

**GSS Publications**

# **2022 Governor Elections**

**Guidance for Headteachers on elections for parent and staff  
governors**



**Coventry City Council**

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# 1. Introduction

## **Why are elections necessary?**

The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended requires that Parent and Staff Governors must be elected as members of Governing Boards (*Regulations 6 and 7*). In the case of community, community special and controlled schools, responsibility for the elections falls to the LA (*\*Regulations Schedule 1 Paragraphs 1(a) and 2*) and the City Council has delegated this responsibility to Headteachers who acts as the 'Returning Officer'. In the case of aided schools, responsibility rests with the Governing Board (*Regulations Schedule 1 Paragraph 1 (b)*) and it is possible (and usual) for the Governing Board to delegate this responsibility to the Headteacher. Schedule 1 of the Regulations sets out the rules for elections. This guidance is based on the Regulations as well as our experiences of elections held by schools in the City.

## **When are elections necessary?**

It is necessary to hold elections for parent and staff Governors whenever there is a vacancy on the Governing Board for a Governor in these categories. The election should be held as soon as possible after the vacancy arises or in preparation for a forthcoming vacancy.

## **Model letters and forms**

This guidance is available by e-mail and is a Word document. This enables the letters and forms in the appendices to be adapted by schools for their own use.

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\* *The Regulations referred to in this guidance are the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, the School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) Regulations 2014 and the School Governance (Miscellaneous Amendments)(England) Regulations 2015 and 2017*

## 2. Online Election Methods

### Implementing a new method

There is no requirement to use any specific system for the election of parent and staff governors or trustees. If you are making changes to your procedure, you must ensure that the following criteria is met:

- all individuals that are eligible to stand are informed of the vacancy and informed that they can stand for election and vote
- those individuals are given the opportunity to do so
- mechanisms are in place to ensure that the process is fair, and safeguards are in place to ensure that one person cannot cast two votes  
voter confidentiality is maintained
- academies should ensure that any voting system complies with rules set out in their articles of association (or relevant procedural document)
- maintained schools must provide the **opportunity for postal voting** (including delivery by hand) and should check with their local authority to see if specific voting systems are recommended or mandated

### Ensuring voting is accessible

Voting needs to be open and accessible to all who are eligible to stand and vote, including:

those with a disability

- those with limited access to technology, email or the internet
- those for whom English is a second language

Offering an online voting method may help to ensure maximum accessibility and efficiency for all. However, more than one method, may be necessary (and indeed mandatory).

### Online voting methods

#### Existing home-school communication tools

Many schools have effective online home-school communication tools in place. These include applications such as ParentMail, SchoolPing (and many more). Some schools are using these communication tools to facilitate voting. These tools can be used to manage the entire process, from an initial message to parents to explain the process through to generating an online voting form (in much the same way as parents might complete a consent form).

#### Email

A dedicated email inbox can be created for voting forms to be returned to. In this case, care should be taken to ensure that only essential access is given to this inbox to maintain confidentiality. Schools also need to monitor eligibility to vote – for example, only one vote per email address is allowed (and the email address must be a match to the school's existing database).

#### Online survey tools

Services like Google Forms, Microsoft Forms and SurveyMonkey may offer an efficient voting method. These services can also make use of the school's existing email database. These services use a variety of methods and so care must be taken to ensure eligibility to vote and maintain confidentiality. Some of these services have the capability to collect votes anonymously and to limit votes to one per email address. However, some of these features may come at a cost. Communication tools and their capabilities vary considerably between schools.

The voting method chosen should meet the needs of the school, the electorate, and satisfy the outlined criteria.

# 3. Election of Parent Governors

*These notes of guidance refer to the election of parent Governors in community, community special and voluntary controlled schools.*

## 1) Constitution

- a) The Instrument of Government prescribes that the Governing Board shall include Parent Governors elected by parents of registered pupils at the school and who are themselves parents of registered pupils at the school at the time when they are elected.
- b) The Regulations 2012 indicate that there should be a minimum of two Parent Governors on the Governing Board.
- c) Voting is on the basis of one vote per parent.
- d) When recruiting schools can not choose second choice from a previous election. A new election process must occur.
- e) A "Parent" includes 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 19. A person is disqualified from standing for election or appointment as a Parent Governor if they are : An elected member of the local education authority; or Paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any consecutive 12 month period (at the time of the election or appointment); or subject to any of the disqualifications under the Regulations (See page 10)

It is possible for a child to have more than two parents eligible to participate in the election. Although it is not a requirement to track down every person who might qualify, the Returning Officer should not rule anyone ineligible who is known to be a "parent" as given in the above definition.

- f) In the event that there are fewer candidates than vacancies, the Governing Board must appoint a parent of a registered pupil at the school or they are elected 'unopposed'. Although, if it is not possible to do so (for example where no other parent wishes to be appointed), the Governing Board may appoint the parent of a former registered pupil, or a parent of a child under or of compulsory school age.

## 2) Term of office

The term of office is as determined in the Instrument of Government for the school but shall not exceed four years from the date of the election unless a parent resigns as a Governor in the interim.

## Election procedures

### 3) Returning Officer

The Headteacher should be the Returning Officer for the election acting on behalf of the Director of Education.

#### 4) Nomination Procedure

- a) The Returning Officer must take reasonable steps to inform all parents of registered pupils at the school that there is a vacancy that is required to be filled by election, be informed that they are entitled to stand for election and be given the opportunity to do so.
- b) A communication should be sent to **all** parents of registered pupils containing the information as shown in the model letter at Appendix A. This information may be conveyed as a separate letter or contained within another letter or communication.
- c) The communication should set out the following information:
  - The core functions and role of the Governing Board
  - Induction or other training available
  - Term of Office
  - Frequency of meetings
  - Membership of Committees (if applicable)
  - Invite nominations on an enclosed nomination form.
  - The invitation form and nomination form should also be added to the school website.
  - Circumstances which a person is not allowed to serve as a Governor.
  - Closing date for nominations (not less than 10 school days from the date of issue)
  - Invitation to submit a statement of support of their nomination no longer than 250 words.
  - With reference to “**A Competency Framework for Governance**” (**January 2017**) specific skills or experience that would be desirable, including the willingness to learn or skills that would help the Board improve its effectiveness or address any specific challenges. This does not preclude anyone standing or election.
- d) Parents may self-nominate or a parent can nominate another parent. (Appendix C) They must, however, seek their approval before submitting the nomination.
- e) Any parent seeking to be elected as a parent Governor must be willing to agree to undertake a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. If a parent refuses to undertake such a disclosure then they will be ineligible to stand for election to the Governing Board. Guidance on the type of offence or conviction that would prevent a parent from serving as a governor is given in Appendix B.
- f) The candidate is required to sign the nomination form confirming acceptance of the nomination.
- g) Nominations must not be accepted after the specified closing date/time.

#### 5) Uncontested Election

Where the number of candidates nominated is equal to or fewer than the number of vacancies, then all those nominated will be elected unopposed. If too few parents stand for election to fill all the vacancies, the Governing

Board will appoint Parent Governors in accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Returning Officer should inform parents and the Clerk to the Governors. The Returning Officer should inform parents by the most appropriate method, for example, a letter (see Appendix D) or a notice displayed at the school. See also Section 8 “Declaration of Result” below which explains more fully the procedures for declaration.

## 6) Election Arrangements

- a) If there are more candidates than vacancies, an election must be held with voting taking place by ballot during a specified period.
- b) The Returning Officer should organise the voting and the duration of the vote to suit the needs of the school. The process should allow a reasonable length of time for the procedure to be carried out freely, efficiently and democratically. A period of not less than ten school days is suggested for the casting of votes.
- c) The arrangements should provide for every parent to have the opportunity to vote by post. However, if they prefer, their ballot papers may be returned to the school either personally or by a registered pupil at the school.

## 7) Ballot Papers

- a) Ballot papers should be produced and forwarded to parents with a covering letter outlining the arrangements for the ballot and incorporating or enclosing the supporting statements for candidates.
- b) All parents of registered pupils are entitled to vote. Depending on the number of vacancies, parents may be asked to vote for more than one candidate. Each parent can submit **one ballot form**, regardless of the number of children they have attending the school.
- c) In order to ensure the integrity of the election the ballot papers should be produced as follows:
  - on a coloured (i.e. other than white) paper, to minimise the risk of photocopying, and
  - each paper marked with an individual number. They should be numbered consecutively, with the first number chosen at random or otherwise (i.e. with 500 ballot papers these could be numbered in the following ways - 1 to 500, or 47 to 546, or 1401 to 1901 and so on). More than one set of consecutive numbers may be used. The sequence of numbers (or sequences if more than one is used) should be recorded in order to check the validity of returned ballot papers at the count.

**NB. The numbers of individual ballot papers should not be recorded against the names of individual parents.**

- d) If you are running parent and/or staff Governor elections simultaneously you may find it helpful to distinguish between them by using different coloured ballot papers.
- e) The letter and ballot paper should be sent to parents via the normal method of communication used by the school. If using “pupil post”, ballot papers will need to be posted, or delivered, to all parents whose children are absent

from school on the day the ballot papers are issued. A model letter and ballot papers are attached for guidance at Appendix E.

- f) The letter will need to inform parents of the following details:
- Timetable for the election, including the voting period, date and time the ballot closes, and date and time of the count.
  - Method of casting and returning votes, including the opportunity to vote by post.
  - Arrangements for counting votes.
  - Arrangements for informing parents of the results.
- g) The ballot paper should list the full names of candidates arranged in alphabetical order.
- h) If a ballot paper is inadvertently spoilt (or lost by the pupil) a duplicate may be issued by the Returning Officer, who should make a record. The election is not invalidated by an individual's failure to receive or to return a ballot paper.
- i) A parent may cast a vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies i.e.:-
- 1 vacancy - vote for 1 candidate
  - 2 vacancies - vote for 2 candidates etc.
- j) The Returning Officer should ensure that a suitable sealed and locked ballot boxes are provided at a convenient point(s) within the school. These should be stored in a safe place at the end of each day.
- k) The counting of Ballot papers and the declaration of result should follow soon after the close of voting. If it is necessary to defer counting until the next day, the boxes should remain sealed with the aperture also now sealed and stored overnight in a safe place.
- l) The Director for Education should be informed of the date and time of the count (Via the Clerk) in order that he/she (or his/her) representative may be present to assist in the process if appropriate. Usually this may be the Clerk to Governors.
- m) After the closing date the Returning Officer should count the votes in front of at least two witnesses. Candidates and Governors should be invited to witness this, but there is no requirement for either to attend. The outcome of the vote will be decided by the simple majority vote system.
- n) The Returning Officer will have the responsibility for deciding the validity of dubious or spoilt ballot papers, but can seek advice from the Governor Support Service.
- o) At the close of the counting, the Returning Officer should announce the result. In the event of a tie, there should be a recount. If this does not produce a clear result, the Returning Officer should, in the presence of the witnesses, draw lots (select at random). In such circumstances any candidate whose votes have tied should be present, or have been invited to be present. It would be preferable if all affected candidates were present.



- p) In any event any candidate may ask for a recount if the result is close.

**As a general rule when recounting votes this process should be repeated until the same number has been achieved twice.**

#### **8) Declaration of Result**

- a) Parents should be informed of the result of the election by the most appropriate method, for example a school newsletter, school website, letter or a notice displayed on a public notice board at the school (see Appendix F).
- b) The Returning Officer should forward the results to the Clerk to the Governors following the election via email.
- c) On receipt of the return, the Clerk to the Governors will:
- Communicate the result to the Governing Board at its next meeting.
  - Formally write to the newly elected Governor(s) welcoming them to the Governing Board and to provide any necessary induction materials

#### **9) After the Election**

- a) The ballot papers should be retained securely by the Returning Officer for a period of at least six months, in case the election result is challenged.
- b) The number of ballot papers issued and the number returned should be noted in order to monitor participation.
- c) Any questions or areas of doubt concerning the election of parent Governors should be referred to the Governor Support Service.

## MODEL LETTER TO PARENTS REQUESTING NOMINATIONS

Dear Parent/Carer,

**ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS**

You are invited to stand for election as a Parent Governor, or nominate another parent to do so. In our school we have provision for ----- Parent Governors and there is/are currently \_\_\_\_\_ vacancy (ies) who will serve on the Governing Board for \_\_ years. Although no qualifications are required to become a Governor and the most important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the Governing Board's work we are particularly keen to encourage parents with the following skills to stand for election as we have identified these skills gaps on our Governing Board; ***Insert skills required***

Training is available to all Governors and the Board has an expectation that new Governors attend a free induction training session.

The Governing Board has three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Any parent seeking to be elected as a Parent Governor should be willing to undertake a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. If a parent refuses to undertake such a disclosure then they will be ineligible to stand for election to the governing Board.

The enclosed sheet (Appendix B) summarises the circumstances under which someone can serve as a Governor. In addition, parents/carers who have paid employment in the school for 500 or more hours per academic year or who are elected members of the Local Authority, are not eligible to stand in these elections. Nominations must be from parents or carers with children at the school on the day that nominations close.

If you would like to stand for election please complete the enclosed nomination form and return it to the school no later than \_\_\_\_\_ at am/pm. You may also include a short personal statement to support your nomination, which should be no longer than 250 words. Self-nominations will be accepted but if you are nominating another parent, please seek their prior consent.

Should \_\_\_ or fewer nominations be received by the official closing date, the candidate(s) will be duly elected unopposed. In the event of there being \_\_ or more nominations an Election will take place between \_\_\_\_\_. Information on voting arrangements will be sent to you at a later date.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher, \_\_\_\_\_ School (Returning Officer)

## Becoming a Governor

Anyone can become a Governor as long as the following eligibility criteria are met:

- **I am** aged 18 or over at the date of this election or appointment;
- **I do not** already hold a governorship of the same school in another category;
- **I agree to** undertaking a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.
- **I am not** included in the list kept under Section 1 of the protection of Children Act 1999 or subject to a direction by the Secretary of State, barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3 (2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, disqualified from working with children under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 or disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006.
- **I am not** a bankrupt or subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986;
- **I have not** been removed from the office of a charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commissioners or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement or, under section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 2005, from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- **I am not** disqualified from being the proprietor of any independent school or from being a teacher or other employee of a school;
- **I have not**, in the five years prior to becoming a Governor, received a sentence of imprisonment, suspended or otherwise, for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine;
- **I have not**, in the twenty years prior to becoming a Governor, been convicted as aforesaid of any offence and had passed on me a sentence of imprisonment for a period of two and a half years or more;
- **I have not**, at any time, had passed on me a sentence of imprisonment for a period of five years or more;
- **I have not** been fined, in the five years prior to becoming a Governor, for causing a nuisance or disturbance on school or education premises;
- **I have not been** disqualified as a Foundation, Authority, Co-opted or Partnership Governor for non-attendance at meetings in the last 12 months at this school
- **I have not** been disqualified as an elected Parent or Staff Governor of a school in the last five years.
- **Parent Governors only - I am not** an elected member of the Local Authority; or paid to work at the school for more than 500 hours in any 12 consecutive months.
- **Local Authority Governors only – I am not** eligible to be a staff Governor of the school.

*This is a summary of the relevant Regulations, which have legal force. If you are already a Governor and any of the above apply you should tell the Clerk of the Governing Board. A newly appointed Governor will be asked to make a disclosure to the **Disclosure and Barring Service** who would identify any criminal offences which apply. The same provisions apply to Associate Members of Governing Board committees.*

**This is a simplified summary of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, The School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations and amendments (2017) and is not an interpretation of the law. Anyone seeking clarification of any of these provisions should contact the Governor Support Service in the first instance.**

PARENT GOVERNOR NOMINATION FORM

Election of parent governors

Please enter IN BLOCK LETTERS the name and address of the person being nominated for election:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person nominated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of proposer (if different to nominee): \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address in BLOCK letters of proposer (if different to nominee):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Statement (maximum 250 words)

I wish to submit my nomination for the election of parent governor.

I confirm (i) that I am willing to stand as a candidate for election as a parent governor and (ii) that I am not disqualified from holding office for any of the reasons set out in the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.

Signature  
.....

Date  
.....

Completed nomination forms must be returned to the school by <insert date>

**MODEL LETTER TO PARENTS SETTING OUT THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS WHEN INSUFFICIENT NOMINATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED TO HOLD A BALLOT**

Dear Parent,

**ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS**

I am writing to inform you that following the request for nominations in respect of the \_\_\_\_ vacancy (ies) for Parent Governor (s), \_\_\_\_\_nominations were received at the school by the official closing date.

In accordance with the rules of the election, the following parents have therefore been duly elected unopposed to serve as Parent Governors of the school.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

The above are entitled in accordance with the Instrument of Government to serve as Governors of the school for a period of \_\_\_\_ years from .....  
[Normally the date of their election] unless they resign as Governors in the interim.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher,

..... School

**MODEL LETTER TO PARENTS WHEN A SECRET BALLOT IS NECESSARY**

Dear Parent,

**Election of parents to serve on the Governing Board of \_\_\_\_\_ School for a period of \_\_\_ years.**

I am delighted to inform you that following the request for nominations in respect of the \_\_\_\_\_ vacancy (ies) for Parent Governor (s) the following nominations have been received from parents wishing to serve as Parent Governors on the School's Governing Board for a period of \_\_\_ years.

A ballot is therefore necessary and a ballot paper is attached for your use (with the names of candidates in alphabetical order. Also included is a copy of the personal statements from the candidates who are *<insert parents' names>*

You may record one vote for up to \_\_\_\_\_ candidates of your choice (*insert number equal to the number of vacancies*). You may not vote twice for the same candidate or vote for more than \_\_\_\_\_ candidates. Each parent can submit one ballot paper, regardless of the number of pupils you have attending the school. As indicated on the ballot paper you should vote by marking an 'X' alongside the name(s) of the parent(s) you support.

Once you have marked the ballot paper you should seal it in the envelope. This should then be put in the ballot box, which can be found *<named location, e.g. school foyer>* by *<date ending 10 school days from the date of this letter>*. If it is not possible for you to vote in person, please return to the following address: *<insert address for returning officer>*.

The election will be decided by a simple majority of votes cast. In the event of a tie, lots will be drawn.

The counting of votes and declaration of result will take place on \_\_\_\_\_ and you will be informed of the result as soon as possible after that date.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher (Returning Officer)

# BALLOT PAPER

*NB: This ballot paper includes the candidates' personal statements in the same document. You may choose to provide these as a separate document.*

## Election of Parent Governors <insert school name>

There are <insert number> vacancies for parent governors. You may vote for <insert number> candidates, but NOT vote more than once for each candidate.

### **Candidates**

<Insert a copy of candidates' personal statements>

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### **Election of parent governors – <insert school name>**

Candidate	Mark an 'X' to indicate your vote



**MODEL LETTER TO PARENTS SETTING OUT THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNORS FOLLOWING A SECRET BALLOT**

Dear Parent,

**ELECTION OF \_\_\_\_\_ PARENT GOVERNORS TO SERVE ON THE GOVERNING BOARD OF \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL FOR A PERIOD OF \_\_\_\_ YEARS.**

I am writing to inform you that the result of the recent election for \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Governors to serve on the School's Governing Board for the period until \_\_\_\_\_ is as follows:

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Votes</b>
NAME	XX
NAME	XX
NAME	XX

In accordance with the rules of the election, the following parents have therefore been elected to serve as the Parent Governors of the School

.....  
.....  
.....

The above are entitled, in accordance with the Instrument of Government, to serve as Governors of the school for a period of \_\_ years from the date of their election unless they resign as Governors in the interim.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher (Returning Officer)

## 4. Election of Staff Governors

*These notes of guidance refer to the election of staff Governors in community, community special and voluntary controlled schools.*

### 1) Constitution

- a) The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 and the school's Instrument of Government require that the composition of the Governing Board should include one elected staff Governor.
- b) When a vacancy arises for a staff Governor they are required to be filled by an election held amongst **all** staff at the school.
- c) For the purposes of this election, "teacher" means permanent full-time and part-time teachers who are subject to the provisions of the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
- d) The Headteacher is not entitled to participate as he/she has a place on the Governing Board as Headteacher ex officio.
- e) Those eligible must either be:
  - a teacher and must be permanent full time or part time teachers on the staffing establishment of the school who will be employed at the school at the start of the period of office.
  - a member of support staff who must be either a) employed at the school or b) employed on a contract which provides services to the school. In both a) and b) they must attend school on at least one day per week.
  - to make nominations and vote must be permanent full time and part-time teachers or support staff on the establishment of the school at the time of the election.

### 2) Term of office

Staff Governors hold office for a term as determined in the Instrument of Government for the school but must not exceed four years from the date of their election unless they cease to be employed at the school or resign as Governors in the interim.

## Election procedures

### 3) Returning Officer

- a) The Headteacher should be the Returning Officer for the election acting on behalf of the Director of Education who will arbitrate in the event of any dispute concerning the Election Procedures and his/her decision will be final.

### 4) Nomination Procedure

- a) The Returning Officer must make reasonable efforts to inform all eligible staff of their right to participate.
- b) The Returning Officer must inform the relevant staff by means of a centrally placed notice (or notices) and may back this up orally at, for example, a staff meeting.

- c) Teachers or support staff absent on that day should receive postal notification together with a nomination form. A model communication inviting nominations is attached as Appendix G.
- d) An official nomination form (see Appendix H) should be available from a specified location.
- d) The communication should set out the following information as per the Governance Handbook;
  - The core functions and role of the Governing Board
  - Induction or other training available
  - Term of Office
  - Frequency of meetings
  - Membership of Committees (if applicable)
  - Invite nominations on an enclosed nomination form.
  - Circumstances which a person is not allowed to serve as a Governor.
  - Closing date for nominations (not less than 10 school days from the date of issue)
  - Invitation to submit a statement of support of their nomination no longer than 250 words.
  - With reference to “**A Competency Framework for Governance**” (*January 2017*) specific skills or experience that would be desirable, including the willingness to learn or skills that would help the Board improve its effectiveness or address any specific challenges. This does not preclude anyone standing or election.
- e) Staff may self-nominate or a staff member can nominate another staff member. (Appendix H) They must, however, seek their approval before submitting the nomination.
- e) The candidate should be required to sign the nomination form confirming acceptance of the nomination.
- f) The completed nomination forms must be received by the Returning Officer on a date and time specified in the notice when inviting nominations. The Returning Officer should allow a reasonable length of time for the return of nomination forms. A period of not less than ten school days is suggested. Nominations must not be accepted after the closing date/time.

## 5) Uncontested Election

Where the number of candidates nominated is equal to or fewer than the number of vacancies, then all those nominated will be elected unopposed. If too few staff stand for election to fill all the vacancies, the Governing Board will appoint a staff Governor in accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Returning Officer should inform staff by the most appropriate method, for example, a letter (see Appendix I) or a notice displayed at the school. See also Section 8 “Declaration of Result” below which explains more fully the procedures for declaration.

## 6) Election Arrangements

- a) If there are more candidates than vacancies an election must be held with voting taking place by secret ballot during a specified period.
- b) If there is only one nomination, the nominee will be deemed to be elected unopposed. If no nominations are received, the election process will be restarted and nominations sought from school staff.

- c) The Returning Officer should organise the date and time of the ballot to suit the needs of the school. The process should be carried out freely, efficiently and democratically. At least 10 school days should be allowed for the casting of votes. A day(s) and time(s) should be specified for casting votes.

## 7) Ballot Papers

- a) Ballot papers will need to be produced and be available for collection by each member of staff eligible to participate.

**Ballot papers should be posted to absent teachers or support staff and appropriate arrangements made for their return.**

- b) Teachers or members of the support staff should be informed of the voting arrangements by the most appropriate method.
- c) Ballot papers should be distributed in such a manner as to ensure only one paper per eligible employee. A model letter and ballot paper are attached for guidance (see Appendix K).
- d) Teachers or members of the support staff should be informed of the voting arrangements by the most appropriate method and should include:
- Timetable for the election (closing of ballot; the count; and arrangements for postal votes).
  - Method of casting and returning votes.
  - Arrangements for casting votes.
  - Arrangements for informing staff of the result.
- e) A teacher or member of support staff may vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies.
- f) The Returning Officer should ensure that a suitable, sealed and secure ballot box are provided at convenient points within the school during the period of the ballot.
- g) The counting of ballot papers and the declaration of result should follow soon after the closing of voting. If it is necessary to defer counting until the next day the box should remain sealed with the aperture also now sealed and stored overnight in a safe place.
- h) The Returning Officer should consult the candidates prior to the voting day to establish whether or not they wish to be present during the counting of votes.
- i) The Director of Education should be informed of the date and time of the count in order that he/she or his/her representative may be present to assist in the process if he/she so desires.
- j) At the close of the counting, the Returning Officer should announce the result. [In the event of a tie, there should be a recount. If this does not produce a clear result, the Returning Officer should, in the presence of the witnesses, draw lots \(select at random\).](#) In such circumstances any candidate whose votes have tied should be present, or have been invited to be present. It would be preferable if all affected candidates were present.
- f) In any event any candidate may ask for a recount if the result is close.

**As a general rule when recounting votes this process should be repeated until the same number has been achieved twice.**

#### **8) Declaration of Result**

- a) Staff should be informed of the result of the election by the most appropriate method, for example a letter or a notice displayed on a public notice board at the school (see Appendix L).
- b) The Returning Officer should forward the results to the Clerk to the Governors immediately following the election via email.
- c) On receipt of the return, the Clerk to the Governors will:
  - Communicate the result to the Governing Board at its next meeting.
  - Formally write to the newly elected Governor(s) setting out the arrangements for future meetings etc.

#### **9) After the Election**

- a) The ballot papers should be retained securely by the Returning Officer for a period of at least six months, in case the election result is challenged.
- b) The number of ballot papers issued and the number returned should be noted in order to monitor participation.
- c) Any questions or areas of doubt concerning the election of teacher or support staff Governors should be referred to the Governor Support Service.

**MODEL COMMUNICATION REQUESTING NOMINATIONS  
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING/SUPPORT STAFF ESTABLISHMENT AT  
\_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL.**

**ELECTION OF STAFF GOVERNORS**

You are invited to stand for election as a Staff Governor, or nominate another member of staff to do so. There is currently one vacancy for a Staff Governor, who will serve on the Governing Board for \_\_\_ years. Although no qualifications are required to become a Governor, we are particularly keen to encourage staff with the following skills to stand for election as we have identified these skills gaps on our Governing Board; ***Insert skills required***

Training is available to all Governors and the Board has an expectation that new Governors attend a free induction training session.

The Governing Board has three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Eligible members of the teaching and support staff are invited to take part in the election of a Staff Governor. The enclosed sheet (Appendix B) summarises the circumstances under which someone can serve as a Governor. Official nomination forms are available from \_\_\_\_\_ for this purpose. These should be returned to \_\_\_\_\_ no later than \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. /p.m. on \_\_\_\_\_

Should only one nomination be received by the official closing date, the candidate will be duly elected unopposed. In the event of there being more nominations, an election will take place on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ between \_\_\_ a.m. and \_\_\_ p.m. and you will be informed of the voting arrangements at a later date.

Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_ School.

**NOMINATION OF STAFF TO SERVE ON THE GOVERNING BOARD OF  
\_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL FOR \_\_\_\_ YEARS**

Election of Staff Governor

Please enter IN BLOCK LETTERS the name and address of the person being nominated for election:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person nominated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of proposer (if different to nominee): \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address in BLOCK letters of proposer (if different to nominee):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Personal Statement (maximum 250 words)

Please note:

- i. A staff member may not propose more than one nominee.
- ii. Any staff member employed under a contract of employment with the local authority/governing body to work at the school, are entitled to participate in the election.
- iii. Details of the disqualification rules are enclosed.

Signature  
.....

Date  
.....

Completed nomination forms must be returned to the school by <insert date>

**MODEL COMMUNICATION TO TEACHERS/SUPPORT STAFF SETTING OUT THE  
RESULT OF THE ELECTION OF STAFF GOVERNORS WHEN INSUFFICIENT  
NOMINATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED TO HOLD A BALLOT**

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING/SUPPORT STAFF ESTABLISHMENT AT  
\_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL.**

**ELECTION OF STAFF GOVERNOR(S)**

Following the receipt of nominations in respect of the vacancy for a Staff Governor, only one nomination was received at the school by the official closing date.

In accordance with the rules of the election, the following person has been duly elected unopposed to serve as the Staff Governor of this school for \_\_\_ years unless they resign in the interim or cease to be employed at the school:

Headteacher,

..... School



**MODEL COMMUNICATION TO TEACHERS/SUPPORT STAFF WHEN A SECRET BALLOT IS NECESSARY**

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING/SUPPORT STAFF ESTABLISHMENT AT \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL.**

Election of one member of staff to serve on the Governing Board of \_\_\_\_\_ School for \_\_\_ years.

Following the request for nominations in respect of the vacancy for a Staff Governor the following nominations have been received from Teachers/Support Staff wishing to serve as a Staff Governor on the School's Governing Board for a period of \_\_\_ years:

(Names)

A ballot is therefore necessary and a ballot paper is available on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) from \_\_\_\_\_ (place) for your use. You may record one vote for the candidate of your choice.

Ballot papers may be placed by you in the ballot box situated \_\_\_\_\_ or returned to me in an envelope clearly marked "Staff Governor Election - Ballot Paper". The voting period is \_\_\_\_\_ day/time) between \_\_\_ a.m. and \_\_\_ p.m. Votes cast after the close of the ballot will be invalid.

The counting of votes and declaration of the result will take place on \_\_\_\_\_ and you will be informed of the result as soon as possible after that date.

Headteacher

# BALLOT PAPER

*NB: This ballot paper includes the candidates' personal statements in the same document. You may choose to provide these as a separate document.*

Election of Staff Governors <insert school name>

There is one vacancy for a Staff Governors. You may vote for one candidate, and NOT vote more than once for each candidate.

**Candidates**

<Insert a copy of candidates' personal statements>

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**Election of Staff Governors – <insert school name>**

Candidate	Mark an 'X' to indicate your vote

**MODEL COMMUNICATION TO TEACHERS/SUPPORT STAFF SETTING OUT THE  
RESULT OF THE ELECTION OF STAFF GOVERNOR FOLLOWING A SECRET BALLOT**

\_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING/SUPPORT STAFF ESTABLISHMENT AT  
\_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL**

THE RESULT OF THE ELECTION FOR A STAFF GOVERNOR TO SERVE ON THE  
SCHOOL'S GOVERNING BOARD FOR A PERIOD OF \_\_\_ YEARS WHICH TOOK PLACE  
ON \_\_\_\_\_ IS AS FOLLOWS:

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Votes</b>
NAME	XX
NAME	XX
NAME	XX

In accordance with the rules of the election, the following member of staff has therefore been  
elected to serve as a Staff Governor of the School, for \_\_\_ years unless they cease to be  
employed at the school or resign in the interim.

.....

Headteacher

## **GSS Publications**

*The Governor Support Service has issued guidance on many topics of interest to Governors. They are free of charge to Governing Boards **subscribing** to our services and are available from:*

*Tel: 024 7683 1561 e-mail: [Angela.Carr@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Angela.Carr@coventry.gov.uk) or [Kelly.Goddard@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Kelly.Goddard@coventry.gov.uk)*

*A list of publications are available on request*