

What are the criteria?

Foundation Governors would normally be practising Christians and regular supportive members of the local Anglican Church. But, this is not always the case and it may be appropriate for the governor to belong to another church and therefore reflect the ecumenical dimension of the community. For each appointment, local discretion is appropriate and taken into account.

As for all school governors, a person is disqualified from holding or from continuing to hold office if they:

- Are under 18 years of age
- Already hold a governorship at the same school
- Are detailed under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Are subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order
- Have had their estate sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced
- Have been removed from the office of a charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commissioners of the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement or, under section 34 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, from being concerned in the management or control of any body
- Are included in List 99 of teachers and workers with children or young persons whose employment is prohibited or restricted
- Are disqualified from registration for child minding or providing day care
- Are disqualified from working with children or are subject to direction under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002
- Are disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006
- Have received a prison sentence (suspended or otherwise) 5 years prior to becoming a governor for not less than 3 months without the option of a fine
- Have received a prison sentence of 2½ years or more in the past 20 years
- Have at any time received a prison sentence of five years or more
- Have been fined for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school premises during the five years prior to or since appointment or election as a governor
- Refuse to allow an application to the Criminal Records Bureau for a criminal records certificate

The very first schools were Church Schools and they remain an intrinsic part of the state education system.

There over 80 Church Schools In the Ely Diocese, all of which have Foundation Governors who play a full role in the life of the governing body and committees of the schools.



A Foundation Governor has a potential responsibility to ensure the foundation character and ethos of the school is upheld and able to flourish and participate fully in the wider work of the Governing Body.

Like all governors, foundation governors need to get to know the school, its staff and its concerns and work with the headteacher and others in its effective management. For full information on the general requirement go to www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/governors.

The Instrument of Government of every Church of England School contains a common Ethos Statement:

‘Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.’

What does a Foundation Governor do?

A Church School is at the centre of a church's local mission, and is an important focus for pastoral ministry, supporting the whole school community and linking with whole families.

A Foundation Governor is called to be 'an advocate for Christian ethos' and is seen to be a significant lay ministry and is a vital link between the school and church.

In addition to a governors general duty to participate fully in the life of the governing body, Foundation Governors have the responsibility to:

- **develop the school's Christian character**
- **uphold the school's Anglican ethos**
- **ensure the soundness of arrangements for Collective Worship**
- **assist with preparation for Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS).**
- **communicate to the governing body the policies of the Diocesan Board of Education when requested**



All Foundation Governors are required to sign a written declaration that they will uphold the foundation and ethos of the school as described in the Ethos Statement.

You won't be the only Foundation Governor though! Usually the local vicar will be an ex-officio Foundation Governor and in Voluntary Aided schools the overall majority of governors are Foundation Governors, while in a Voluntary Controlled school there will usually be three Foundation Governors.

Who appoints Foundation Governors?

It is usually the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE), the Parochial Church Council (PCC) or School Trust who appoint Foundation Governors and this will be set out in the school's Instrument of Government. Appointments are usually for a term of four years.

- If the appointment is made by the PCC it must be approved and noted in their minutes. The DBE will need to be notified and verify the appointment.
- For DBE appointments the recommendation is usually made by the local vicar.



In some cases where the Parish is in interregnum, the Archdeacon may be asked to appoint someone in their place, until such time as the new incumbent is able to take up this position.

How do I become a Foundation Governor?

Firstly you will need to establish there is a vacancy... to do this you could speak to your vicar or the headteacher of your local school.

If your local school is not in need of your services right now, they may be soon, or a neighbouring school may be delighted to have you on their board.... so do ask them.

Of course there is paperwork to complete... but nothing too onerous and the Clerk to the Governors or the Schools Administrator for the DBE will be able to help.
Email jane.sansom@ely.anglican.org or telephone 01 353 652724

There is lots more information available on our website at www.ely.anglican.org/education/schools/governors, or you can always call us on the above number if you have any questions or concerns.