



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

Helping shape the future since 1555



14 September 2018

Dear Parents

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS

Following the reconstitution of the Governing Board in 2015, as required by the DfE, the Board now comprises eighteen governors, of whom six are elected by parents. Elizabeth Jarvis has been appointed as Chair of Governors from 1 September 2018 and therefore relinquishes her position as an elected parent governor. Helen Suckling's term of office ends in September and Dr Michelle Day and Philip Ratcliff have relinquished their positions, also from 1 September 2018. As a result, there are **four vacancies for elected Parent Governors**. I am writing to let you know that there is to be an election for these positions. The other Parent Governor is Dr Chris Preece.

Other members of the Governing Board are: 1 nominated by the Local Education Authority; 1 elected by the staff, myself as Headmaster, and 9 governors co-opted by the rest of the Governing Board.

I hope that the following information and details of the procedures will be helpful to you.

What do governors do?

Governors' responsibilities may be summed up as:

- Setting the strategic direction for the School
- Encouraging, supporting and challenging the Headmaster and staff on the School's performance
- Ensuring that all the School's resources, especially financial resources, are used to maximum effect

The governors' business therefore affects most aspects of the School's life and work. They establish, with the Headmaster, the aims for the School, approve School policies and are responsible for the School's budget, the appointment of staff and the use and maintenance of the premises. More generally, they promote the School within the local community and help guide the School in meeting the community's educational needs. They also help the School communicate to the wider community what the School is achieving for its students.

Headmaster: Mr. Jonathan M. Webb, MA (Cantab).

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Governors, as a Board, also have a range of legal responsibilities, therefore being a governor is an important commitment and new governors must be willing to commit the time and attend training to help them learn what is entailed.

What is the term of office?

Parent Governors are elected for a four year period. If you will not be a parent in four years' time since your son/daughter will have left School, I would still urge you to consider contributing to the work of the governors to help Ripon Grammar School become an even better school.

Do Parent Governors have Special Responsibilities?

No. Parent Governors do not have "extra duties". All governors are equally responsible and discharge their responsibilities as a body, not individually. Elected Parent Governors speak as parents: they cannot speak for all parents, nor are they representatives of parents. They are governors in their own right with the same responsibilities as all other governors but they bring an important parent's perspective to the various issues.

Are there any particular skills or experience that the Governing Board is looking for?

It is open to any parent, irrespective of their skills or experience to put themselves forward for election as a Parent Governor. However, the Governing Board regularly conducts a skills audit to make sure it has the expertise needed to conduct its business effectively. Currently there is a need for someone with financial, business or property experience or someone who has experience in design, writing or sub-editing skills **but parents with skills and experience outside these areas should still seriously consider putting themselves forward**. Commitment to the School and to the work of the Governing Board is the overriding essential requirement.

Are there any restrictions which could disqualify parents from becoming Parent Governors?

Yes. These are contained in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003, Schedule 6 and subsequent amendment Regulations. A form with these details will be given to parents putting themselves forward for election and they will be required to sign and return it with their nomination form.

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If any of these criteria apply to you, you should not seek election as a governor. Also, you are disqualified from election as a Parent Governor if you are an elected member of the local education authority or if you are paid to work at Ripon Grammar School for more than 500 hours in any twelve month period commencing on 1st August and finishing on 31st July.

Governors are subject to background checks and the parents who are elected will be required to provide proof of identity (passport, birth certificate, etc) in order for an enhanced DBS check to be conducted via NYCC. As a volunteer, there is no charge for this to you or to the School.

What is the election process?

It is open to any parent who has a child currently registered at the School to nominate a candidate, to vote in the election and, subject to the disqualifications mentioned above, to stand for election as a Parent Governor. The term 'parent' is taken to include a guardian or anyone who has parental responsibility for a child, as well as 'natural' parents.

Nomination Forms can be obtained from Mrs Kinread in the School Office or from the School website (under the governors' section). If you wish to nominate a candidate you should sign the form yourself, obtain the signature of an eligible seconder (i.e. another parent who has a child at the School), and the signature of the person you are nominating. You may nominate four eligible candidates as there are four vacancies to fill.

Candidates should also make a short statement about themselves (no more than 150 words). A simple form for this purpose will be provided with the Nomination Form and candidates must make use of this, observing the word limit, and returning it by the published deadline. This is also available on the School website. A self-declaration form also needs to be completed to confirm that you are not disqualified from serving as a school governor.

Completed Nomination Forms, candidates' statements and self-declaration form must be returned to Mrs Kinread in the School Office by **12 noon on Friday, 28 September 2018**.

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If only four nominations are received, then those nominees will be declared elected. If, however, I receive more than four nominations then there will be a ballot and I will send ballot forms to you via your son/daughter (1 per parent), together with envelopes for their return. The ballot form will explain how votes may be cast. The rules for the election are written down in Regulations made by the Local Education Authority, and these can be inspected at the School if required.

How will the result of the election be made known?

The successful candidates will be notified immediately after the count by email. The names of the parents elected will be displayed at the School for at least seven days and will be posted on the School website and e-mailed to parents. This information will also be included in the next report issued to parents by the governors.

Anyone having any query about this procedure, or the rôle of school governors, is invited to contact me or Dr Elizabeth Jarvis, Chair of Governors, to discuss informally what being a school governor entails.

Yours sincerely

J M Webb
Headmaster

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