

## Becoming a School Governor – Guidance from WSCC

School governors are volunteers who want to make a positive contribution to children's education. They do not need to <sup>SEP</sup>be education experts or have formal qualifications.

### **The most effective governors are those who:**

- listen, think and ask questions;
- believe that education is important;
- take an interest in the role of schools in the community;
- can work with others and assimilate a wide range of information and data;
- have a willingness to learn;
- have sound communication skills;
- are prepared to give time to doing the job well.

A governor performs a vital strategic role as part of a governing body.

### **Governors need to make time to:**

- attend full governing board meetings;
- attend committee and working party meetings about once or twice a term;
- attend school events;
- read reports and background papers before meetings;
- visit the school during the working day;
- take part, if necessary, in staff appointment panels, pupil exclusion panels, complaints panels and staff discipline and grievance hearings;
- attend training.

### **The governing board:**

- Individual governors have no power or responsibility. It is only the full governing board that has legal duties and powers. However, all governors share in that corporate responsibility;
- The school's direction is agreed by the governing board, headteacher and senior leadership team, who also make sure the school is meeting its targets;
- The headteacher and staff manage the school on a day-to-day basis.

# School governors' right to time off work – Statutory Guidance

## The rules: in summary

- Employees who are school governors must be allowed "reasonable" time off work to carry out their duties, including attending governing body meetings
- The employee and employer must agree on what is 'reasonable time off'
- Employers may give time off with pay but they don't have to
- Time off is in addition to your usual holiday entitlement

The **legislation** and the Governance Handbook only say that maintained school governors have the right to time off, but the **ESFA** confirmed to us that academy governors also have this right.

## Check whether your job is exempt

You don't have the right to time off if you are:

- An agency worker
- A member of the police service
- A member of the armed forces
- Employed on a gas or oil rig at sea
- Employed on a fishing vessel
- A merchant seaman
- A civil servant whose public duties are connected to political activities restricted under the terms of your employment

## Agree what is 'reasonable' time off

A specific amount of time off is not laid down in law. Decide what is 'reasonable' with your employer based on:

- How long the duties might take
- The amount of time you have already had off for public duties
- How the time off will affect the business

Your employer can refuse a request for time off if they think it's unreasonable.