

Whiston Junior and Infant school

New governor induction pack



Whiston Junior and Infant School

Introduction

Welcome to your new governor induction pack produced by Whiston Junior and Infant School. This pack helps to explain the roles and responsibilities of being a governor, how the governing body is structured in our school and how the governing body carries out its duties.

This pack includes the following:

- School aims,
- School context, key strengths and actions
- The responsibilities of a governor
- The different types of governor
- The responsibilities of the Governing Body, Head teacher, Leadership Team and the Chair of Governors
- Being an effective governor
- The governing body structure and membership
- Useful terms and abbreviations
- Induction checklist

Relevant supporting information can be found on the school website at

www.whistonjunior-infant.co.uk, where you will find:

- School aims and mission statement
- School Prospectus
- Newsletters
- Term dates
- Staff lists
- Links to the Governors Handbook and Competency Framework for Governance
- Copies of the school policies
- Links to Ofsted Reports
- Pupil Premium information and much more!

School Aims

The school aims to provide quality education for children between four and eleven years of age.

Our aim is to provide high standards of teaching and learning through:

- ❖ A rich, broad, balanced and creative curriculum which sustains the engagement of all learners.
- ❖ Operating an environment which is safe, healthy, caring and supportive for everyone.
- ❖ Encouraging self-reliance and pride in all achievements.
- ❖ Developing learning skills and a love of learning, including the ability to question, enquire and independent in their approach to learning.
- ❖ Promoting the development of tolerance and respect for others, regardless of race, creed or gender and ensure that all learners have equality of opportunity.

School Context, Key Strengths and Ofsted Actions

Whiston J & I School is part of White Woods Multi Academy Trust (WWMAT). WWMAT was established by three self-converting primary schools in September 2013. Canklow Woods Primary, Whiston Worrygoose Infant & Junior and Whiston Infant & Junior schools had previously been part of a soft federation. In November 2014, Wickersley Northfield Primary School joined White Woods Primary Academy Trust. The Academy is managed by the Chief Executive Officer, John Henderson, on behalf of five directors selected from the member schools. Since 2016, a further number of other schools have joined the Academy. See <http://www.whitewoodsprimaryacademytrust.co.uk/> for further details.

Whiston J & I School is based in a reasonably privileged area of Rotherham. It is a smaller than average school with 215 children: 10% EAL, 14.7% BME pupils; 8.1% SEND; 6.5% FSM and 14.7% SOA. These are all **below National and LA averages**. Whiston J & I School is an over-subscribed school, and the latest OFSTED report stated that: *'there is highly effective leadership'* and *'the plan for school improvement is firmly rooted in secure evidence.'* (OFSTED MAY 2016).

Key strengths and actions (2016/17): We believe Whiston J & I School is a **good school** with **outstanding features**. We are built on underlying core values that drive **our vision to become an outstanding school, in which every child develops a love of learning and achieve the necessary academic and life skills (social and emotional intelligence; communication & self-belief)** to enable them to be the **best they can be** and fulfil their potential for their life in the 21st Century.

Findings from the one day inspection on May 10th 2016, found that Whiston Junior and Infant continues to be a **good school** with a vast range of specific strengths, which included:

- ❖ *'A catalyst for the improvements to teaching and learning is the implementation of a new, exciting curriculum.'*
- ❖ *'The vibrant displays throughout the school promote learning, particularly through celebrating the **best that each pupil can do**. This approach reflects the school's determination to ensure that **all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed**. The wide range of topics and themes helps pupils understand British values as well as preparing them effectively for life in modern Britain.'*
- ❖ *'Leaders and governors make sure that **safeguarding arrangements are secure**. The policies concerned with safeguarding pupils are detailed and thorough. Regular training, alongside effective systems and procedures, ensure that staff are keenly aware of risks to pupils' well-being and take prompt action to protect them when necessary.'*
- ❖ *'The governing body provides strong challenge to school leaders. Governors are highly committed to their role and access training as required to help them fulfil this effectively.'*

Actions: We are not quite outstanding yet because leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- *the main success criteria in the school's plan to develop excellence are measurable;*
- *pupils make consistently good progress to reach the standards they are capable of in the Reception Year and key stage 1*
- *strategies introduced to raise the attainment of boys so that it is similar to that of girls are effective*
- *the required information about the governing body is published on the school's website*

The Responsibilities of a Governor

When becoming a Governor in our school we would ask you to complete:

- A skills and knowledge audit/matrix as part of the **new governor checklist**
- A enhanced DBS form
- A pecuniary interests statement (*To be given at the first governor's meeting*)

Many new governors have confessed to being quite bemused during their first meetings and some feel unprepared for the barrage of papers with which they were greeted. In order to be effective, every governor needs some basic knowledge about their school and needs to be able to set this against a wider understanding of education. For both new and experienced governors there are training courses run by the Local Authority (LA) and Learner's First. All governors are encouraged to take advantage of the training on offer. These courses are free of charge to governors.

What School Governors Do

The purpose of a school governing body is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. It has a strategic role in the development of the school but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues – that is the role of the Head Teacher.

All governing boards, no matter what type of school they govern, **have three core functions** (Governance Handbook *Jan 2017*):

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- **Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.**

You are there to:

- **Provide a strategic view** - help to set and maintain the broad framework within which the Head Teacher and the staff should run the school
- **Act as a critical friend** - provide the Head Teacher with support and offer advice and information but also to provide some challenge.
- The governing body is there to **monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness** and governors should therefore be prepared to **ask challenging questions**
- **To ensure accountability** - the Head Teacher and staff report to the governing body on the school's performance. In turn the governing body is accountable to all stakeholders on the school's overall performance

Please read pages 9 - 13 in the Governance Handbook January 2017 to find out more details

Principles and personal attributes of governors - 'The seven Cs' (*A competency Framework for Governance 2017 p.7*)

The principles and personal attributes that individuals bring to a board of governors are as important as their skills and knowledge. As such all those involved in governance should be:

- **Committed;**
- **Confident;**
- **Curious;**
- **Challenging;**
- **Collaborative;**
- **Critical and Creative.**

The Different Types of Governor

Parent Governors - parents or carers elected by other parents or carers with children at the School or, on occasion, appointed by the governing body;

Staff Governors - the Head Teacher and staff members elected by teaching and support Staff;

Community Governors - individuals chosen by governors from the local community who represent community interests;

Specific Responsibilities of the Governing Body - support decisions to:

- Set the overall budget for the school
- Decide on the number of staff
- Decide on the level of pay for teachers
- Help to decide the priorities for the school when the school improvement plan is being developed
- Ensure the national curriculum is taught to all pupils
- Set targets for pupil achievement
- Publish national test and exam results
- Compare the performance of their school to similar schools
- Receive information about the quality of teaching in the school
- Have a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns
- Ensure health and safety issues are addressed
- Set the times of school sessions
- Consult the Head Teacher when making decisions
- Ask challenging questions
- Help develop school policies and procedures
- Consider the repair and maintenance of school buildings
- Consider the use of school premises outside school hours
- Appoint committees of governors to look at specific issues such as finance, staffing, curriculum and premises.

Governing Bodies Don't:

- Inspect the school
- Report on the quality of teaching after visiting the school
- Authorise all expenditure
- Share concerns about staff capability
- Decide on how pupils are taught different subjects
- Have the right to exclude a pupil
- Write the school's policies on their own
- Rubberstamp recommendations from the Head Teacher
- Automatically approve all apologies for absence for meetings sent by governors
- Need to be aware of the performance objectives which had been set for individual teachers
- Write the OfSTED action plan

The key responsibilities of the Head Teacher are:

- The internal organisation, management and control of the school
- Performance Management of all staff
- Formulating aims, objectives and policies for the governing body to consider adopting
- Advising on and implementing the governing body strategic framework
- Giving governors the information they needed to help the school raise its standards
- Reporting on progress at each meeting

The key responsibilities for the Leadership Team are:

- To support the head teacher in the day to day running of the school
- To oversee an OFSTED area for the next inspection

The key responsibilities of the Chair of Governors are (Governance Handbook 2017 p35):

- Responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the board
- Give the board clear leadership and direction
- Encourage the board to work together as an effective team
- Ensure everybody is actively contributing relevant skills and experience
- Ensure everybody is actively participating constructively in meetings
- Ensure everybody is actively involved in the work of any committees
- Ensure that everyone understands what is expected of them and receives appropriate induction, training and development
- To have honest conversations, as necessary, if anyone appears not to be committed or is ineffective in their role.

The Chair has a pivotal role to play in leading the governing body to work as a team. The Chair must have a clear view of the governing body and understand the shared visions for the school and know how that vision is to be achieved.

Being an effective school Governor - What Makes an Effective School Governor?

Committed, Confident, Curious, Challenging, Collaborative, Critical and Creative.

- You are **committed** to devoting the required time and energy to achieve the best outcomes for young people
- You are **confident** of an independent mind, to express opinions and to play an active role
- You are **curious**, possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach
- You are able to provide appropriate **challenge** to drive for improvements
- You are prepared to actively listen to and work **collaboratively** with others to build stronger working relationships
- Understand the value of **critical** friendship which enables both challenge and support
- You are open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving; recognising the value of innovation and **creative** thinking to organisational development and success.

(Please read the competency Framework for Governance 2017 for further details)

How Much Time Do Governor's give?

A governor's term of office is usually for four years, but as a volunteer you can resign at any time. Your main task is to attend meetings of the school governing body. Meetings of the full governing body normally take place once each term. Each committee normally meets once a term, but may meet more frequently depending upon current issues the committees are involved with. The full governing body meetings may last around 3 hours.

We actively encourage our Governors to visit school as part of their role in monitoring and evaluation to observe practice, meet with staff and to familiarise themselves with the school. Governors are usually welcome, by invitation, to attend school performances, events and some staff training. However, we recognise that not all governors can visit school during the day due to work commitments.

Be Prepared for a Meeting:

- Read the papers before the meeting
- Make sure you have all the necessary papers; prepare your thoughts and questions before the meeting
- Bring with you your diary and your annotated papers

Attendance

Any governor who, without permission, is absent from meetings of the full governing body for a continuous period of six months will cease to be a governor. If you need to offer apologies for a meeting this should be done through the Chair or the clerk in advance of the meeting with the reason for your absence noted.

Confidentiality

- Governing body meetings are not open to the public. Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed.
- Governors observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the governing body in meetings and from their visits to school as governors.
- How an individual governor votes should always be regarded as confidential.
- The minutes of any part of the meeting that are confidential should be kept separate.
- In the main, confidential items will be those where the privacy of an individual needs to be respected.

Governors and the law

The intention of the law is that governors should be accountable and business should be transparent with any confidential items being kept to a minimum. Any old documents governors wish to dispose of should be shredded, given the sensitive nature of some of the information.

Frequency, notice & duration of meetings

You will usually be given a terms notice of the next full governing body meeting date. You should receive your papers for the formal full governing body meetings seven days before the meeting with the papers setting out details of the date, time and place.

Committee meetings are organised by the committees and contact is made by email or telephone giving governors details of agendas or necessary information they need for a meeting.

Agenda

- The agenda, which will be contained with your notification for the meeting, will list all the items that are to be discussed at the meeting.
- Consider the agenda carefully before the meeting and make notes where there are items of particular interest or importance to you or where you want to ask a question.
- You have the right to request that an item be placed on the agenda by contacting the Chair or clerk a few weeks before the meeting.
- If “Any Other Business” features on your agenda and you wish to raise an issue under this item you must discuss this with the Chair prior to the start of the meeting so the Chair can evaluate whether the meeting is an appropriate forum for the issue and can allow sufficient time for discussion.

Quorum

If a meeting of the governing body cannot be held for a lack of a quorum (50% of current membership) or has to be terminated on that account before all agenda items have been completed, the clerk must convene a further meeting as soon as reasonably practicable. If the governing body decide to terminate the meeting before all agenda items have been completed, it must first fix the date and time for a further meeting at which the outstanding items will be considered and must direct the clerk to convene that meeting accordingly.

Register of Pecuniary Interests

Governors and school staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and affairs and the interests of the school. Each Governor is required to complete this register each year. A copy for you to sign is included in the supporting information and needs to be returned to the head teacher.

Minutes

The clerk takes minutes of the meetings which are a record of what happens at that meeting. Minute takers at committee meetings are agreed at the start of the meeting. Once approved by the full governing body, the minutes are a public record and are filed in the school office.

How the Governing body is structured.

The whole Governing Body will meet once each term for a formal business meeting which looks at current issues within the school, takes a report from the head teacher and also takes feedback from the committees.

Whilst each Committee has a specific area of responsibility, the support of other committees may need to be sought before decisions can be actioned.

Each committee has a core membership and arranges its meetings within the group, however all governors are invited to attend committee meetings where they feel they wish to be involved in a specific issue.

At the moment we have only one sub-committee: **Finance, Audit and Premises (FAP)**

The Governing Body at Whiston J & I School includes the following members:

Governor Name	Attend Full GB	Attend Sub-committees	Appt. Date	Appointed by LA / Parents/ School	Chair ? Y/N	Vice Chair ? Y/N	Other Responsibilities/Role in school	Committee membership (which)
John Henderson	1/1			Governors			WWMAT CEO	
Tina Angell	1/1	1/1	01.09.11	Governors			Head Teacher	Finance, Audit, Premises (FAP)
Mike Furness	1/1		01.04.16	Governors		Y	Recruitment	
Kate Francis-Burke	1/1			Staff			Teacher	
Craig Roberts	1/1	1/1		Staff			Teaching Assistant	Finance, Audit, Premises (FAP)
David Phillips	1/1	1/1		Governors	Y			Finance, Audit, Premises (FAP)
Joanne Archer	1/1			Parents				
Alan Bradbury	1/1			Governors				
Brendan Frazier	1/1	0/1		Parents			Safeguarding LAC SEND	Finance, Audit, Premises
Mike Jennings <i>(Linked Director not Governor)</i>	1/1			WWMAT			WWMAT Director	
New Parent Governors 2017								
Mark Kostanjsek								
Scott McClean								
Amy Morrell								
John Swallow								

Jeanette Furness, the School Business Manager (SBM) to attend Governing Body and FAP meetings in a non-voting capacity.

Useful terms and abbreviations

A

Admission limit the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted into any year of a school

AEN Additional Educational Needs. A wider term than SEN, attempting to recognise additional needs

ACE Advisory Centre for Education. A non-profit making campaigning body, which provides educational advice to parents and others

Appeals parents have the right of appeal against decisions relating to admission to schools, special educational provision and exclusion from school

Appraisal the periodic reviewing of staff to identify their future needs in terms of training and staff development generally

APR Annual Performance Review

Attainment target the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils are expected to have by the end of each national curriculum key stage

AT Attainment Target

B

Ballot a method of voting, usually secret.

Baseline assessment assessment of pupils' attainment on entry

Benchmarking the technique which permits the comparison of data between schools to allow performance to be assessed.

Best value replaces compulsory competitive tendering and confirms the need for all academies to be efficient, cost effective and responsive to the school's needs

Budget share the amount schools receive through the formula and for which the governing body has delegated responsibility under the local management of school (LMS)

BME Black and Minority Ethnic

BV Best Value

C

CAF Common Assessment Framework – A framework for assessing the needs of children and families

Capital expenditure spending on building projects and large items of equipment

Casting vote an additional vote to be used by the chair when an equal number of votes are cast

Child protection governor the governor who oversees child protection

Clerk the person appointed to carry out administrative duties to the governing body such as preparing the agenda, managing meetings and dealing with correspondence. The clerk advises the governing body on legal and procedural matters

Collective worship a single act of worship for all pupils required to take place in maintained schools

CPD continuing professional development

D

DBS Disclosure Barring Checks. A organisation created to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse by identifying unsuitable employees and volunteers working with these vulnerable groups

DDA disability discrimination act

Delegated budget money which governing bodies can use to their discretion

Delegated powers committee or the Head Teacher permitted to take action on behalf of the governing body

DEP developing excellence plan – school actions for improvement

DfE Department for Education

Devolved capital funding funding allocated to schools specifically for large capital projects

Directed Time when a teacher must be available to carry out duties, including attending staff and parents meetings under the direction of the Head Teacher

E

EHCP education and health care plan – replaces the old SEN statement

EWO education welfare officer

Ex officio an individual who is able to attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office

Exclusion pupils removed from schools for serious misconduct, either for a fixed period or permanent

Extended services a range of services or activities offered before or after the normal school day for the pupils, families and wider community

F

FTE Fixed Term Exclusion

FOI Freedom of Information

FSM free school meals

FTE full-time equivalent

H

H&S health and safety

HLTA higher level teaching assistant

HMI her majesty's inspector

HMCI her majesty's chief inspector

HSE health and safety executive

I

IBP Individual Behaviour Plan

ICT information and communications technology

IEP individual education plan, drawn up for children with special needs

IIP Investors in People

IMD Index of Multiple Deprivation

INSET in service education and training for staff

Instrument of government the legal document setting out the composition of the governing body

ISR individual school range

ITT initial teacher training

J

K

KS Key Stage - the national curriculum is divided into four key stages, key stage one pupils aged five to seven, key stage two aged seven to 11, key stage three 11 to 14 and key stage four aged 14 to 16

L

LA Local Authority

LAC Looked After Children

LEA Local Education Authority

M

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MAT Multi-Academy Trust

Mixed ability teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together

MLD Moderate Learning Difficulty

MPS Main Pay Scale

N

NAHT National Association of Head Teachers

NASUWT National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers

National curriculum the curriculum required by law to be taught in all schools. The governing body shares with the WWMAT and the Head Teacher the responsibility of ensuring that it is implemented

NCVQ National Council for Vocational Qualifications

NGA National Governors Association

NGFL National Grid for Learning

NPQH National Professional Qualification for Head Teachers

NQT Newly Qualified Teacher

NUT national union of teachers

NVQ National Vocational Qualification

O

OfSTED Office for Standards in Education. The body which arranges and sets education standards

OFSTED Categories: Outstanding (1) Good (2) Requires Improvement (3) Inadequate (4)

P

PGCE Postgraduate Certificate in Education

PI Performance Indicators

PIVATS performance indicators the value added target setting

PLASC Pupil Level Annual School Census

PM performance management

PoCA Protection of Children Act

PPA planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers (10% guaranteed non-contact time)

Prospectus information about an individual school. Must be published annually

PRU pupil referral unit

Q

QCA Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

QTS qualified teacher status

Quorum the minimum number of members at a meeting for decisions to be made

R

ROA record of achievement –annual report to parents

RAISE Reporting and Analysis for Improvement Through School Self- Evaluation

RE religious education

RI Ofsted category –Requires improvement

Risk assessment - assessment of the risks to health and safety pupils and staff are exposed to whilst undertaking specific activities e.g. school educational visits

S

SAT's standard attainment tasks used to assess attainment at the end of key stages of the national curriculum

School profile an online report to parents

SEF self-evaluation form

SEMH social, emotional and mental health

SEN special educational needs

SENDCO special educational needs and disability coordinator. The teacher responsible for coordinating SEN provision in the school

Secondments the release of staffing on a temporary basis for work elsewhere

SIMS schools information management system. A computer software package to assist with managing information on pupils, staff and resources e.g. attendance

SLA service level agreement

SLD severe learning difficulty

SLT senior leadership team

Special measures a school which, when inspected has failed to provide an acceptable standard of education

Special school a school for children and young people whose needs cannot be met in a mainstream school

Stakeholders person or group of people with an interest in a particular organisation, for example a school, stakeholders being parents, staff, pupils, governors, the community etc

STAT Sheffield tracking and assessment tool used by school

Supply teacher a teacher who works in the school on a temporary basis to cover staff absence

T

TA teaching assistant

TDA teaching and development agency

TLR's teaching and learning responsibilities

TTA teacher training agency

U

Unauthorised absence absence by pupils from school which is not otherwise authorised

UPS upper pay scale

V

Value-added the progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points

Virement the transfer of certain sums of money from one budget heading to another

W

WHJI Whiston Junior and Infant School

WWMAT White Woods Multi-Academy Trust

Whiston Junior and Infant school

New governor induction checklist



In order to be fully prepared for their duties, new governors must ensure all the necessary procedures are followed during their induction. It is good practice for schools and academies to have a governor induction procedure, which provides all the essential information from the school, or academy, as well as gathers information on the governors themselves.

The first two tables need to be completed to ensure that the governing body is fully aware of the skills and knowledge of the new governor. In this way, potential areas for training and improvement can be identified.

Following these, the checklist will be completed as the induction process progresses. Before undertaking their duties, new governors will ensure all areas of concern have been covered or discussed with the Chair/ Headteacher.

Skills and knowledge audit

Please tick where appropriate:

Skills	High level of experience	Adequate level of experience	Basic level of experience	No experience
HR				
Financial management				
Facilities management				
Curriculum				
SEND				
Data management				
Children's services				
Law				

Governor responsibilities	Extensive knowledge	Adequate knowledge	Basic level of knowledge	No knowledge
Roles and responsibilities of a governing body				
Curriculum				
SEND				
Financial management				
Data management				
Health and safety				
Safeguarding				
Pupil discipline				
School performance management				
HR in schools				
School improvement planning				
Accountability				

Whiston Junior and Infant School - New governor checklist

Action	Completed (Please tick)
Preparation	
Invited by the headteacher to visit Whiston J & I School .	
Completed DBS forms	
Welcomed to the governing body by the chair	
Toured the school and met pupils and staff.	
Received an informal briefing on the school from the headteacher, including the current issues facing the school.	
Assigned a governor mentor.	
Viewed the school's website.	
Received the dates of upcoming governors' meetings.	
Received or directed to the relevant documentation	
The Governance Handbook and	
The Competency Framework for Governors	
The school's Guidelines for Governors, including the code of conduct.	
The school's prospectus.	
Details and terms of reference for the governing body.	
Contact details for all the other governors.	
Contact details for the school.	
Calendar of the school's events.	
The school's newsletters.	
The school's Developing Excellence Plan - DEP.	
The latest Ofsted report and action plan.	
The latest annual report to parents.	

The Performance and Evaluation Policy – SEF including SEF Summary	
The school's Educational Visits Policy.	
Details of any relevant training opportunities.	
Details of the school's budget.	
A list of all the school staff, along with their responsibilities.	
A register of interests form.	
A list of all the committees, along with the relevant terms of reference.	
The Governors' Expenses Claim Policy, with the accompanying claim form.	

Understanding the processes of the governing body

Please tick when you feel you fully understand each area:

The current issues facing the governing body.	
The language and abbreviations of the education sector.	
The voting process of the governing body.	
The process for governors' visits to the school.	
The process for raising concerns and issues.	

Governor's name:	Signed:	Date:
Headteacher:	Signed:	Date: