

JOIN OUR SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD



What is the role of the Advisory Board?

The Advisory Board has a key role in influencing the development of the school and ensuring it is meeting the needs of children. As a member of the board you will work closely with the Headteacher to support the development and improvement of teaching, learning and standards in school.

The board is representative of the whole school community and provides a mechanism for parents to be consulted, learn more about the school and how you can be involved in it, be provided with information and an opportunity to be involved in key decisions.

As a parent or carer you have a unique perspective which you will be able to use to influence decision making and policy for the benefit of the school and all its pupils.

The Advisory Board is an important part of the governance structure of the school and Trust. The Board follows an agreed Scheme of Delegation which sets out the requirements of the Trust and details where the Trustees delegate governance functions locally. The Trust Board remains accountable for these functions.

How is the role different to that of a governing body?

Our school is part of Discovery Schools Trust which is an education charity that oversees the running of fifteen schools (13 primary schools and two special schools).

The Discovery board of trustees oversees the central organisation and is the legal governing body for all schools in the trust. To help the Discovery board fulfill its responsibilities, the board of trustees delegates functions to each school local advisory board and this is set out in a document called the scheme of delegation.

So whilst the advisory board is not the legal and accountable governing body, they form an important part of the governance structure, providing local governance on behalf of the board of trustees.

Each advisory board of 6 to 8 members and will be made up from several stakeholder groups which includes parents, staff and the local community.

What is the commitment?

If you join our Advisory Board, you will serve for a three-year term and you can continue to the end of the term of office even if your child leaves the school. You may resign at any time by giving notice to the Clerk of the Advisory Board.

Of course, being a member does take up time. The Advisory Board meetings are usually held four times a year alongside regular opportunities for you to visit the school.

You will need to set aside time to be able to be an effective member, time to prepare for meetings, for visiting the school, and undertaking training.

What is expected of an Advisory Board Member?

We want a parent/carer who:

- Currently has child or children in our school
- Has an open and enquiring mind
- Shows a willingness to listen and make informed judgements
- Is able to work well with others
- Is interested in education generally and our school in particular
- Has a desire to play a part in improving our school
- Is willing to give about 10 hours per term to attend meetings, training and background reading
- Has the skills/experience that can be applied to the role

If you match the above description, you could be the very person to join us. Everyone has something to offer and we want people from as many backgrounds and interests as possible.

How do I represent parents?

As a parent member of the board your role is to bring a parental perspective to the issues discussed not to act as a representative for parents.

It can sometimes be a difficult balance to strike. On occasions, parents may approach you with concerns but you should not become personally involved, instead you should guide parents to the appropriate lines of action and procedures.

Equally you will need to separate your role as a board member from your role as a parent. You are not there to promote the interests of your own children but of all children.

Don't worry, there is plenty of advice and an induction programme that will support you in the role.

What are the personal benefits of being a member?

Being involved on the advisory board offers many rewards. Our members feel they benefit from:

- An insight into the wider perspective of the school
- The opportunity to develop new skills and experiences
- The opportunity to work with our team of members and staff in developing our school
- A sense of achievement in making a difference to our school
- Entitled to "reasonable time off" by employers to carry out their duties

The role of the board is diverse and you will have the opportunity to be involved in many areas from pupil welfare to curriculum development, every member is guaranteed to broaden their skills and knowledge in some way.

What support will I get in the role?

An induction programme is overseen by the school and provides an opportunity for members to understand their duties and enable them to become effective in their role.

The Trust provide an induction meeting to welcome you to the trust, to provide you with an overview of the organisation and to explain the role and responsibilities of the advisory board.

The Trust and school also provide other training and development activities to help you meet the ongoing needs of the advisory board.

A knowledge and skills audit will be carried out to establish areas for personal development for individual members.

The Trust develop members further by providing regular communications by email to keep you up-to-date on news and key issues.

How do I apply?

Applying to be a parent member is easy to do.

When a vacancy arises on the Advisory Board, the school will write to all parents to make you aware.

Firstly, you should check that you are eligible to apply by reading the list of criteria as to why you may not be – this is included in the nomination form.

Next, complete the nomination form and write a brief personal statement (250 words maximum) to support your nomination.

If we have more applications than vacancies, then an election will be arranged. This will mean that your personal statement will be circulated to all parents with a ballot paper.

For the protection of children, all appointments are subject to a declaration of eligibility and a vetting process. Appointments will only be confirmed after subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

