



The BAWB Federation  
Bainbridge, Askrigg, and West Burton Primary Schools  
*Mid-Dale Excellence in Education*  
Executive Headteacher: Miss Charlotte L. Harper

28<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Dear Parent

## **ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR**

I am writing to let you know that there is a vacancy for a parent Governor for which we will be holding an election. The governing board, when it is complete, will be made up of 11 Governors of which 2 will be elected by the parents. There is currently 1 parent governor place to be filled.

The term 'parent' includes anyone who has custody of a child registered at any of our three schools, as well as 'natural' parents. Parents can stand for election and vote in secret in the election, if a ballot is needed.

Please note that, in line with statutory constitutional requirements, the governing board does not have a parent representative from each individual school in the federation but two parents overall, elected by the parents, and from any of the federation's communities.

As well as parents, the governing body is made up of a governor nominated by the Local Authority (the County Council), school staff, the headteacher and governors appointed by the rest of the governing body (co-opted governors). In voluntary controlled and aided schools there are also foundation governors.

Parent Governors have a four year term of office and continue to serve even if their child(ren) leaves the school during this period.

### What Do Governors Do?

The governors' work affects most aspects of the school's work.

Once appointed or elected, all governors must operate in the best interest of pupils, not as representatives to lobby on behalf of their constituency. Their task is to govern the school. This means focusing on the core functions of providing strategic leadership, holding the headteacher to account and making sure the school's money is well spent. This is a demanding task for which all governors need to have, or develop, relevant and appropriate skills.

The governors, together as a body, have a range of legal responsibilities, so being a governor is an important commitment and new governors should be willing to attend training to help them learn what is entailed.

We are looking for governors to fill the following skills gaps as identified by the Governing Body:

- Leadership experience in education, governance or another sector
- Communication with a variety of audiences
- Innovation, research
- School financial management
- Special educational needs
- Marketing
- Literacy, maths or other curriculum interests

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### What is the role of a governing body?

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Carrying out the Performance Management of the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders e.g. parents, staff and the wider school community
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Ensuring financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

The governors, together as a body, have a range of legal responsibilities, being a governor is an important commitment and the Local Authority and school will provide induction training.

### What is expected of governors?

- To acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- To strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- To observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- To accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.

### 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. The Parent Governors speak as parents: they can't speak for all parents.

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

Yes, but they are unlikely to apply to most parents considering becoming a parent governor. The restrictions are contained in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, regulation 16 and subsequent amendment Regulations. A copy of these is attached as a Self Declaration form. Parents putting themselves forward for election will be required to sign this form and return it with a nomination form. If any of the restrictions apply you should not proceed with your nomination as a governor. Also, you are disqualified from election or appointment as a

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parent governor if you are an elected member of the local authority (-or if you are paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any twelve month period commencing on 1 August and finishing on 31 July).

Governors are subject to enhanced DBS checks and the elected parent will be provided, by the school with the requisite information as to how to access the on-line application form to complete. Following this, the school administrator or headteacher must be notified and the governor is required to take proof of identity (as detailed in the list of Valid Identity Documents) into school. The headteacher will then complete the verification form to the DBS Unit at County Hall for checking and forwarding to the DBS, Liverpool. The term of office of the successful candidate (s) can commence prior to a clear enhanced DBS being received by the school. However, it is essential that whilst the check is being processed the school should ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are adhered to.

It is recommended that you discuss this with me if you have any concerns over issues which may be highlighted by the Enhanced DBS as they may not exclude you from acting as a Parent Governor.

### How are Parent Governors Elected?

Parent Governors must be people (aged at least 18) who have a child(ren) at the school when they are elected. Nomination forms are attached. Each form must be signed by the candidate. Candidates can also make a short statement about themselves - a simple form for this purpose is provided. Please return the form to me as quickly as possible.

If more nominations are received than there are places to fill, there will be a secret ballot and I will send to each parent, ballot forms (1 per parent) and envelopes for their return. The form explains how votes may be cast.

If the number of nominations received is the same as the number of places to be filled, then those people will be declared elected. If there are fewer, those nominated will be declared elected and it will be for the governing body to fill any remaining vacancy by appointing a parent governor.

**The rules for the election** are written down in Procedures set by the Local Authority, and these can be inspected at the school.

### Result of the Election

The names of those elected will be displayed at the school for at least seven days and will be included in the next edition of the school prospectus or placed on the school website.

Anyone having any query about the election is invited to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher and Returning Officer

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATION IS Noon on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

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