

# Governor Newsletter Worlebury St. Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

November 2014

## **WANTED – four new governors. Could you be one?**

Since the October Governor Newsletter, the Governing Body has met and agreed on our new constitution structure (something we legally have to do by September 2015). As a result, we are now looking to recruit two new parent governors and two Foundation governors.

*Governors are often described as "critical friends" to the school. Critical as in challenging, asking those difficult questions, but also critical as in essential, as any good friend is.*

The role of a school governor is to contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

A key consideration in the appointment and election of all new governors should be the skills and experience the governing body needs to be effective. We have recently undertaken a skills audit and identified the following areas of skills and experience that

we would like our new governors to have if possible, or be willing and capable to develop such skills:

- Health and safety
- Finance
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)
- Equalities
- Education – a practitioner
- Data analysis

In particular, we are keen to recruit someone who would like to take on the Health and Safety governor role which Miranda Pincott has kindly been undertaking until we can recruit someone.

All governors need a strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for children, the inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and the willingness to learn. They need good inter-personal skills, appropriate levels of literacy in English and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data. Foundation governors need the skills to understand the ethos of the school and its implications for the way it is governed.

To be an effective Worlebury St. Paul's governor you need to have the desire to actively contribute to making our school the very best it can be for each and every one of our precious and unique learners. We also need you to have energy, enthusiasm and time available, including occasionally during school hours, to attend meetings (6 main governing body meetings a year), read circulated papers, undertake school visits and write up your visits. Governors are also involved in things like recruitment so there will be additional time required as and when governors are needed.

*Any governor can be contacted via the school office, or you can email the Chair of Governors [cofg@staff.worlebury.n-somerset.sch.uk](mailto:cofg@staff.worlebury.n-somerset.sch.uk)*

*Worlebury St. Paul's C of E VA Primary School, Woodspring Avenue, Worlebury, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset, BS22 9RH*

We plan to partner up new governors with a buddy, and support is always available from other governors and North Somerset Governor Services so you should know you are not on your own.

All new governors will be expected to undertake an induction and to attend training (a few hours in the evening approximately once a month for the initial training and then occasional relevant courses for your particular governor role).

Governors serve a term of four years (although you can step down at any point).

In return for your time and commitment you will become part of the largest volunteer group in the country, supporting our schools and staff in an ever changing and challenging academic world. You will have the opportunity to further your own skills and experience and receive training. You will have the privilege of seeing and sometimes influencing the complex inner workings of the school and knowing that by being a governor you have played a part in achieving our successes.

If you would like to find out more, the link below has a useful summary of what governors **do** and **do not** do! (Hard copies are available from the office).

[http://www.nga.org.uk/getattachment/Be-a-Governor/What-do-governors-do/What does a governor do.pdf.aspx](http://www.nga.org.uk/getattachment/Be-a-Governor/What-do-governors-do/What%20does%20a%20governor%20do.pdf.aspx)

Alternatively, please do get in contact with any current governor (names and photos are in the October Governor Newsletter, on the school website and pictures are on the board on the way into the hall). Or you can email the Chair via [cofg@staff.worlebury.n-somerset.sch.uk](mailto:cofg@staff.worlebury.n-somerset.sch.uk) for any questions.

Our Clerk to the Governing Body, Liz Mansbridge, will soon be sending out forms for nominations for Parent Governors for interested people to return. In the event that there are more than two nominations, an election will be held. Further information on this will be circulated if the situation arises.

If you are interested in putting yourself forward to be considered as a Foundation Governor, please do get in contact with Rev.

Geoff Eales on [reveales@btinternet.com](mailto:reveales@btinternet.com) or 01934 624247.

Foundation Governors are appointed by the Diocese of Bath and Wells on the recommendation of the church PCC (Parochial Church Council) and have the same role and responsibilities as other governors, with the addition of the particular purpose to safeguard the character of the school as a Voluntary Aided Church of England school and ensure it is conducted in accordance with any founding documents. This all sounds a lot more daunting than it is in reality, so please do get in contact with Geoff if you would like to find out more.

We also now have the option to co-opt governors onto the Governing Body. Co-opted governors cannot vote and do not have the responsibility that full governors have, but are people who in the opinion of the governing body have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Therefore, if you don't have the time to offer to be a full governor, but have skills that we could use, please do get in contact with the Chair (via email) so we can keep a record of potential skills available to us.

As school governors are viewed like magistrates or members of a jury they therefore have a right to ask for reasonable time off work for their public duties (which may be unpaid). So if you work, it is worth checking with your employer.

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We hope that even if you don't feel that you are the right person to put yourself forward as a governor, you will now have a better understanding about what the Governing Body does. If you do feel you could be a governor, we look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Worlebury St. Paul's Governing Body