St Mary & St John CE Primary School

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Headteacher: Rebekah Stott

Friday 10th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Parent Governor Vacancy

There is a vacancy for a parent governor on our school's governing body and we are writing to invite nominations to fill this vacancy. We are looking forward to welcoming one new parent or carer onto the governing body, so please let us know if you are interested. Or, if you know of someone else who you think would make a good parent governor, please encourage them to think about putting their name forward.

The governing body has an extremely important role. They are responsible for the strategic direction of the school, working in partnership with the headteacher, promoting high standards of educational achievement and ensuring our resources are used to maximum impact. Governors do not have power personally in the work of the school, but when they act collectively, as a corporate body rather than as individuals, they can have significant impact.

Parent governors are a vital part of the school's governing body. They also help to ensure the body is connected with the parents and carers at the school (although you are not expected to be a spokesperson for parents/carers).

The governors particularly welcome nominations from groups currently under-represented on the governing body.

In looking to fill this vacancy, the governors have identified the following skills, experience and attributes that they feel would help strengthen the governing body:

- Interest in playing an active part in our school community to help set the strategic direction of our school;
- Motivated to ensure that finances of the school are spent well (experience in financial planning and budgeting is helpful but not a requirement);
- Ability to work as a team in partnership with the headteacher, school staff and other governors;
- We encourage nominations from all personal and professional backgrounds. Specifically, no prior experience in education is required.

All governors receive training to help them carry out their role. Oxfordshire Governor Services runs a wide variety of training courses for governors which you can attend, including an induction course for new governors – we expect all our governors to complete induction training.

Nominations must be from parents or carers with children at the school on the day that nominations close.[1]

If you would like to stand for election, please complete and sign the enclosed nomination form and return it to the school office by hand or by email to office.3834@ssmj.oxon.sch.uk no later than 12 noon on Friday 24th January 2025. You can nominate yourself. We encourage you to include a few details about yourself and why you would like to become a governor.

[1] The enclosed sheet summarises the disqualification criteria to serve as a governor. Anyone standing for election must certify that they are not disqualified for any reason listed. All governors must apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The school will arrange that. Parents/carers who have paid employment in the school for 500 hours per academic year or more or who are elected members of the Local Authority are not eligible to stand in these elections.

An election, by secret ballot, will be held if more than one nomination is received. If an election is needed, ballot papers and details of the procedure will be sent to all parents. These ballot papers will give the names and a short statement from each of the candidates, so please watch out for that!

If you would like to know more about becoming a parent governor, please get in touch with Tony Pound or Charlotte Ryland, the current parent governors. They will be pleased to talk to you about the role. Tony (tony@journeyhappyfp.com) has two children in the school, Caitlin in Year 4, and Maisie in Year 1. Charlotte (ryland.charlotte@gmail.com) has one child in the school, Maryann in Year 4. Alternatively, please get in touch with us by e-mail (ssmjgovernors@gmail.com) to find out more about what is involved. **The enclosed fact sheet also contains further information about being a parent governor**.

Please think about taking on this worthwhile role or encourage other parents to volunteer. We need enthusiastic and committed parent governors to make the governing body as effective as it can be and as representative as possible of our diverse and energetic school community.

Yours sincerely,

Rebekah Stott, Headteacher Sarah Franklin, Chair of Governors

Election of Parent Governors

Nomination Form

Please return this form to the school office by hand or by email to office.3834@ssmj.oxon.sch.uk by midday on Friday 24th January 2025

Your name:	
Address:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	

Please tick✓

	I declare that I have a child on roll at the school and am eligible and willing to serve as a parent governor
	I confirm that I am not disqualified from becoming a parent governor (see attached disqualification criteria)
	I understand that the post requires me to hold a DBS certificate (the school will apply for the check on your behalf if you are elected)
	I confirm that I am able to fulfil the role including by attending meetings as required, and by contributing to governance work outside formal meetings.

Signed:	
Date:	

We encourage you to please include a few details about yourself and why you would like to become a governor in the box below (no more than 100 words). If an election is needed, this will be circulated to all parents to help them decide whom to vote for. You will be able to provide and/or amend detail ahead of any potential election.

Parent Governor Fact Sheet

The St Mary & St John Governing Body is made up of 14 governors: three parent governors; the Headteacher and one other staff governor; the Vicar of Cowley St John and seven other foundation governors; and one local authority governor. Parent governors have all the same powers and duties as other governors.

The Governing Body meets six or seven times a year, usually once per term, in the evening. Meetings are held sometimes in person at school and sometimes online. Individual governors are also asked to take responsibility for overseeing particular areas in the work of the school — for example, school finance and budget monitoring, attendance, admissions — and this may involve additional meetings with school staff or with governor colleagues, at times agreed to suit everyone involved. We also invite governors to come into school occasionally during the school day so they can understand how the school operates and see improvements for themselves.

To be eligible to stand for election as a parent governor, you have to have parental responsibility for a pupil at the school. Having "parental responsibility" is not limited to biological parents, but will cover you if you are a step-parent, foster parent, grandparent bringing up the child, or permanent partner of the child's biological parent. A few people cannot be school governors; those who have been made bankrupt or who have been in prison for certain offences may not serve for some years afterwards. School staff are not eligible to stand as parent governors if they are employed for 500 hours or more per year. If you have any doubts as to your eligibility on any of these grounds, please contact the school office/headteacher.

A candidate for a parent governor post must have a child on the school roll (Years R to 6) at the time the election is held. However, parent governors do not have to resign if their children leave the school before their term of office has expired.

A candidate is a *representative* member of the parent body rather than a delegate:

- Parent governors do not have to try to represent the views of all parents.
- They should communicate with them about issues that arise, but only in so far as is reasonable, and not about confidential matters.
- When decisions have to be made by the Governing Body, each parent governor is free to vote in accordance with his/her own views.

The Governance handbook and competency framework emphasises the importance of the skills, experience and personal attitudes brought by each governor. In addition, it is essential that all new governors attend the Induction Course provided by Governor Services for newly appointed governors so that you are fully aware of your role and can contribute effectively to the work of the Governing Body team.

Composition of the Governing Body

The governing body of St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School comprises the following members:

Number	Governor Type	How they are given their place
3	**Parent Governors:** Tony Pound Charlotte Ryland Vacancy	Elected by parents and carers
1	**Vicar of Cowley St John:** The Revd Martha Weatherill	Ex-officio: by virtue of the position they hold
7	**Foundation Governors:** Sarah Franklin Shakeel Ahmed Tim Foster Ben Klooss Laurence Price Ed Weightman Vacancy	Appointed by the Diocese or Parochial Church Council
1	**Local Authority Governor:** Vacancy	Nominated by County Councillors/LA, appointed by the governing body
1	**Staff Governor:** Jane Godby	Elected by school staff
1	**Headteacher:** Rebekah Stott	Ex-officio: by virtue of the position they hold

For further detail about our governors, committee memberships and minutes from our meetings, please see: https://ssmj.oxon.sch.uk/our-school/governors/

Guidance on Terms of Office

- Governors are elected for the term of four years unless specified otherwise on the Instrument of Government, but they may resign at any time.
- Parent governors may continue to hold office until the end of their term of office even if their child leaves the school.
- If an elected governor decides to resign before their term of office is up the school must hold new elections.

- Any governor elected to take the place of another governor who has resigned early is elected for a full term of office.

Qualifications and Disqualifications

Governors

Regulation 17, Schedule 4 of The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 covers the qualifications and disqualifications of governors for Maintained Schools.

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his or her election or appointment and cannot be a registered pupil at the school.

A governor must not also be a clerk to the governing body at which they are a governor.

A person cannot hold more than one governor post at the same school at the same time.

A person is disqualified from being a parent governor if they are an elected member of the LA or paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours (i.e. for more than one-third of the hours of a full-time equivalent) in any consecutive twelve month period (at the time of election or appointment).

A person is disqualified from being a local authority governor if they are eligible to be a staff governor at the school.

A person is disqualified from being a governor of a particular school if they have failed to attend the meetings of the governing body of that school for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting they failed to attend, without the consent of the governing body. This does not apply to the headteacher or to foundation governors appointed by virtue of their office.

A foundation, local authority, co-opted or partnership governor at the school who is disqualified for failing to attend meetings is only disqualified from being a governor of any category at the school during the twelve month period starting on the date on which they were disqualified.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a school if, in summary, that person:

- is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order; an interim bankruptcy restrictions order; debt relief restrictions order; an interim debt relief restrictions order; or their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; a disqualification order under the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002; or an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order)
- has been removed from the office of trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity, or under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from being concerned in the management or control of any body

- has been removed from office as an elected governor within the last five years
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children or young people
- is barred from any regulated activity relating to children
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 or section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- is disqualified from working with children or from registering for child-minding or providing day care
- is disqualified from being an independent school proprietor, teacher or employee by the Secretary of State
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a governor or since becoming a governor
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has received a prison sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20 years ending with the date preceding the date of appointment/election as a governor
- subject to certain exceptions for overseas offences that do not correlate with a UK offence, has at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- has been convicted and fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school or educational premises during the five years ending with the date immediately preceding appointment/election or since appointment or election as a governor
- refuses a request by the clerk to make an application to the Disclosure And Barring Service for a criminal records certificate.

Anyone proposed or serving as a governor who is disqualified for one of these reasons must notify the clerk to the governing body.

Eligibility Criteria – Who is eligible to be nominated and to vote in a parent governor election

A.1 Parent governors (regulation 6 and Schedule 1) Parent governors are elected by other parents at the school. Subject to disqualifications set out above, any parent which includes a person with parental responsibility, or carer, of a registered pupil at the school at the time of election is eligible to stand for election as a parent governor. Parent governors may continue to hold office until the end of their term of office even if their child leaves the school.

The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools
Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and local authorities in England August 2017