



The Firs

Lower School

Dear Parents / Carers

19th February, 2019

We have a vacancy for two Parent Governors at The Firs to join our board of Trustees.

Parent Governors serve a 4 year term of office, as do all our Trustees and once elected, can continue to the end of the 4 years, whether your child remains in the school or transfers to middle school during that time. Any parent is eligible for nomination and includes adoptive parents, foster parents, carers etc.

We have a fantastic group of Trustees who are highly supportive of the school and play a critical role in helping us to continuously develop and improve the school.

We would be particularly interested in recruiting parents who could add any of the following skills / experience to our Governor team:

- Awareness of buildings related issues
- Experience in marketing and advertising
- Understanding of financial procedures and accounting processes

We are requesting nominations for the vacancy and in the event of there being more nominations than vacancies, we will proceed to an election. Self-nomination and spouse-nomination are permitted and all nominations should be seconded by a parent, other than the candidate's spouse. Nominees should write, in less than 100 words, something about who they are and what they hope to do for the school.

One nomination form is being issued to each family in the first instance. Additional forms are available from the School Office or on our website if you or your spouse/partner wish to submit separate nominations. Nomination papers should be returned to the school in an envelope marked "Nomination Paper - for the attention of the Headteacher" by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March , 2019**.

The following link provides more information on the role of a school governor and in particular that of a parent governor.

<https://www.nga.org.uk/Be-a-Governor.aspx>

There is a little background information on the next page, which we hope will be helpful. if you require any more information however, or are in doubt about the commitment or responsibilities involved, please don't hesitate to contact me. Our Chair of Governors, Gareth Jones can also be contacted, through the school office, should you wish to speak to him.

Yours sincerely,

Adam J.G Campbell (Headteacher)

The Firs Lower School • Station Road, Ampthill, Bedford MK45 2QR

Telephone: (01525) 402735

Email: office@firslower.org • Web [www.firslower.co.uk](http://www.firslower.co.uk)



## **Background information... being a Governor at The Firs**

Being a school Trustee, serving on a board of Governors, is a hugely rewarding role. It will give you the chance to make a real difference to our children at The Firs and give something back to your local community. Governance is a voluntary role and therefore it is not paid. You will be joining the largest volunteer force in the country however: there are over a quarter of a million volunteers governing state funded schools in England.

### **What Governors do we need?**

The governing board should have a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective. We need a range of professional knowledge on our governing board including education, finance, human resources, legal, marketing and public relations, property and estates management, and organisational change.

### **How is our Governing Body organised at The Firs?**

At The Firs we use the DfE preferred model of Governance. We have a group of Trustees who meet regularly and take an active role in setting the strategic direction of the school and overseeing the progress we make with our development objectives. In addition we have a small group of 5 Members who meet less regularly but who maintain an important watching brief, overseeing the work of the Trustees. (If you want to know who our Trustees and Members are, you can look on our website on the Governors 'Meet Us' page under the 'School Information' tab.

### **Who can be a Governor?**

Any parent or member of the community can be a Trustee on our board of Governors. There is no requirement for you to have an understanding of the education system, just the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. There is plenty of training available to help you learn about education.

### **What trustees do?**

The board of Governors provides strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It has three key functions:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the school to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Our Trustees set the aims and objectives for the school and oversee the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives. They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher.

Trustees work together as one team and although they may be elected by the parents, they serve in a personal capacity on the Governing Body and cannot be mandated to vote in any particular way or to abstain. They are free to exercise their own personal judgement. They can, like any other trustee, voice their own personal opinions.

Parents having concerns or questions about any matter are free to contact any governor of the school, although parents are encouraged to contact the school with any questions or concerns in the first instance.

We have a 'Working Protocol' for Governors at The Firs and Trustees must be prepared to adopt the Nolan principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

### **What will be expected of me?**

Trustees meet on average 3 times a term (2 main Governing body meetings and a committee meeting).

As a Trustee you may have a link role with a leader in school and may be involved in e mail correspondence and/or occasional meetings and visits in addition to the set meetings above.