



## Why volunteer to be a school governor at Carrington Junior School?

School governors make a valuable contribution to children's education, opportunities and futures. If you would like to have the opportunity to make a positive difference to young people in our village then please read on.

Being a school governor is a challenging but hugely rewarding role. It will give you the chance to make a real difference to young people, give something back to your local community and use and develop your skills in a board-level environment. You will also be joining the largest volunteer force in the country: there are over a quarter of a million volunteers governing state funded schools in England.

Schools need governing boards that have a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective. Ofsted (the national inspection body for schools) has repeatedly noted that the most effective schools demonstrate effective leadership and management – which includes the governing board.

### Who can become a school governor?

Anyone aged 18 or over can be a governor or trustee (but there are some exceptions) and you do not need to be a parent. There is no requirement for you to have an understanding of the education system, just the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. There is plenty of support and training available to help you learn about education. Schools need and benefit from a range of professional knowledge on their governing board including education, finance, human resources, legal, marketing and public relations, property and estates management, and organisational change.

At this point in time we are particularly keen to appoint governors with experience in education, law, finance and estates management. All skills are welcome though, and by far the most important is a commitment to the children and a willingness to learn and become part of the governor team.

As a governor you will be able to:

- use your own experience of education and life beyond school to inform conversations
- develop and utilise your skills in a board-level environment
- make a valuable contribution to education and your community
- support and challenge the school so that it improves for pupils and staff
- bring your unique experiences, perspectives and insights into decision-making in the interests of the school community

### What type of governor will I be if I join Carrington Junior School Board

Carrington Junior School is a school controlled by the local authority and you will be known as a governor. (If you were volunteering in an academy you may be known as a trustee).

There are also different categories of governor including parent, staff and local authority. Currently we shall be looking to appoint/elect one staff and one parent governor. If you do not have a connection of this nature to the school, you will be a co-opted governor invited to join the board for the skills you can contribute. The type of governor you will become depends on your situation; however, all governors have the same roles and responsibilities once part of the governing board.

### What do governors do?

The governing board provides strategic leadership and accountability in schools. It has three key functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Governors set the aims and objectives for the school and set the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives. They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher. In action, this means:

- Appointing and performance reviewing the head teacher and senior leaders, including making decisions about pay
- Managing budgets and deciding how money is spent
- Engaging with pupils, staff, parents and the school community
- Sitting on panels and making decisions about things like pupil exclusions and staff disciplinary
- Addressing a range of education issues within the school including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special needs, staff workload and teacher recruitment
- Looking at data and evidence to ask questions and have challenging conversations about the school
- Governors must be prepared to behave in an ethical way and adopt the Nolan principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Governors should also be committed to their role and to young people; confident in having courageous conversations; curious with an enquiring mind; able to challenge the status quo to improve things; collaborative to build strong relationships; critical to improve their own work and that of the board; and creative in problem solving and being innovative.

Download National Governance Association- [role descriptions for governors](#)

### **What will be expected of me?**

The average time commitment over the school year is five to eight hours per month, although it will vary depending on the needs of the school and the role. This includes meetings, background reading and school visits. As well as full governing board meetings, many schools have various committees and link governor roles which you will be expected to contribute to –depending on each individual’s skills and interests and the needs of the school.

Like magistrates or members of a jury, school governors have a right to reasonable time off work for their public duties, although this may be unpaid. Your company’s HR department will be able to tell you about its policy.

Each school sets a term of office for its governors– this is normally four years. Many people choose to serve multiple terms, however as a volunteer you can resign before your term is finished if your circumstances change.

Each individual governor is a member of a governing board, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the governing board; decisions are the joint responsibility of the governing board.

Governance is a voluntary role and therefore it is not paid; but we do have a policy to support some expenses.

### **Ready to get involved?**

#### **Contact us about becoming a school governor**

Email -in the first instance [office@carringtonjunior.co.uk](mailto:office@carringtonjunior.co.uk)

Your enquiry will be passed to the Chair of governors and /or the headteacher and one or other of us will get back to you.

Please leave your email and mobile phone number.

### **What happens next?**

Our school has a recruitment process for volunteers that includes speaking with the chair and headteacher, completing an application form, visiting the school and may also include observing a governing board meeting. These are an opportunity for the school to ensure you are right for their governing board and for you to decide that school is right for you, helping both to make an informed decision.

It is good practice for schools to take up references before confirming their decision to appoint you so do be prepared to provide these if requested. You will need to complete a declaration of interests for to declare any conflicts of interest you will have including conflicts of loyalty and financial interests – this information

must be published by the school on its website. You must undergo an enhanced DBS check, and your appointment will be subject to this – this will be carried out by the school. Once all this is in place, the full governing board can then make a decision about your appointment.

Currently Governance and the processes above are being carried out on line in line with COVID guidance.

### **What development, training and support is available?**

There is no requirement for you to have any specific training to be a governor. We have an induction and mentoring process to help you get up to speed. There is plenty of training and support available for new volunteers and access to relevant information.

We recognise it takes time to get up to speed and see how governance works over an academic year cycle and if you apply and end up joining us you will join a committed governor team that will support you on your journey.

### **Asking questions**

If you would like to know more or have any questions then please contact our headteacher, Mrs A Majcher, via school office, [office@carringtonjs.co.uk](mailto:office@carringtonjs.co.uk) or Chair of Governors, Anne Sheddick, [chaircarringtonjunior@gmail.com](mailto:chaircarringtonjunior@gmail.com)