



Appointing Foundation Governors: Guidance

July 2019

Loving.
Living.
Learning.

The Role of Foundation Governors

Foundation governors are an important part of the wider team of governors. As such their main role is to work with other members of the governing body to fulfil all of the functions required of all school governors, undertaking training as required. However, a foundation governor has a specific role. It is **not** the role of foundation governors to solely take on responsibility for the 'church school' aspects of governance, all governors are governors of a church school.

The role of the Foundation Governor is to ensure that the full governing body nurtures, encourages and challenges the school in living out its Christian foundation by:

- Developing the distinctive Christian vision and character of the school;
- Ensuring high-quality Collective Worship and Religious Education;
- Securing positive links between the school, the parish and the Diocesan Board of Education;
- Promoting Christian values in the way in which the governing body conducts its business;
- Ensuring that development as a church school is embedded in the school improvement plan and a regular part of the governing body self-evaluation;
- Ensuring that points for development following Section 48 inspection are addressed;
- Being involved in the recruitment process for a new Head Teacher;
- Reporting to the Parochial Church Council or the Diocesan Board of Education as appropriate.

Appointing Foundation Governors

What if a foundation governor's term ends?

In most cases the term of foundation governors is four years, as the term comes to an end reappointment should be considered. The annual skills audit of the governing body is consulted and any skills gaps identified in consultation with the Headteacher, chair of governors and relevant clergy. If the current foundation governor meets the skills gap requirements of the governing body, the chair of governors or local incumbent (if appropriate) will contact the governor and ask if they wish to stand for a further term. If they do not wish to stand or the head, chair and relevant clergy do not support reappointment, then a vacancy becomes available.

What if a vacancy for a foundation governor occurs?

The annual skills audit of the governing body is consulted and any skills gaps identified in consultation with the Headteacher, chair of governors and relevant clergy. The vacancy should be advertised to the local congregation and applications encouraged. It may be also appropriate to advertise the vacancy in neighbouring CE churches. An example advert and flyer can be found on the diocesan website. If more than one person applies for the vacancy then the decision should be made based on the skills audit as to who best fulfils the current needs of the governing body, it is appropriate to hold an interview to support the decision-making process. Although there is no legislation preventing members of staff being appointed as foundation governors, there is a limit to the number of governors who are also members of staff (no more than a third). In addition, it is better to have a range of skills and experience, and so we do not recommend the appointment of staff to foundation governor vacancies. It is our recommendation that members of the same family (or two people living together), or connected parties, do not serve on the same governing body.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

JOIN THE TEAM
YOUR LOCAL CHURCH SCHOOL IS SEEKING A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

We are looking for a volunteer to join our governing board, someone who wants to make a difference by becoming a school governor.

Experience and skills
Governing boards are made up of members with a range of experience and skills, why not find out what the school needs?

Christian character
Foundation governors operate at a strategic level, ensuring that the Christian vision and character of the school are upheld.

A team player
As well as joining an experienced team, the school and diocese will provide support and training to help you settle in.

Can you spare 10 hours per month?
Attend at least 3 full governor meetings per year?
Have a sub-group or committee?

Contact us to find out more:

Some ideas for finding a suitable candidate

Once you are clear on the skills set you require of your candidate, you could try some or all of the following:

- Talk to people within your Church. Often there are people within your congregation that have the skills, and they are waiting to be asked. Try asking them personally; advertise within your Church, through a poster or flyer, or on your website. An example advert and flyer can be found on the diocesan website; or make a verbal appeal at services/event.

What if there is not a suitable person within our own congregation?

Initially, you might want to get in contact with another nearby Church of England parish. If it is one that does not have its own Church School and the associated responsibility for finding foundation governors, you may find people who are pleased to be asked to help, as part of the wider Church Family. However, a Foundation Governor does not have to be a member of the Church of England. Many Christian denominations do not have their own Church schools and may welcome being approached. These are some other avenues you could explore:

- Contact other Christian leaders to see if they would be willing to recommend someone/display a poster or flyer/ make a verbal appeal to their congregation;
- Contact your local 'Churches Together' group to see how they may be able to help with your search;
- Use [Inspiring Governance](#) and make clear you are searching for a foundation governor
- Use direct recruitment techniques. For example if you need a foundation governor with financial expertise, write directly to local accountancy firms, banks or businesses.
- If you have an advertisement prepared for your Foundation Governor vacancy this can also be posted on the Diocese website in our 'Education Vacancies' section. If you would like to do this please contact info.ed@leeds.anglican.org.

Process for Appointing Foundation Governors

The first stage of any vacancy/recruitment situation is to check the **Instrument of Government** for the school. This will outline the number of foundation governors required. Usually, one of the foundation governor positions is held by the incumbent (local vicar) of the parish in which the school is located, who is a member of the governing body by virtue of his or her office (this is known as an **ex-officio** post). Where the incumbent is unable or unwilling to act in this capacity, the Archdeacon (as set out in the Instrument of Government and usually acting through the Diocesan Board of Education) is responsible for appointing a substitute.

The body/bodies responsible for the appointment of foundation governors are named in the school's Instrument of Government. They will usually be:

- a) the Leeds Diocesan Board of Education (DBE);
- b) the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the parish in which the school is located with an appointment to be confirmed by the DBE;
- c) a trust which has a formal interest in the school (appointment to be confirmed by the DBE).

In some schools, a mixture of the bodies above will appoint foundation governors, in this case, it is important to keep a record of which body appointed which foundation governor.

The process for appointing varies depending on whether it is a DBE, PCC or Trust responsibility. Each of these processes are set out below, as a checklist.

Please note that schools regularly misunderstand the term 'appointing' body. The appointing body is the body that *agrees* to the appointment of a governor. It is the role of the school to find and recruit governors.

Process for appointing/reappointing if the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) are the appointing body.

Order of events – should be started three months prior to a vacancy arising or term ending	
1. The instrument of Government has been checked to ensure that the correct process is being followed.	
2. Skills audit has taken place and gaps have been identified.	
3. Headteacher, Chair and local clergy (if appropriate) decide if a reappointment can be recommended or a vacancy has arisen to meet the identified skills gaps. If a vacancy has arisen, the governing board seek a new proposed foundation governor.	
4. It has been checked and agreed that the proposed foundation governor meets the skills gaps identified through this process.	
5. Proposed governor (or those seeking reappointment) complete the application form Parts 1 and 2 and passes onto the Parochial Church Council (PCC).	
6. PCC Chair/Secretary completes and countersigns part 3.	
7. Application with parts 1,2 and 3 completed gets sent to info.ed@leeds.anglican.org	
8. The DBE make a final decision as to whether to approve the recommendation (clergy/school may be contacted to confirm details).	
9. An email and the welcome pack is sent out from Church House formally appointing the governor to the post and the Local Authority informed for LA maintained schools.	
NB Enhanced DBS checks need to be completed before appointee takes up office	
10. An induction period starts which is followed up six months after the appointment has been made.	

Process for appointing/reappointing if the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are the appointing body.

Order of events – should be started three months prior to a vacancy arising or term ending	
1. The instrument of Government has been checked to ensure that the correct process is being followed.	
2. Skills audit has taken place and gaps have been identified.	
3. Headteacher, Chair and local clergy (if appropriate) decide if a reappointment can be recommended or a vacancy has arisen to meet the identified skills gaps. If a vacancy has arisen, the governing board seek a new foundation governor.	
4. It has been checked and agreed that the proposed foundation governor meets the skills gaps identified through this process.	
5. Proposed governor (or those seeking reappointment) complete the application form Parts 1 and 2 and passes it onto the Parochial Church Council (PCC).	
6. PCC Chair/Secretary completes and countersigns parts 3 and 4.	
7. A copy of the application with parts 1,2,3 and 4 completed gets sent to info.ed@leeds.anglican.org	
8. The DBE confirm receipt of the appointment.	
9. An email and the welcome pack are sent out from Church House formally appointing the governor to the post and the Local Authority informed for LA maintained schools.	
NB Enhanced DBS checks need to be completed before appointee takes up office	
10. An induction period starts which is followed up six months after the appointment has been made.	

Who would make a good Foundation Governor?

When considering potential candidates to take up the role of foundation governor, nominating/appointing bodies need to feel confident that the person they are putting forward will:

- be committed to developing the Christian character of the school;
- be an advocate for the views of the DBE;
- be committed to high standards and the provision of a rich educational experience, within a distinctive Christian context, for all children in the school community;
- have the relevant skills and expertise to support the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities effectively (this should be considered following a skills audit);
- be willing to undertake training to ensure that they understand their role and responsibilities, are familiar with school performance indicators and make a positive contribution to the work of the governing body; This includes the basic online training course as part of a six month induction period;
- attend governing body and committee meetings regularly;
- abide by the 7 principles of public life and code of conduct as described in their welcome pack.

What is the Induction Period for Foundation Governors?

The DBE know that foundation governors play a key role in leading, supporting and improving schools, and becoming one can be a rewarding experience. The DBE is committed to ensuring that every foundation governor makes a positive contribution to the life of the school and is committed to providing every new foundation governor with specific support during their first six months in post. For their induction period each foundation governor will receive:

- A welcome pack including a useful 'Role of a Foundation Governor' guide outlining roles, responsibilities and links to useful resources.
- Access to a free basic online training course about what it is to be a governor of a church school.
- A six-month check to ensure that all is going well.

After six months, contact will be made with the foundation governor and the school to ensure that all is going well in the role from both perspectives. The DBE wants to check that foundation governors are being given appropriate support by their school and also that new foundation governors are being effective in their role.

Should schools not adequately support the foundation governor during their induction period contact will be made with the named adviser for the school.

Should the new foundation governor show insufficient commitment to the role within their first six months:

In the case of DBE appointments, the DBE reserves the right to disqualify the foundation governor.

In the case of PCC appointments, the DBE will recommend removal to the PCC.

Appendix 1: Sample Advertisement for a foundation governor.

An Opportunity to Serve your Community as a Foundation Governor

Enter School/Academy name

We currently have a vacancy for a Foundation Governor on our governing board and we would like you to consider whether you could serve God in this way.

Our governing board works together as a team and has the responsibility to do the following:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

As a Foundation Governor, you will specifically make sure that the governing board

- Preserves and enhances the religious character of the school
- Ensures that the school is conducted and led in accordance with its trust deed

The term of office is for four years from the date of appointment.

As well as having the right attitude, we are looking for someone with the following attributes:

- *Add required skills/experience/knowledge here*
- *Here*
- *Here*

Time commitment varies but averages at between eight and twelve hours per month.

Add details here about the regularity of meetings, where and what time of the day.

Anyone interested in the mission of foundation governor should not be put off by a lack of experience. Appropriate training is available during the period of service.

If you would like further information please contact *name and details* who will be willing to talk through with you what it's like being a governor and how it all works.

Appendix 2: Sample Advertisement Poster/Flyer for a foundation governor.



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds

JOIN THE TEAM

YOUR LOCAL CHURCH SCHOOL IS SEEKING A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

Could you volunteer to join the governing board?
Do you want to serve your community and make a difference?



Experience and skills

You would be joining a governing board with a range of experience and skills, what could you bring to the team?



Christian character

Foundation governors operate at a strategic level, ensuring that the Christian vision and character of the school are upheld.



A team player

As well as joining an experienced team, the school and diocese will provide support and training to help you settle in.

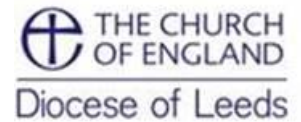


Can you spare 8-10 hours per month?
Attend at least 3 full governor meetings per year?
Join a sub-group or committee?

Contact us to find out more:

Appendix 3: Application Form to become a foundation governor.

Leeds Diocesan Board of Education Foundation Governor Application Form



Name of School	
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Please check your Instrument of Government and indicate which the appointing body for this application is

Leeds Diocesan Board of Education (DBE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete parts 1, 2 and 3.
Parochial Church Council (PCC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete parts 1, 2, 3 and 4.
Application in place of the Incumbent (local vicar) unwilling/unable to take up their ex-officio post.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete parts 1, 2 and 3, we will forward part 5 to be completed.

Part 1- to be completed by the applicant.

Surname		Title	
Forename/s			
Address			
Postcode		Telephone	
Over 18?	Yes/No	Email	
Occupation			

Religion/Denomination			
Place of worship			
Parish			
Frequency of attendance e.g. weekly, monthly, occasionally		Are you confirmed?	Yes/No
Contribution to Church life e.g. PCC member, help run Sunday School			
If you are not a church attende please support your nomination by telling us what other qualities, attributes or experiences you would bring to the governing body in relation to its distinctiveness as a church school.			

Part 1 (continued) to be completed by the applicant

Have you served on this Governing Body before?		Yes/No	
If yes, for how long?		In what capacity?	
Nomination for a re-appointment?	Yes/No	Or a new appointment?	Yes/No
If a new appointment, name of the governor being replaced:			
In the case of a re-appointment please give details of all governor training undertaken in the last 4 years:			
Type of training	Provider		Date
Please name other schools/academies where you are a governor			
Do you have a child who attends this school?			Yes/No*
Are you a member of staff at this school?			Yes/No**
Does a relative or someone you live with serve on this governing body?			Yes/No
Does a relative or someone you live with work in this school?			Yes/No
What contribution would you make as a foundation governor to this governing body?			

*number of parents guidance

** Proportion of staff guidance

Part 2 – Declarations – to be completed by the applicant

Declaration	
I declare that:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I understand my responsibility to uphold the faith and beliefs of the Church of England within the school (please see ethos statement in the accompanying guidance).2. I have read, and understood, and will abide by the 'Role of a Foundation Governor' guidance document.3. I have never been disqualified as a governor through non-attendance at meetings or removed as a governor for any other reason.4. I undertake to refrain from using any social networking sites to divulge any information or express any opinions regarding the school, its governors, staff, pupils and their families. I will use professional judgement in my role as foundation governor when considering accepting parents/carers or pupils as friends on social networking sites. I will ensure that any use of photographs on such sites will not identify the school, its staff, pupils or their families.5. The information provided on this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that if I am subsequently appointed, any false information may cause my appointment to be withdrawn.	
Signed:	
Date:	
Name (print):	

Safeguarding	
I am willing to complete an Enhanced Disclosure form which will be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Unit.	
I declare that I have not been convicted at any time for any offence connected with children or have any such prosecution pending.	
Signed:	
Date:	
Name (print):	

Part 3 – to be completed by the nominating authority:

This applicant is nominated by (tick as appropriate):

Chair/Secretary of the PCC	<input type="checkbox"/>	If the PCC is the <i>appointing body</i> then part 4 must also be completed
Chair of Governors	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Incumbent	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Name:		Tel No:	
Email:			
How long have you known the applicant?			
In what capacity?			
Has a skills audit of the governing board taken place prior to application?		Yes/No	
Are the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Incumbent all aware of this application?		Yes/No	
Why will this applicant be a good foundation governor?			
Signed:			
Date:			
Name (print):			

Part 4 – to be completed on behalf of the PCC

Name of Parish:			
Date of PCC meeting where nomination was approved?			
<i>We confirm that the above applicant was approved by the PCC to become foundation governor of the above school.</i>			
Signed:			PCC Chair
Date:			
Name (print):			

Signed:			PCC Secretary
Date:			
Name (print):			

Part 5 – to be completed where the Archdeacon is the appointing person

This appointment made by the Archdeacon of:	
For a term of office which lasts until the Incumbent decides to take up their ex-officio post or a new incumbent is appointed to the parish, whichever is the sooner.	
Signed:	
Date:	
Name (print):	

Data Protection
<i>Please note that the information supplied on this application form will be held on a database under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Some of the information will be used by the Education Team for communications with you, schools, academies and local authorities. By signing this form, you are also agreeing for the information supplied to be held by the Education Team for the purposes aforementioned. If you are not content for any of this information to be used for any particular purpose, this should be clearly indicated below.</i>

Please complete and sign all relevant parts of this form and return to the Diocesan Education Team.

By email: info.ed@leeds.anglican.org marked for the attention of Helen Shelley.

Or

By post:

Helen Shelley

Diocesan Education Team

Church House

17-19 York Place

Leeds

LS1 2EX