this should be used to inform the reference)

- parish teams need to be mindful of all governor vacancies in their school/s and be proactive in their parish groups to identify, encourage and support potential Governors
- those with other Christian faith backgrounds can fulfil the role
- those with no faith background can fulfil the role if they are prepared to understand and show commitment to the Christian ethos, promoting the school's Christian character and working closely with other Foundation Governors and clergy
- long serving, former parent governors, who have shown a strong commitment to the Christian ethos could be considered for nomination as Foundation Governors because of their breadth of experience and understanding even though they may not be church members
- must be mindful of the range of skills that are needed for a successful appointment
- in the same way that there are staff in church schools who are drawn from all faiths and none and from different backgrounds, (providing a stimulating diversity) whilst accepting and supporting a commitment to the Christian ethos and values – this should be extended to Foundation Governors also

Pitfalls

- church members can sometimes be persuaded to take on the role without really understanding what they are taking on and that it is a long-term substantive commitment
- some church members see the role only as representing the local parish and congregation and raising the church's profile (not as a strategic role with other Governors)
- those putting non-Anglican candidates forward must know them well enough so that they can confidently recommend them as being able to fulfil the role with the level of commitment to the school's Christian ethos that is required
- wishing to exclude non-Christians from the role can mean the skills of those with a willingness to work and contribute to the school's effectiveness could be lost.