



Questions and Answers About Inkpen School Governors

Why do schools have governors?

The governing body of a school is responsible and accountable for all the major decisions about the school and its future. We have a legal responsibility to make sure the school promotes high standards of educational achievement. We are responsible for appointing and reviewing the performance of the Headteacher, and are usually involved in other staff appointments.

What do the Governors do?

Together with Ms Kanisius we set the future direction for the school, decide how the school's budget should be spent, and monitor & evaluate the school's performance. In doing this we make decisions on things like performance targets, school policies, staffing, and the school's development plan. We provide the Headteacher with support and advice, drawing on our knowledge and experience from outside school. We ask searching questions whilst respecting his position as professional leader of the school - this is often compared to acting as a "critical friend". Examples of major decisions taken by the governors in recent years include:

- Refurbishing the kitchen so we can provide meals cooked freshly on-site
- Appointing Mrs Kanisius as our Headteacher
- Converting the staff room to an ICT suite, and replacing laptops and PCs in classes
- Changing to a 4 class system in the mornings
- Working with a consultant on how to improve break times, which lead to employing a play leader for break times and investing in new play equipment

Who can be a Governor ?

Anyone over 18 with an interest in education can be a governor. We are all volunteers who spend about 6 hours each month attending meetings and working to further the school's development. Our governing body is drawn from the school's community, and includes parents; school staff; representatives of the Local Education Authority and community governors.

Who are our Governors ?

At Inkpen School our current governors are:

Vacancy	Co-Opted Governor
Vacancy	Local Authority Governor
Jane Kanisius	Headteacher
Jane Obin	Staff Governor
Sarah Marston	Co-Opted Governor/Chair
Emma Wordsworth	Co-Opted Governor
Mark Taylor	Parent Governor
Mike Unsworth	Co-Opted Governor
Maria Tillett	Clerk to the governors

How often do we meet ?

There is a full governors meeting 10 times a year, usually the 2nd Tuesday of the month and within that meeting it incorporates all aspects of the school, E.G Curriculum, results, Finance, H&S etc.

The minutes of the meetings are available from the school office or on via website. In addition the Chair and Headteacher will normally once a term.

Are governors paid ?

No, all of our work is voluntary, although we may receive expenses. Across England there are around 350,000 Governors, making us the largest volunteer workforce in the country.

How do you contact the governors ?

Mrs Tillet in the school office will be happy to put you in touch with them, or direct you to parent governors in the playground.

When should you contact the Governors rather than the Headteacher ?

Whilst we are always happy to hear from and talk with parents, the Headteacher is responsible for the day to day running of the school, so initially most queries and specific issues should be addressed to Ms Kanisius. Because we have a specific responsibility for reviewing complaints and exclusions it is sometimes important that we don't get involved in the first instance.

For example, if you had concerns about a specific behaviour incident at the school then you should discuss it first with the Ms Kanisius. If that failed to resolve the issue, or you were concerned about the general approach to behaviour management, then that would need to be discussed by the governors, and you should contact us.

In most cases the way we want the school to operate is set out in the various policies (such as the behaviour policy, uniform policy, complaints policy, etc) which we review on an annual or bi-annual basis. The current policies are always available in the school office and on the web site.

If you don't think a policy is being followed, or it is unclear, or even simply that it is wrong, then that should be brought to our attention.

If in doubt then please feel free to contact either the governors or Ms Kanisius, and if necessary we will point you in the appropriate direction.

The Governors and Staff are all committed to making Inkpen School the best possible learning and development environment for the children, and are always happy to answer any additional questions you may have.