

PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF A PARENT GOVERNOR

1. Parent governors are elected by and from among the parents of registered pupils at the school. They should be parents of pupils currently at the school at the time of their election. They are entitled to serve out their term of office even if their child has left the school.
2. The election procedure will be undertaken by the Headteacher assisted by the Clerk to the Governors. All parents, foster parents, guardians and carers of children who are registered pupils at the school are eligible to nominate and to vote candidates in the election. A few parents are disqualified from standing as candidates. These are parents who at the time of the election are either employed at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year or are an elected member of North Somerset Council. Any disagreement about eligibility should be referred to the Governor Support Manager, Children & Young People's Services.
3. When a vacancy arises, a copy of letter PG1 (Notice of Election) is to be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Headteacher, and distributed to parents. Each school may amend the letter so that it contains details appropriate to their school and the election.
4. If there are fewer, or the same number of candidates as there are vacancies, these candidates will be declared elected (Form PG3). The number of vacancies remaining should be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors and to the Governor Support Manager, Children & Young People's Services.
5. If there are more candidates than vacancies then a vote, by secret ballot shall be taken. A ballot paper (PG5) shall be distributed to each person entitled to vote. No person is allowed more than one vote per vacancy regardless of the number of children he/she has at the school. The ballot paper will state the maximum number of candidates the voter may vote for.

The Headteacher should distribute details of the candidates and the procedure for the election. It is good practice to encourage each candidate to provide a profile (of up to 100 words) of themselves. This can then be included with form PG4 if an election is required. The paperwork should also make clear the date and the time by which the ballot papers must be placed in the ballot box, should be in a conspicuous but secure place.

6. As soon as possible following the election, at a time agreed between the Headteacher and the candidates, the Clerk to the Governors, in the company of the Headteacher shall conduct the count in the presence of each candidate (or his/her representative), who shall be invited to attend as observers. The Clerk will declare the result. Ballot papers must be held securely until the count occurs, and may be disposed of after a further period of six months.
7. The Clerk and Headteacher will decide which papers are 'spoilt' on the basis that if the candidates present at the count (or their representatives) agree that the voter has not indicated clearly whom they wish to support, the paper is regarded as 'spoilt'. If all candidates can agree upon the candidate whom the voter has intended to support, then the vote will be counted as good. Decisions about 'spoilt' papers shall be made before the votes are actually counted. In the event of a dispute about a voter's intention the Headteacher's decision is final.
8. In a contested election, whether it be for one or more Governors, the principle of "first past the post" shall operate. The candidates with the highest number of votes shall be declared duly elected.
9. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher as to whether or not a recount of votes cast should take place.
10. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast for two or more candidates the Clerk to the Governors, in the presence of the candidates or their representative, shall draw lots to decide which of the candidates shall be elected.
11. As soon as it is known who is to fill the vacancy(ies), letters PG6 and PG7, notification of the result must be issued. The Clerk to the Governors must also tell the Governor Support Manager the name and the address of each successful candidate.
12. The Governor Support Manager will then write to the successful candidate enclosing a form concerning the reasons why a person may be disqualified from serving as a governor. Once this check has been completed, a further letter will be sent to confirm the appointment, the term of office and provide other details about the role and responsibility of governors.
13. The term of office of the parent governor is at the discretion of the governing body subject to it being a minimum of one year and a maximum of four years. The governing body should have decided the period of office for parent governors prior to the re-constitution of the governing body due to take place between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2006. The decision may be reviewed at any time and any change must be recorded in the Instrument of Government.
14. Vacancies for parent governors will arise at all times. Some parent governors serve their full period of office, others leave the post before that time. The timing

of the election for parent governors is a matter for each Headteacher in consultation with the governing body. It is suggested that elections should not normally take place during the second half of the summer term but be delayed until the early part of the Autumn term, thus allowing the parents of new pupils on roll the opportunity to take part in the election.

15. Where there are no candidates to fill the vacancy, the governing body is able to appoint someone to the vacancy. Before doing so, the governing body is recommended
 - to have allowed the Headteacher to run the election process twice
 - to ensure they have available the criteria for making such appointments
16. Any questions relating to the above procedure should be directed to the Director of Children & Young People's Services' representative on 01934 427381.