

Role of the Parent Governor

Parent governors play a vital role on the Link Academy Trust LAC (Local Advisory Committee), holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. Through the children, they have a first-hand experience of the delivery of the curriculum, and how the academy is perceived from the 'consumers' point of view. This enables parent governors to bring a different perspective to the strategic management of the academy. It is important for parent governors to establish a rapport with the parental body which elected/appointed him/her, whilst continuing to maintain a strategic approach to Trust governance. Although being available to advise parents on appropriate routes of action is a very important aspect of the role, it is vital that parent governors do not personally become involved in individual concerns. Apart from the possibility of this jeopardising appropriate complaints and appeals procedures, no governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school.

Parent governors are representative parents rather than representatives of parents. To effectively fulfil the role, parent governors should:

- make themselves known to the parent body
- try to attend in-service training sessions
- listen impartially to concerns raised by parents
- guide parents regarding appropriate lines of action and procedures
- present a balanced view of issues, representing different sections of the community

Achieving a balance between being the impartial representative parent and the often emotional issues relating to individual children's education, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance include:

- make yourself available to parents
- never press your own child's case at the expense of others
- never promise to 'solve a problem' on your own
- be wary of bringing an individual's issue to meetings without following the agreed procedures
- abide by the agreed protocol regarding agenda items and Any Other Business
- keep yourself aware of parental views and concerns
- play an active part in governor meetings

Although this is a very delicate role, there is ample support from the Clerk of the LAC and the Governance Professional. There is also training available. Effective parent governors will find working alongside the other members of the Local Advisory Board both interesting and rewarding in that their efforts will ensure that the work of the Local Advisory Board fulfils its duties to all children.