



## Kirk Hammerton Church of England Primary School and Staveley Community Primary School

21<sup>st</sup> September 2016

Dear Parent

### Federation Update and Election of Parent Governors

At a meeting of the joint Governing Bodies of our schools last night – Governors agreed to proceed with plans to federate with each other. Governors agreed the move is in the best interests of both schools – offering wider opportunities to children and Staff, freeing up leadership time that can be better spent focusing on school priorities and giving strength and resilience to the schools collectively too.

Our date of Federation has been agreed as **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**.

I am also writing to let you know that there is to be an election of Parent Governors for the Federated Governing Body. The federated governing body, when it is complete, will be made up of eleven Governors across both schools of which two Parent Governors will be elected by the parents of Staveley and Kirk Hammerton Schools. **Please note this is not two parent governors from Staveley and two parent governor from Kirk Hammerton, it is two parent governors in total, as explained in the federation document.**

### THE CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATION IS 6<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER

The term “parent” includes anyone who has custody of a child registered at either school, as well as “natural” parents. Parents can stand for election and vote in secret in the election, if a ballot is needed.

As well as parents, the governing body is made up of one governor nominated by the Local Authority (the County Council), one member of the school Staff, the Headteacher, two Foundation Governors and four governors appointed by the rest of the governing body (Co-opted 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 schools. This means focusing on the core functions of providing strategic leadership, holding the headteacher to account and making sure both schools’ money is well spent. This is a demanding task for which all governors need to have, or develop, relevant and appropriate skills.

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and Nursery School

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Head Teacher Miss Emma E Miller



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 with a variety of skills for the newly formed Governing Body. Co-Opted Governors will be agreed based on the skills they can bring to the team:

Membership of the GB requires a focus on a range of skills, experience and interests; this could include:

- Leadership experience in education, governance or another sector
- Communication with a variety of audiences
- Innovation, research
- School financial management
- Personnel management
- Special educational needs
- Buildings and maintenance
- Health and safety
- 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 communities
- Contributing to both schools’ 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 schools 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 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 one of the schools when they are elected. Nomination forms are enclosed. Each form must be signed by the candidate.

Candidates can also make a short statement about themselves - a simple form for this purpose will be provided with nomination forms. 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 schools.

### **Result of the Election**

The names of those elected will be displayed at the schools for at least seven days and will be placed on the school website.

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

Yours sincerely

E Mellor  
Headteacher and Returning Officer

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATION IS 6<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER.**