

Nominations for parent governor of Primary Advantage Federation

Dear parent,

I am writing to invite you to consider standing for the role of parent governor for Primary Advantage Federation's governing body. The governing body has two parent governors and one of these positions is currently vacant. To stand, you must be the parent or full-time carer of a child in one of the federation's eight schools on both the date nominations close and the closing date for returning ballot papers. Parent governors are elected to serve for a four-year period and can complete their term even if they no longer have a child in a federation school.

You may remember that I wrote to you about this at the start of the term but unfortunately one of the candidates became ineligible and we are having to re-run the election.

There's more information about the federation in *Appendix A: About Primary Advantage Federation*.

Role of the governing body and governors

The governing body, along with the executive principal, has overall responsibility for the running of the federation. Governing bodies have three core strategic functions:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding the executive principal and headteachers to account for the educational performance of the federation and its pupils;
- overseeing the financial performance of the federation and making sure its money is well spent.

All governors have the same roles and responsibilities. The role and responsibilities of a governor are set out in further detail in the attached governor role description published by the National Governance Association – see *Appendix B: What does a governor do?* Please note that the role relates to all eight federation schools, not just the one your child attends.

Expectations of governors

The main time commitment for governors is preparing for and attending meetings. You will be a member of the Central Governing Board (CGB), which consists of all governors. You will also be expected to chair one of the eight local advisory boards (LABs). There is one LAB for each school and they ensure there is local accountability for the performance of the federation and individual schools and that each school achieves strong outcomes for the pupils and the communities they serve. As your role covers the whole federation, you will not serve on the LAB for the school your child attends.

The CGB and LABs meet once a term in the early evening. You will also be asked to serve on ad hoc panels of governors for disciplinary or exclusion appeals or act as link governor on a specific issue, talking to the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on progress on a school priority.

How to apply

If you would like to stand for election or nominate another parent, please complete the attached nomination form and return it to me. Self-nominations will be accepted, but if you are nominating another parent you should seek their consent first. No special qualifications are needed and the most

important thing is to have a keen interest in the federation and be prepared to play an active part in the governing body's work. Training is available for all governors and the federation expects that those new to being a governor will attend induction training.

Anyone standing for election is invited to provide a short, typed personal statement (maximum 500 words). The statement should include biographical information, your reasons for wanting to be a parent governor and the contribution you believe you can make to the governing body.

If you're interested in applying for the role, please complete the candidate form attached to the letter and return it to me via dhyslop@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk or c/o Holy Trinity Primary School, Beechwood Rd, London E8 3HY. **The deadline is 3.30pm on Wednesday 20 November 2019.**

If there is only one nominee, s/he will be elected automatically as a parent governor. If more than one candidate applies, an election will take place in which all parents and carers with children attending one of the federation's eight schools will be entitled to vote. Copies of candidates' personal statements and the ballot procedure will be circulated to all parents.

Should an election take place, voting will be done electronically starting on 25 November 2019 and ending on 9 December 2019. The winning candidate will be notified on 11 December 2019.

Any questions?

If you'd like to find more about the role, I would be very happy to discuss it with you either over the phone, via email or in person.

Equally, if you have any other queries about this process, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Hyslop
Federation Governance Manager
0207 2541010 Option 6
07932995300
dhyslop@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk

Primary Advantage parent governor nomination form

Please return the form to Dan Hyslop, dhyslop@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk or c/o Holy Trinity Primary School, Beechwood Rd, London E8 3HY by 3.30pm on Wednesday 20 November 2019.

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

Name:	
Name of the school your child attends:	
Address:	
Email address:	
Name of proposer (if different to the nominee):	
Address of proposer:	
Email address of proposer:	

The only information about you that we will send to other parents is your full name and your personal statement.

Personal Statement (maximum 500 words)

In this section please outline:

- the skills and experience you have that the federation governing board requires;
- your commitment to undertaking training to acquire or develop the skills needed to be an effective governor;
- how you plan to contribute to the future work of the governing board.

If there is an election, your statement will be circulated to parents with their ballot paper.

Continue on a new sheet if necessary.



I confirm that I am currently the parent or full-time carer of a child registered at a school that is part of Primary Advantage Federation. I have carefully read the attached document titled *Criteria for Parent Governors* and none of the disqualifications listed in that document apply to me.

**Signed
(nominee):**

Date:

**Signed
(proposer, if
applicable):**

Date:

Appendix A: About Primary Advantage Federation

About the Federation

Primary Advantage is a federation of eight schools in Hackney under the direction of an Executive Principal, Sian Davies. As a federation, we believe our schools can gain many benefits from working collaboratively. We have made a commitment to a shared responsibility to the wider community, the provision of good quality education and the improvement of the life chances for pupils in the community beyond that of our own schools. Teachers, support staff, school leaders and governors have added expertise in working alongside colleagues to improve provisions and outcomes for pupils. There are four Church of England schools and four community schools within the federation, these schools are:

- **St John and St James** Church of England Primary School based in Hackney Central
- **Holy Trinity** Church of England Primary School based in Dalston
- **Springfield** Community Primary School based near Stamford Hill
- **St Matthias** Church of England Primary School located in Stoke Newington
- **St John the Baptist** Church of England Primary School located in Hoxton
- **Morningside** Community Primary School based in Hackney Central
- **Gainsborough** Community Primary School located in Hackney Wick
- **De Beauvoir** Community Primary School based in Dalston

About Teaching Schools

Primary Advantage has also achieved a National Teaching School status. Teaching schools are outstanding schools that work with others to provide high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff. They are part of the governments' plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system.

St John and St James C of E Primary School, Springfield Community Primary School and Holy Trinity C of E Primary School are the lead teaching schools in a part of a multiple teaching school alliance in Hackney. The schools work in partnership with primary schools across the borough and beyond and play a key role within the Primary Advantage National Teaching Schools Alliance.

Our work in improving provision for children will see us sharing practice with our alliance of schools in the borough of Hackney, across London and into the County of Suffolk. We will be working closely with our strategic partners The Institute of Education, Hackney Learning Trust and National Centre for Excellence in Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) to effectively deliver 'The Big 3':

1. **School direct and initial teacher training**
2. **Using evidence based CPD to train and equip teaching staff**
3. **Supporting schools at different stages of their journey**

Primary Advantage Vision

We have made a commitment to a shared responsibility to the wider education community, the provision of a high-quality education and the improvement of life chances for pupils in the community beyond that of our own schools. Our schools gain significant benefits from working collaboratively and can achieve more by working together.

Outcomes

We are committed to achieving the following outcomes:

- Every teacher is a great teacher; every school is a great school. We aim to move incrementally towards excellence in all aspects of our work.
- All pupils will make good or better progress and will be properly equipped for the next stage of their schooling.
- High quality learning environments where pupils feel safe and secure, known and valued and motivated to learn.
- A bespoke curriculum which broadens horizons and inspires our pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.
- A learning community with opportunities for growth for pupils, staff and families.

Approach

Our schools are different, but to achieve our aims we are committed to the following approaches:

Expectation

- We believe in improving the life chances of all our pupils
- We have the highest possible standards and will use our resources and expertise to unlock learning in all its facets for all our children.
- No barrier is too great; no learning is left behind.
- Skilled teachers use the most effective teaching methods to motivate learners and raise aspirations.
- Our schools are special places to work. We want to attract and retain staff at all levels that are willing to think flexibly, work with rigour and precision and go the extra mile.

Leadership

- Our leadership structure aims to make the most of our shared resources, maintain high expectations and secure high standards.
- We build leadership sustainability by spotting talent and creating opportunities for staff at all levels to receive high quality training and leadership experiences.
- We recognise the importance of individuality, spontaneity, and creativity in developing innovation.
- We seek to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of each school by capitalising on centralised services and sharing systems and procedures.

Partnership

- We work in partnership, pooling our expertise and resources in order to achieve collectively what we may not be able to achieve individually.
- We promote a collaborative approach whilst developing the capacity of each school to serve its own community and retain its distinct identity.
- We have developed approaches which we know make the most significant impact on pupil outcomes. These are well considered systems, approaches or policies which can be implemented in a range of settings with the appropriate levels of support.

Growth

- Through the work of our Teaching School we are able to offer excellent professional development for current practitioners, leaders and future recruits to the profession.
- Teachers have many opportunities for professional growth through our development and master's programs.
- Staff, pupils and families have opportunities for growth through links with our partners, schools and a wide range of enrichment activities.

Appendix B: What does a governor do?

Role of a school governor: To contribute to the work of the governing body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the federation's schools by:

- setting the federation's vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- holding the executive principal and headteachers to account for the educational performance of the federation, its schools and its pupils;
- overseeing the financial performance of the federation and making sure its money is well spent.

Activities: As part of the governing body team, a governor is expected to:

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing body meetings which determine:
 - the vision and ethos of the federation;
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the federation;
 - that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
 - the federation's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation;
 - the federation's staffing structure and key staffing policies;
 - the principles to be used by school leaders to set other federation policies.
2. Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the federation's performance. This includes:
 - agreeing the outcomes from the schools' self-evaluations and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in school development plans;
 - considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of federation and school performance;
 - asking challenging questions of federation and school leaders;
 - ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits;
 - ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the federation and its schools are operating effectively according to those policies;
 - acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing body on the progress on the relevant priority;
 - listening to and reporting to the federation's stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff and the wider community.
3. Ensure federation and school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:
 - appoint the executive principal, headteachers and other senior leaders;
 - appraise the executive principal (with the exception of the staff governor);
 - set the executive principal's and headteachers' pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff (with the exception of the staff governor);
 - hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters;
 - hear appeals about pupil exclusions.

The role of governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does NOT:

- write federation policies;
- undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience;
- spend much time with the pupils of the federation – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the federation;
- fundraise – this is the role of the parent-teacher association (PTA) – the governing body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks;
- undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the governing body monitors the quality of teaching in the federation by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources;
- do the job of federation or school staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing body need to consider and rectify this.

Additional roles: As you become more experienced as a governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g. as a chair of a committee). This document does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair and chairs of committees. The staff governor cannot be the chair or vice-chair of the Central Governing Board but s/he can chair committees.

In order to perform this role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the federation and its schools, including by visiting schools occasionally during school hours, and gain a good understanding of schools' strengths and weaknesses;
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events;
- attend meetings (full governing body meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting;
- act in the best interest of all the pupils of the federation;
- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the governing body's code of conduct, including acting in strict confidence.

Time commitment: Under usual circumstances, you should expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on your governing responsibilities. The top end of this commitment, which equates to about half a day per week in term time, is most relevant to the chair and others with key roles, such as chairs of committees. Initially, we would expect your commitment to be nearer 10 days a year. However, there may be periods when the time commitment may increase, for example when recruiting a headteacher. Some longstanding governors may tell you that they spend far more time than this on school business; however, it is fairly common for governors to undertake additional volunteering roles over and above governance.

Under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996, if you are employed, then you are entitled to 'reasonable time off' to undertake public duties; this includes school governance. 'Reasonable time off' is not defined in law, and you will need to negotiate with your employer how much time you will be allowed.

Expenses: Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor, and NGA recommends that a governing body should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.

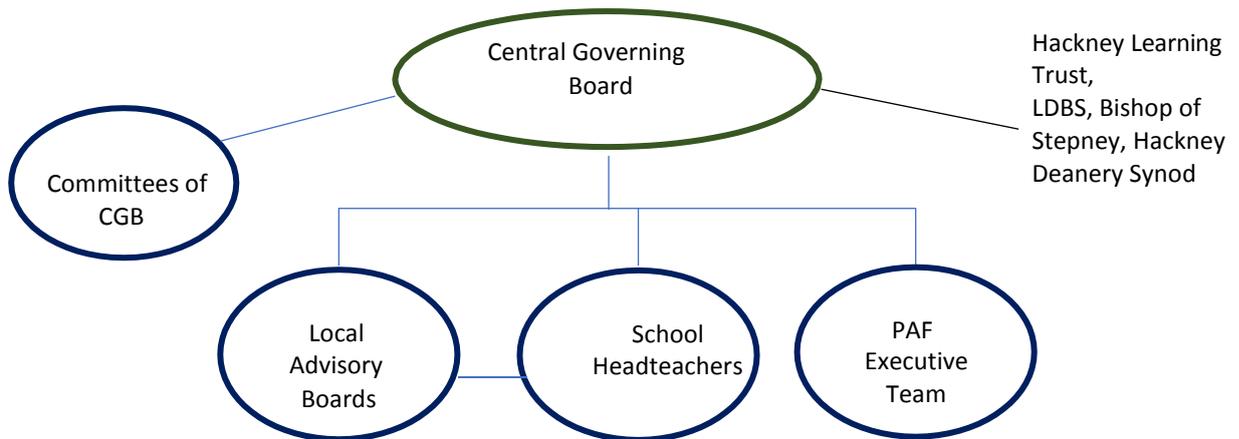
This document has been adapted from *Welcome to Governance 6th Edition* published by the National Governance Association.

Appendix C: Governance in Primary Advantage Federation

Primary Advantage Federation (PAF) is a hard federation of eight primary schools in Hackney. Governance Fundamentals contains all the documents relating to governance for PAF. Any update to individual areas in this will result in a reissue of the Governance Fundamentals.

PAF has a governance handbook and this should be read before looking at the Governance Fundamentals to understand how our Central Governing Board (CGB) delegates functions across the governance tiers.

The following structure seeks to capture the relationships between the governance elements of Primary Advantage, the eight schools and teaching schools.



The key elements of this structure and their roles are:

- **Central Governing Board (CGB):** holds legal powers of governing bodies of all Federation schools. It ensures clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction and holds the Executive Principal to account for performance of each school, teaching schools, Federation and staff. Oversees financial performance. The CGB will delegate some responsibilities and these will be set out in the Scheme of Delegation.
- **Committees:** to achieve its functions, the CGB delegates some responsibilities to two committees, Business & Finance and Provision & Outcomes. Further committees may be established as needed.
- **Local Advisory Boards (LABs):** there is a LAB for each school to support the strategic decisions to improve outcomes for pupils. They reflect CGB core functions to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, financial performance and hold Headteachers to account for performance and staff.
- **Executive Team:** delivers vision and values of Federation, oversees strategic operations. Performance manages each Headteacher.
- **Headteachers:** responsible for the performance and management of their school and for aligning to the Federation vision, ethos and strategic direction.

Appendix D: Criteria for parent governors

Qualification

To stand as a parent governor you must be the parent or full-time carer of a child registered at one of the eight schools that are part of Primary Advantage Federation.

Disqualifications

According to schedule 4 of The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 and statutory guidance on these regulations a person is disqualified from holding or from continuing to hold office as a parent governor of a school at any time when they:

- Are a registered pupil at any federation school.
- Are under 18 years old.
- Fail to attend their meetings for six consecutive months.
- Are the subject of:
 - A bankruptcy restrictions order, or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order.
 - A debt relief restrictions order, or an interim debt relief restrictions order.
 - An undischarged sequestration.
- Are disqualified from being a company director and/or a charity trustee.
- Have been removed from office as an elected governor within the last five years.
- Are included in the list of those unsuitable to work with children.
- Are disqualified from working with children, barred from regulated activity and/or disqualified from registering for childminding or providing daycare.
- Have been sentenced to three months or more in prison (without the option of a fine) in the five years before becoming a governor or since becoming a governor.
- Have received a prison sentence of two-and-a-half years or more in the 20 years before becoming a governor.
- Have at any time received a prison sentence of 5 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 a request by the clerk to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Are elected members (councillors) of the local authority (this is Hackney Council in relation to the federation).
- Are paid to work at any federation school for more than 500 hours in a year.