

As a Parent Local Governing Body (LGB) Member your role is

- To bring a parental perspective to the issues discussed – you're not there to speak 'on behalf' of the parent body
- No different from those of other LGB Members

Note: parents are elected to the LGB, not appointed (unless there are fewer candidates than vacancies).

The Parental Perspective

- You should aim to communicate a parent's perspective but remember that you're not there to speak on behalf of parents.
- Use your perspective as a parent to help the LGB understand a parent's viewpoint. This will help the board make good decisions and maintain a link between governance and the parent community.
- You're not bringing complaints from parents to the board's attention. Rather, you're highlighting how governing board decisions impact the school from a parent's perspective.

Example	Do ask	Don't say
School uniform change	'Have parents been consulted on the proposed uniform changes? If not, why not?' 'How have the proposed changes been explained to parents?' 'Has the cost of this change to parents been considered?'	'As a parent, I've spoken to other parents in the playground and we all think the uniform shouldn't change.'
Canteen menu change	'How have parents been consulted on the new menu?' 'Has the school explained to parents the reasons behind the change?' 'What alternative provision is available for pupils whose parents disagree with the menu changes?' 'How will this change impact parents?'	'Parents have come up to me asking why the menu has changed. They say they prefer the old one.'
Curriculum change	'How has the school communicated the curriculum change to parents?' 'Have parents been given the opportunity to ask questions and get further clarity?'	'Parents want to me express to you that they disagree with the changes. They don't feel the changes reflect what they want their children to be taught.' 'A number of parents have told me they're confused about why the curriculum has changed.'

Help other parents understand that you're not there to

- Speak on their behalf
- Bring up their individual issues in meetings
- Solve problems for them

Be polite but firm and tell them to stick to the official channels.

Get up to speed with your school's complaints policy / procedure and staff list, so you can quickly direct parents to how/where they can raise their issue.

If another parent approaches you at the school gate with a grievance:

- Do ask the parent to put it in writing and follow the school's complaints procedure. Tell them how/where they can raise their issue. This helps to separate genuine complaints from the customary grumbles
- Do explain what the role of Parent LGB Member is. Learn a one-liner such as: "Parent LGB Members don't speak 'on behalf' of the parent body, instead we bring a parental perspective to the strategic decisions the LGB makes"
- Don't agree to raise it at the meeting or look into it for them – this will set a bad precedent and will cause problems later down the line as the right procedure hasn't been followed

Don't respond to comments on social media in your governance role

You might see comments about the school from parents on social media, perhaps in parent groups you've joined. It's not your role to get involved.

Separate your role as a LGB Member from your role as a parent and aim to think about all pupils, not just your child

- As a LGB Member, you're responsible for the progress and wellbeing of all pupils at the school, so keep this at the forefront of your mind in meetings.
- You must rely on a wide range of sources to make decisions and hold the headteacher to account. These include high-quality, objective data and the views of pupils, staff, parents and the community. This is set out in the Governance Handbook available on GovernorHub.

When discussing issues in meetings:

- Do remember that you're acting in the interests of the whole pupil body
- Don't bring up your child, or refer to anecdotal evidence based only on your child's, or a friend's, experience

Follow your school's complaints procedure like any other parent

- If you have a complaint concerning your child, you must follow your school's complaints procedure, even as a Member of the LGB.
- If possible, ask the other parent to lead the discussion with the school. In all communication during the process, clarify that you're acting as a parent, not a Member of the LGB.
- You could take action as an LGB Member if the complaint affects more children than your own child. For example, if data shows a wider problem with pupil progress in your child's year group, ask questions in the relevant meetings like:
 - What support is in place for underperforming members of staff?
 - How does the school help all children who are falling behind?

Avoid conflicts of interest

Most of the time, you won't need to declare a personal interest in all agenda items that could have an impact on your child. You should do this where:

- The matter would affect your child individually (an exclusions panel where your child was the victim of a behaviour incident, for example)
- You feel too close to the matter to be impartial
- Where there is a dispute about whether you should withdraw, the other LGB Members may make this decision.

If you have concerns over a LGB decision

Again, remember to keep your role as a parent separate from your role as an LGB Member.

If you have a concern

- Do raise it in an LGB meeting. Meetings are designed for this purpose: Members can openly discuss decisions the LGB might take and express disagreement by voting against it
- Do respect the decision taken by the LGB if it's been voted on properly, and be united with your fellow LGB Members
- Do ask for a meeting with the LGB Chair to discuss a decision in more detail if you wish
- Don't express your disagreement outside LGB meetings
- Don't involve other parents or seek to mobilise them in any way

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election or appointment and cannot hold more than one governorship at the same school.

A person is disqualified from election or appointment as a parent governor if s/he:

- is employed at the school (Clauses 2.1 and 2.2 of the annex to the scheme of Delegation)
- is an elected member of the Local Authority.

A person is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor or associate member if s/he:

- is a registered pupil at the school;
- has failed to attend governing body meetings at the school without the consent of the governing body, for a continuous period of six months
- has been disqualified for failing to attend governing body meetings at the school without the consent of the governing body, for a continuous period of six months whilst serving as a foundation, co-opted or community governor at the school in the last 12 months;
- has had his/her estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced;
- is subject to a bankruptcy restriction order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order;
- is subject to:
 - a disqualification order or disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
 - a disqualification order under the Companies Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - a disqualification undertaking accepted under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002
 - an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under a county court administration order);
- has been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or Commissioners or High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which s/he was responsible; or to which s/he was privy; or to which he contributed, or he facilitated by his conduct; or
- has been removed, under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- is included in the list of people considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children (under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999);
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction);
- is subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008;
- is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- is disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29, or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 2 of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 for child minding or providing day care;
- is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006;

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- has been convicted of any offence and received a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) in the 5 years before or since becoming a governor;
 - has been convicted of any offence and received a prison sentence of two and a half years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor;
 - has been convicted of any offence at any time and received a prison sentence of 5 years or more;
 - has been convicted of an offence and sentenced to a fine under section 547 of EA 1996 (nuisance or disturbance on school premises) or under section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (nuisance or disturbance on educational premise) during the 5 years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor;
 - has refused a request by the clerk to the governing body to make an application under section 113B of the Police Act 1997 for a criminal records certificate.