

Governors

To contact the Chair of Governors, please email: clerk@castletiverton.school

What do school governors do?

School governors are responsible for setting school strategy together with the Head and SLT, while the Head and SLT are responsible for day-to-day operations. Governors' key functions are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Head to account for the students' educational performance, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the school's finances in the short and long term

Ultimately, we are responsible for strategic decisions, for keeping the school solvent, for ensuring that targets are set and met, and that the school meets its statutory requirements – from health and safety to SEN provision.

It's also our job to look ahead to the long term, and plan for future developments, funding, and long-term decisions.

The Headteacher (who is also a governor in most schools, CPS included) is responsible for *how* those objectives are achieved: the organisation, management and day-to-day control of the school. The governors should both challenge and support the Head; an approach often referred to as the critical friend.

Mostly our role is to observe and make sure the school is doing what it should be. Not to get actively involved. School governors do however have a few more active functions:

- They appoint the Headteacher and other senior leaders
- They appraise the Headteacher
- They set the Headteacher's pay
- They agree on pay recommendations for other staff
- They hear staff grievance appeals and disciplinary matters
- They hear pupil exclusion appeals

What do governors NOT do?

We don't get involved in the day-to-day running of the school. So, to give you one example, the decision to appoint a full time SENDCo has to be agreed by governors – it's a strategic decision – but we don't get involved in how the timetable should be organised to accommodate it.

We also have nothing whatever to do with how teaching and learning are delivered. We are not trained or qualified to make judgements on teaching, and wouldn't presume to do so. If we are not satisfied with the academic performance in a particular area we will say so and agree on targets to improve it, but we won't give any direction as to how the target is to be achieved.

So who are we?

Castle Primary School governing body is made up of 11 governors. We're all volunteers, and almost all have busy day jobs as well. There are five types of governor here:

Staff governors We have one of these, plus the Headteacher. Their function is to be representative of the staff (but not staff reps) and lend their expertise and knowledge of the school.

Parent governors are likewise representative parents, not parent reps. They have an important perspective on the school through their children's experience and a strong vested interest in the school's performance.

Community governors are made up of the three categories below. They help to strengthen links with the local community and often bring specialist skills such as finance or law. They can be either staff or parents, but don't have to be.

Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Body. *Foundation governors* are appointed by the Tiverton Co-Operative Learning Partnership (TCLP), *Local Authority governors* are appointed by the Local Authority. These last two categories are normally people recommended by Castle Primary School to the TCLP and LA.

"Staff governors are representative staff, not staff representatives"

Some governors are elected but most are appointed, so we can make sure we have the skills we need around the table. We meet once each half term as a full governing body.

What's a "lead governor"?

We appoint individual governors to take responsibility for a particular key area of importance, such as safeguarding, or health and safety. A lead governor keeps a close eye on behalf of the whole governing body, and provides a communication channel between us and the key staff responsible for the area in question. The lead governor will make sure that the school is fulfilling its legal requirements, and will support the relevant member of staff in doing so if necessary.