

20 April 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians

There is a vacancy for a parent governor on Nobel's Governing Body. In looking to fill this vacancy the Governors of the school have identified the skills, experience and attributes that they feel would help strengthen the Governing Body, which are detailed overleaf. Training and support will be available to help you develop into the role. This will include in-house mentoring and support as well as access to external governor training. Please be aware that regulations require everyone elected or appointed to a governing body to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check. This is to ensure the safety of the students. If you are elected and you subsequently decline to undergo such a check, you will disqualify yourself.

If you would like to stand for election please complete and return the form set out at pages 7-8 to my PA, Mrs Coakes ([chantal.coakes@nobel.herts.sch.uk](mailto:chantal.coakes@nobel.herts.sch.uk)) by noon on Friday 5 May 2017 (a Word version of the same is available on request, from Mrs Coakes). You will need to ask another parent of a student at Nobel to sign the form. Please give brief details about yourself (not more than 80 words) on the form, explaining why do you want to be a school governor and what special skills will you bring to the role, for example, do you have any experience in school improvement, finance, human resources, health and safety or safeguarding? If an election is needed these details will be copied and sent to all parents with the ballot papers. **Please note that the 80 word limit will be strictly enforced and result in additional wording being deleted.**

The Governing Body has determined that the term of office for a parent governor is 4 years. If you are elected you may serve the full term of office even if your child leaves the school before your term of office finishes.

Should we receive one nomination, then the person nominated will be deemed elected unopposed. If there aren't any nominations, the Governing Body has the duty to appoint a parent governor to fill the vacancy. If there are more applications than vacancies, we will hold an election and we will send you a ballot paper on Monday 8 May 2017. You may return the ballot paper either via your child, by post or deliver the same to our school reception.

Only parents of children registered at Nobel are entitled to stand or vote in the election. A parent who is paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year or is an elected member of the Local Authority may not stand for election.

Each parent will be sent one ballot paper regardless of how many children they have at the school, and each parent will have one vote as there is just the one vacancy. The ballot will be secret and you will be notified of the result as soon as possible afterwards.



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In most cases it will be obvious whether you are a parent, however, for the purpose of the election of a parent governor, a parent is:

Parents (including carers) of registered students at the school. "Parent" is defined for the purposes of the Constitution Regulations as including "any individual who has or has had parental responsibility for, or cares or has cared for, a child or young person under the age of 18". It includes a person who the child lives with or who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child. The reference in the definition must be someone involved in the full-time care of the child on a settled basis.

If you have any questions about whether you are eligible to stand or vote in the election or about anything else in this letter, please contact me, otherwise more information for prospective governors is available on the Hertfordshire County Council website (<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Schools-and-education/School-Governors/School-Governors.aspx>).

Yours sincerely



Martyn Henson  
Headteacher

## Message from the Chair of Governors

The Nobel School Board of Governors has a vacancy for ONE parent governor as a result of a current parent governor stepping down.

An outstanding Board of Governors has a diverse range of skills from its governors to both challenge the performance of the school and to help set the strategic direction for the coming years.

It would be wrong of me to say that the role is straightforward and doesn't take much time, you will see from the information below that there are a number of meetings each term, each of which comes with required pre-reading, along with school visits. That said the role is rewarding as you are helping to shape the school and to ensure that the current rate of progress continues for all.

Our goal is to become an outstanding school in near future and parent governors are crucial in bringing a stakeholder view. Please remember that a parent governor is a representative and not a delegate of parents and is there to promote the interests of all children not specifically yours.

If you feel you have some skills (they can be business skills such as finance or training or skills gained from life in general) and the time to give then please put your name forward in accordance with the application process. If you wish to discuss the role further before applying please contact me via [chair@nobel.herts.sch.uk](mailto:chair@nobel.herts.sch.uk)

### **AIMS AND STANDARDS** Adapted from DfES *Guidance on Good Governance*

The purpose of the Board of Governors is to help the school provide the best possible education for its students.

The Board of Governors is accountable to those who established and fund the school and also to parents and the wider local community for the way it carries out its functions.

The strength of the Board of Governors lies in the talent of its members, and in their ability to work together as a team. The Board of Governors is a 'corporate entity' and acts as a group.

Governors are elected or appointed by different groups - including parents, teachers and others within the local community. By these means, although they are not delegates, the governing body reflects the community it serves.



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Each governor makes up his or her own mind about issues that are considered by the Board of Governors. Once the group makes decisions, however, individual governors are bound by them and are loyal to them.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HEADTEACHER** *Adapted from DfES Guidance on Good Governance*

The Headteacher and Board of Governors support each other, recognising each other's respective responsibilities so as to form a good working partnership.

The Board of Governors is responsible for determining the aims and overall conduct of the school. This includes deciding, with the Headteacher, how the school should develop in order to maintain and improve its standards of education; and approving the broad policies, plans and procedures which will support that development.

In discussion with the Board of Governors, the Headteacher is responsible for formulating policies, for their eventual approval. The Headteacher is also responsible for implementing these policies, managing and administering the school, and organising and operating the school's curriculum, acting within the agreed framework.

The Headteacher provides the Board of Governors with the information, advice and recommendations it needs to carry out its functions effectively and to understand how the school is performing. The Board of Governors treats this information and advice with respect, and uses it with discretion.

## **WHAT DOES A SCHOOL GOVERNOR DO?**

The House of Commons Education and Employment Committee's report on the role of the school governors says:

*"School governors are a large, usually unsung, army of volunteers whose contribution to the life of our schools has been too little appreciated. There is much to celebrate about the contribution made by our school governors. Effective governing bodies bring benefits to the schools they serve, not only in terms of community involvement and accountability, but also in terms of overall school improvement."*

The Board of Governors is made up of:

- parent governors (elected by parents)
- staff representatives (elected by school staff)
- local authority governor (appointed by the local authority)
- co-opted governors (appointed by the governing body)
- partnership governors

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## SO WHAT DO WE DO?

The Board of Governors (not any individual governor) is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the school and for determining its aims, objectives and policies in accordance with all the relevant legislation. As the legislation is continually being reviewed and changed, we are often swamped in paperwork that we need to understand and action when appropriate. Reviewing often takes place via email to free up time at meetings but this adds to the time governors dedicate to the role. The Head leads the school from day to day and the Board of Governors assists with the formulation and implementation of its aims, objectives, policies and plans.

The entire Board of Governors currently meets twice a term to hold the school to account in a Scrutiny meeting. Once a term the entire Board of Governors also holds a Strategy meeting where we discuss longer term matters. Our meetings generally take place in the evenings. We also have sub-committees with specific responsibilities delegated by the Board of Governors:

**Foundation Committee:** responsible for overseeing areas such as Health and Safety, Property matters, Staffing/Personnel matters. This committee meets once a term.

**Pay and Performance Review Committee:** responsible for setting and monitoring the Head's Performance targets and agreeing the outcomes from staff targets in relation to pay rises etc. This committee meets twice a year.

All eligible governors are on both the **Discipline & Complaints Committees** - these only meet when necessary to consider appeals and complaints and require a minimum of three governors.

Additionally each governor is linked to an area of the school's RACE plan for improving standards.

Governors have access to a wide range of training including specific training for new governors and the Board of Governors arranges for new governors to be mentored by a more experienced colleague. As you can see, the Board of Governors has many responsibilities and we make decisions together as a 'body' never as individuals. On top of all this we try and come into school on a reasonably regular basis, prepare the school prospectus and meet with new parents.

Governors are expected to uphold **The Seven Principles of Public Life** (*originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations*).



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**Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.



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**ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR**

**NOMINATION FORM**

Your name .....  
(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address .....  
.....

I have a child at the school and hereby nominate myself for election as a governor. I understand that if elected I will have to undergo a DBS (Disclosure and Barring) check. Biographical details (**80 words maximum** giving brief details about yourself explaining why I want to be a school governor and what special skills I will bring to the role) for circulation with the voting paper are set out below.

Signature .....

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Seconded\* by: .....  
(Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr)

Address .....  
.....  
.....

Signature .....

\*The seconder must be a parent of a student at Nobel.

Your completed nomination form must be returned to the school office by:

Date Friday 5 May 2017 Time 12 noon



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Biographical details (80 words maximum) giving brief details about yourself explaining why do you want to be a school governor and what special skills you will bring to the role:



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