



Being a Governor at Cardinal Newman Catholic School

The Benefits

For anybody who is community minded or follows the life and teachings of Jesus Christ being a Governor is one of the highest forms of voluntary service. It is demanding but the school could not function and flourish without this valuable input.

Here are just some of the benefits of being a governor:

- Making a contribution to children's learning
- Working together to add value and support young people to achieve and be the best they can be
- Being part of a joint enterprise where your skills and experience are acknowledged, valued and developed
- Sharing skills and knowledge to support and challenge improvement
- Ensuring young people and families have a voice
- Providing support and challenge to teachers and recognising the work that they do

Time Commitment

The term for a governor is normally four years. The governing board meets monthly during term time and all governors are expected to attend. A smaller group of governors serve on our Resources Committee which oversees budgetary and staffing issues.

Visiting the school during the school day is an invaluable way of getting to know the school, the staff and the work that they do. So we ask governors to volunteer to undertake visits. However, we do understand that work or other commitments will mean that visiting during the school day will be difficult for some governors.

Training

The school subscribes to Brighton and Hove Council's governors' training programme, so all training is free of charge to individual governors. You would be expected, at a minimum, to complete the governor induction programme provided by the council. Sessions are run regularly throughout the year, with daytime and evening choices.

There are also a wide range of other training courses available to help governors develop their skills, including online learning modules. The staff at Cardinal Newman are expected to undertake continual professional development and although we are volunteers, there is an expectation that governors will make full use of the training available to continually develop their skills during their time as a governor.

The makeup and functions of the governing board

Cardinal Newman's board of governors has 18 members – 10 foundation governors appointed by the Diocese, 2 staff governors, including the head teacher, 1 local authority governor nominated by the council, 2 elected parent governors and 3 co-opted governors.

[Statutory regulations](#) define the three core functions of a governing board as being to:

- set the vision and strategic direction of school;
- hold the headteacher to account for its educational performance; and
- ensure financial resources are well spent.

[Government guidance](#) is that the board should provide non-executive leadership for the school. Its role is to operate as a board akin to the board of trustees of a charity, or the board of directors of a company. It says the board should operate at a strategic level, leaving the head teacher and senior school leaders responsible and accountable to it for the operational day-to-day running of the school.

The responsibilities of governors include:

- Developing the school's strategic plan, determining aims, policies and priorities
- Performance management of the head teacher
- Monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
- Appointing and employing staff and ensuring the implementation of personnel procedures
- Managing the school budget
- Securing high levels of attendance and good standards of pupil behaviour
- Ensuring that all children in the school have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is suitable to age, aptitude and ability
- Ensuring the health and safety of pupils
- Setting and applying the criteria for the admission of pupils to the school

Tasks include:

- Getting to know the school: its needs, strengths and areas for development
- Attending meetings (full governing board, committees and working groups)
- Working as a member of a team
- Speaking, acting and voting in the best interests of the school
- Respecting all governing board decisions and supporting them in public
- Acting within the framework of the policies and legal requirements
- Attending training and development opportunities appropriate to the role
- Visiting the school to get to know it and support the development of the curriculum

If you are interested in becoming a foundation governor of the school please contact the Clerk to the Governors by emailing clerktogovernors@cncs.co.uk.