

Torriano primary school

Torriano Avenue, London, NW5 2SJ



Primary Tel: 0207 424 0202

Infant Tel: 0207 485 4325

e-mail: admin@torrianojun.camden.sch.uk

admin@torrianoinf.camden.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher: Bavaani Nanthabalan MA

Head of School: Helen Bruckdorfer BA

Wednesday 16th September 2015

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Governing Body of the former Junior School will now be the Governing Body of the Primary School. It already includes parents with children at both Infant and Junior stages. There are some vacancies for parent governors, two of which are reserved to Infant parents and one is open to all parents.

We hope you will express an interest in serving on the Governing Body of our new school. We thought it would be helpful if we set out what the role is (and what it is not) and explained the expectations for anyone filling this role.

There is an emphasis now on having a wide range of skills represented on the Governing Body. At present, we particularly need governors who are able to engage parents and improve positive communications between the school and the parents. If you did not have such expertise, you would be expected to attend relevant training paid for by the school. Failure to attend such training would raise questions about your suitability as a governor.

Membership of the Governing Body involves committing yourself to attending meetings of the full governing body of which there three a year. Governors are also expected to be members of one or two committees, which means a further 3-6 meetings a year. In addition, you will be expected to visit the school once or twice a year during the working day to see for yourself how the children progress with their learning and other aspects of the school working day, including how the school safeguards children and ensures that the environment is a safe place to learn.

You are not inspectors and would not be making any judgements around the quality of teaching as that is the role of the Headteacher and senior staff. By attending meetings and visiting the school you will contribute to the *collective* and *strategic* leadership of the school.

Both those words are important. **The governors act collectively.** Individual governors do not take decisions on the future of the school. It is the governors acting as a body who do so. You would of course contribute to discussions but the decisions that you would have to explain and sometimes defend would be those taken by the governing body as a whole. You may end up explaining and defending decisions with which you individually do not agree.

The Governors act strategically. They think of the direction in which the school should be going. They consider the bigger picture. They are not concerned with the day to day operation of the school. That role belongs to the Consultant Headteacher, Head of School and senior leaders.

In the event of any confidential items on agendas, you would be expected to avoid talking about these at all to anyone outside the governing body.



Please note you would not be on the Governing Body to represent parents' concerns. You are rather to bring the perspective of a parent to the discussions.

If you wish to represent parents and their concerns, you should consider becoming more involved with the Parents' Association or should arrange to meet with the Consultant Headteacher or Head of School. We enclose some notes on the role of parent governors and a copy of the Governors Code of Conduct. Any breach of this code could involve suspension or removal from the office of governor in extreme cases.

Being a parent governor is a highly responsible role. We do hope you will consider carefully if you wish your name to go forward. We will be in touch to discuss this further.

Notes on the role and expectations of a parent governor.

What it IS about:

- Being part of a collective body which provides strategic leadership
- Holding the Headteacher to account through appropriate support and challenge
- Making sure the school's money is well spent
- Keeping confidential any matter that is tabled as 'confidential' at the governing body meeting
- Representing all stakeholders but in particular bringing a parent perspective
- Knowing the school's strengths and areas for development by understanding the School Improvement Plan and Self Evaluation document

What it is NOT about:

- Furthering your own child's prospects
- Becoming chums with the senior leaders or teachers at the school
- Gossiping to other parents about any matters discussed or raised at meetings of the governing body
- Finding out about issues regarding individual children or their parents
- Finding out about salaries of staff at the school or any matters concerning individual members of staff
- Being involved in any day to day running of the school as that is the role of the Headteacher
- Turning up at the school and wandering about as a governor. Governors may only enter the school premises if invited by the Headteacher or by making an appointment with the Headteacher or senior staff member
- Bringing or airing parent complaints or grievances (there are school policies and procedures for this)



Expectations:

- You must be prepared to attend the induction training at the local authority. This is a series of six sessions which last up to two hours. This is mandatory as without training you will not be able to understand the business of governance. Ofsted will ask about training when they next inspect the school.
- You must be prepared to commit to attending meetings of the governing body. If you are not able then you let the governing body down and you cannot contribute to the discussions and decisions that governors need to make.
- Papers and agendas for meetings are sent out in advance and must be read in advance so that you come to the meeting with any questions you may have
- Visiting the school by prior arrangement for class visits (not your child's class), and whole governing body training on some aspect of the curriculum or safeguarding

If, after reading the above, you feel you could be that person, then please provide a statement outlining the reason as to why you wish to be a parent governor and the skills you feel you could bring to the role.

In addition, please confirm that in order to be an effective governor, you will abide by the Code of Conduct, commit to undergo the relevant training and attend and contribute at meetings.

Election Schedule

- **Nomination form** sent out with this letter (**15th September**)
- **Meet Parent Governors** for advice on role on **Monday 21st September at 2.45pm** and **24th September at 9.15am** in the Gatehouse community room (junior building).
- Please hand your **nomination form** to the school offices by **25th September**.
- The school will publish and circulate your statement and ballot papers on **28th September** for parents to read before voting takes place.
- Ballot closes on **1st October**.
- The School Council will count the votes and announce the successful candidates on **2nd October** followed by the circulation of the results of the ballot on **5th October**.

Yours sincerely,

Luca Salice

Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Body



Parent Governor Nomination form

No person is to make more nominations than there are vacancies.

I would like to nominate myself/the following for parent governor:

Name

Address

Phone No

Signature*

Proposer:

Name

Parent of

Signature

Seconded:

Name

Parent of

Signature

* The person nominated should sign the form to show their willingness to stand for election.

Please note

1. Only a parent or carer of a child registered at the school can propose or nominate a candidate for parent governor.
2. Any one who is prohibited by court order from contacting their child is not eligible to participate in the election.
3. No person who has been declared bankrupt can serve as a governor unless:
 - a) the bankruptcy order has been discharged or annulled
 - b) a composition or arrangement has been made with creditors under which payment has been made in full or three years have lapsed since the terms of the arrangement were fulfilled.
4. No person with any of the following criminal convictions may serve as a governor:
 - a) a conviction carrying a sentence of imprisonment or more than three months (without the option of a fine) within the last five years;
 - b) a conviction carrying a sentence of more than two and a half years within the last twenty years;
 - c) a conviction carrying a sentence of more than five years at any time in the past.
5. The person nominated **may attach a short personal statement** to this nomination form. This will be issued to parents with the ballot papers.

Please return this form and the attached personal statement to Torriano primary school offices by Friday 25th September 2015 at 4.00 p.m

