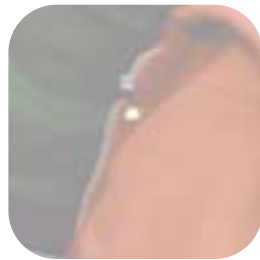
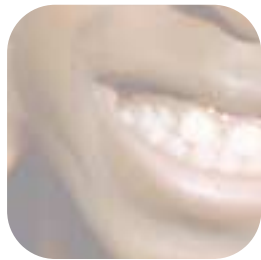
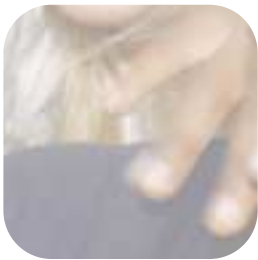
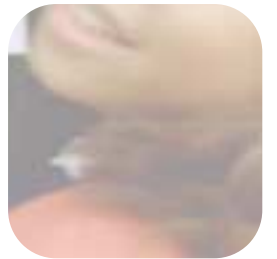
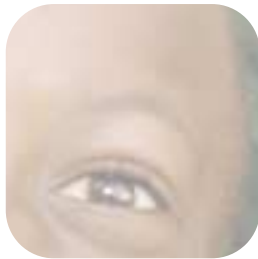
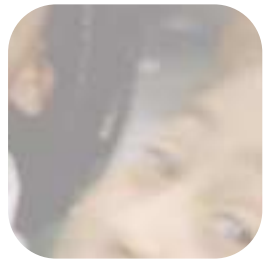
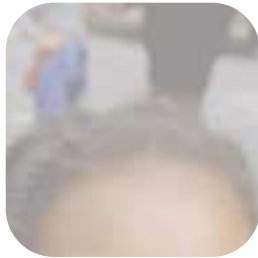


Best practice guidance for parent governor representatives





Local authorities must provide places, with speaking and voting rights, for parent governor representatives on their main committees and sub committees dealing with education matters. Parent governor representatives are parent governors elected by other parent governors to provide a voice for all parents in their area in local decision making.

Representatives are now working on local education authority committees and liaising with local parent governors and parents.

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foreword

Baroness Catherine Ashton

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Early Years and School Standards

Parents, and their children, have the biggest stake in how well schools perform and how well local authorities support them. It is therefore only right that parents should have a say in local authority decisions that affect the range and quality of education in schools. Parents are shrewd judges of whether their children are being well educated and their knowledge and commitment can benefit not only children and schools, but the local authority leadership too. This is where Parent Governor Representatives play an important role. Parent Governor Representatives, or PGRs, are parent governors elected by other parent governors to represent the views of all parents, in a non-political way, on local authority committees dealing with education issues.

This guidance has been produced to help PGRs and local education authorities (LEAs) carry out their role effectively.

Local authorities have a degree of flexibility in how they utilise PGRs, so you may find that in your area things work a little differently to the way they have been described in this guidance. Similarly, PGRs, also have flexibility in carrying out their role. There are no right or wrong ways of doing it and each authority will need to work with their PGRs to find out what works best. As long as PGRs try to best represent the needs and wishes of parents in their area, they will not go far wrong.

Parents are key partners in raising educational standards and Parent Governor Representatives have a very important role to play in making the parents' voice heard and their influence felt, in both local and national decision-making. I value the time you give and the talents you bring to this role and I am grateful for your continued hard work and commitment as a PGR to raise educational standards.



introduction

Parent Governor Representatives (PGRs) are parent governors elected by other parent governors to represent the views of all parents, in an apolitical way, on local authority overview and scrutiny committees and sub-committees dealing with education. PGRs have speaking rights on any issue under discussion by the committee, but may only vote on issues relating to education.

Each local authority must appoint at least 2 and not more than 5 PGRs to each committee or sub-committee dealing with education issues. PGRs serve a term of office of not less than 2 but no more than 4 years.

The role of the PGR is, primarily, to hold their authority to account by consulting with and feeding back to parents on discussions and decisions relating to education.

Policy Commitment:

The establishment of Parent Governor Representatives fulfills a 1997 Labour manifesto commitment. PGRs were established in the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*, amending section 499 of the *Education Act 1996*, and are subject to their own Regulations, *The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001*.

becoming a parent governor representative

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE A PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVE

You must satisfy two conditions before you can stand as a parent governor representative.

Firstly, you must be a parent governor. That means someone who has been elected by parents to represent them on a school governing body. No other type of school governor qualifies, even if they are parents.

Secondly, at the time you are elected, you must be the parent of a child currently being educated by the authority. That means your child will either be on the register of a school maintained by the authority or receiving education outside school with funding made available by the local education authority.

Special cases

There are two exceptions: the City of London and the Isles of Scilly. In these two authorities, you may qualify to vote and to stand in the election if you are the parent of a child in a school maintained by the authority or educated otherwise at the authority's expense or are resident in the authority and have a child in a maintained school elsewhere.

If you do decide to stand, the authority can tell you how and when you should put your name forward. This will include whether you need to be nominated and/or seconded and by whom. The authority will need to check that you are eligible to stand.

PERSONS NOT ELIBIBLE TO STAND AS A PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVE

The following persons are not eligible to stand as parent governor representatives:

- anyone employed by the local authority;
- anyone employed at a school maintained by the local education authority, either as teaching or non-teaching staff;
- anyone who is a councillor of any local authority.

the **role** of the parent governor representative

The PGRs' role is to hold their local authority to account and consult and feed back to parents, the local education authority's discussions and decisions on education. Your task is to represent parents, not to be mandated by them to act in a particular way or be their delegate. The role involves:

- **Speaking** for parents and pupils on education matters at local authority meetings;
- **Voting** in key decisions;
- **Keeping in touch** with general views of parents; and
- **Acting as a sounding board** for the local authority when it wants to get a feel for whether parents are likely to welcome or reject a particular proposal

Although there are no financial rewards from being a parent governor representative, you can expect:

- to get personal satisfaction from performing an important public service;
- to develop a better understanding of how your local authority takes strategic decisions;
- to build effective and valuable working relationships with officers, elected local councillors, church representatives, and other appointed committee members such as teachers.

induction, support and development

INDUCTION AND SUPPORT

As a parent governor representative you can expect support from a number of areas. Shortly after you are elected, your local education authority will provide you with induction into your new role, providing the essential information you will need to get started. You might also gain help from your local governor association or parent/teacher association.

There are also a large number of other resources to develop and support you in your role. There are Internet websites, publications and, of course, other parent governor representatives.

Local education authority

Officers of the local education authority will have an on-going role to provide you with suitable support. You may already have had contact with some officers during your election. You should be able to approach these and a number of other officers, including those dealing with school governor issues and the committee clerk whose role it is to support members of the committee. It is for each local authority to devise its pattern of support to committee members.

While LEA officers will always be willing to help, it is important to bear in mind that they are busy people dealing with schools, head teachers, governors and elected members, among others. Therefore, it may be worth either making arrangements for a regular meeting or agree the best time to contact them.

DfES made available, through the Standards Fund, up to £1200 per LEA to help with this support. However since 2001/2002, due to changing commitments, this amount has not been ring-fenced and must be match-funded by the LEA. Guidance on the 2000 Local Government Act suggests that, to operate effectively, PGRs require similar support to elected members. This support should include induction and further training, advice from the committee secretariat, providing relevant meeting papers, it may include the costs of copying, printing, telephone charges, stationery, postage, travel and subsistence, access to a PC, child care and advice on communicating with parents. You should contact your local education authority for guidance on your claim.

Parent and local governor associations

Ask your local education authority what arrangements they have in place for consulting parents and parent organisations in their area. A number of local education authorities have set up parent forums. For example, a set of local groups could lead into a local authority-wide forum, with a set pattern of meetings throughout the year, or when the authority needs to consult on a specific issue there could be meetings geared to this.

The local governor association may be able to offer you:

- a mechanism for communicating with school governors (e.g. a termly newsletter);
- an insight into wider local issues;
- background on specific local issues that have been running for a while; or
- school governor contacts in areas within your local authority.

Local Government Association

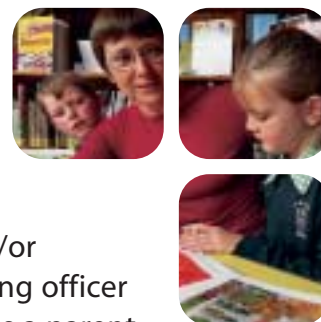
The Local Government Association (LGA) represents all local authorities in England and Wales – a total of just under 500 authorities (34 county councils, 36 metropolitan district councils, 47 English unitary authorities, 33 London authorities, 238 shire district councils and 22 Welsh unitary authorities).

The LGA produces a wide range of publications, supplying information on matters of local government policy and best practice. Publications are often relevant to a wider audience than local authorities, covering areas such as education, health, drugs, and policing. Details and copies of these priced publications are available from the LGA publication unit.

DEVELOPMENT

There are many avenues for development. One highly accessible route is through the Internet. Many organisations now have websites and these include a significant amount of information.

You may have access to the Internet at home. Otherwise, you may like to ask officers at the LEA whether there are facilities available within the LEA that you can use. The LEA may provide a desk-top (or lap-top) computer facility for councillors that can be booked for a period of time.



Your local authority may organise training events for members and/or officers on specific issues. It is worth making contact with the training officer at the local authority. Some of the courses may be relevant to you as a parent governor representative.

NETWORKING

You will be a parent governor of at least one school in the authority. You may like to approach head teachers of other schools to arrange a visit. First hand experience at other schools is likely to give you a broader background and a wider understanding of the issues that affect schools in your authority.

PGR NETWORK & NFER

The Department has contracted an external company, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) until July 2004, to establish a support network for parent governor representatives. This network has established a moderated e-mail list, a bi-monthly newsletter and a website, all of which allow PGRs to share good practice, build relationships with fellow PGRs and help problem solving. For further information on the service provided by NFER, contact the network administrator, Catherine Cox on 01753 695818 or by e-mail at c.cox@nfer.ac.uk.

The PGR Network website address is www.pgrnet.org.uk/

TIME OFF FROM WORK

PGRs are not currently entitled to time off from their employment to undertake their duties as this only applies to members, however, the Department is currently undertaking an exercise to produce a Regulatory Impact Assessment for DTI. This may result in changes to Employment Regulations that will, hopefully, allow PGRS to take time off work to undertake their duties.

contacting parents

FINDING OUT WHAT PARENTS THINK

- ***Regular meetings with parent governors***

You could hold such meetings perhaps once a term. Depending on the size of the authority, it may be possible for each school or each pyramid of schools to send one representative to the meeting. If your authority does not already hold such meetings, your governor support officer or perhaps the local governor association could help you to organise them.

The LEA officer should also be able to advise you on how to run meetings if you have not had much experience. It is particularly important to set an agenda so that both participants know what they will be discussing and so that you can keep the discussion focused on the key issues. You should give others an opportunity to raise other issues. You should try to give everyone who wants to an opportunity to speak. Try not to let one or two very loud people drown out everyone else. Try not to spend too much time on one item so that you have to rush through other items towards the end of the meeting. And make sure you keep to time.

- ***Contacting parent governors through your local governor association***

Your local governor association may be able to offer a route for consulting parent governors through for example a termly newsletter.

- ***Holding a meeting at the town hall or another central location and, through the local press, inviting any parents in the borough to attend***

The advantage of this approach is that it is a good way of publicising your role to a large number of people. But it is likely to make it much harder to keep to your agenda. You may also find that people attend because they want to lobby you about a very specific issue, possibly one that only concerns a very small number of pupils. You will also have little control over numbers: your meeting room could be packed or it could be empty. Perhaps you can think of some ways to gauge numbers in advance. One way of focusing things could be to hold the meeting just before the LEA's committee meeting, so that you could gather views on the agenda points.



- ***Sending questionnaires to other parent governors, or perhaps the other parents at your children's school(s)***

This could involve quite a bit of work in writing, sending out forms, collecting responses and putting together results. It might be worth doing if you want to get a feel for the main interests and issues when you first take up office. It may also be appropriate for a particularly big issue or one that is likely to develop over a long period of time. But you should not plan on doing too many.

- ***Attending parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings, or meeting representatives of PTAs***

This would be a good way of collecting ideas, although you are likely to find that they focus on the school you are visiting, and it may be necessary for you to attend quite a number of such meetings in order to get a feel for what is happening across the area. Perhaps you could ask for the agendas to include a short time for parents to raise any broader issues.

- ***Creating a website on the Internet and ask for comments to be sent to a dedicated e-mail box***

You may feel that this is purely for people who are computer wizards. But do not be put off. Websites can be set up quite easily if you know how to do it, and you will probably be able to find someone within the LEA or among other parent governors who have the expertise and can advise you. More and more families now have a computer at home and are connected to the Internet.

- ***Holding telephone phone-ins on an allotted day***

We would advise using a dedicated telephone number—perhaps one at your town hall or in the LEA offices. It may be sensible to limit the time for calls to a two or three hour period—perhaps in the evening, when most parents are likely to be at home. Or you could use an answerphone and respond to messages over the next few days. We suggest that you do not use your personal telephone number.

- ***Asking local libraries to:***
 - show information posters about what you are doing; and
 - keep a comments book which allows parents to register their views on particular subjects
- ***Setting up, with your local authority's help, a post-box at the Town Hall***

If your local authority would be willing to allow you this facility, this would be a good way of controlling the correspondence you receive. But you would need to discuss with your local authority how to publicise the post-box.

REPORTING BACK TO PARENTS

- ***Newsletters to other parent governors***

You may wish to produce a letter at regular intervals. The letter could cover the decisions the local authority has taken, what action you have taken on the authority's committee(s), and a summary of the comments you have received from parents. You can keep down costs by asking your local education authority to distribute your newsletter to schools with their termly mailings.

- ***Posters***

These could be placed anywhere that is likely to be visited by parents: in schools, crèches, town hall, civic offices, library, sports centre, even local shops.

- ***Setting up a website on the Internet***

As advised in Annex B on finding out what parents think, this is not technically difficult and advice is never likely to be far away. It is also a convenient way to reach a number of people – once you have posted your information, it is available for all to share.

- ***Articles (or even a regular column) in your local newspaper***

First of all you may wish to discuss the possibilities with the media office in your local authority. You could then arrange to see the editor or the education correspondent of your local paper to discuss an article or even a regular column. You may wish to sketch the outline of a first article to show to the editor at your meeting.

- ***Including a short section in all governing bodies' annual reports to parents***

This would be a brief summary of your work over the year and of how the local authority has responded. This might cover both achievements and any setbacks. You would need to liaise with your local authority to arrange inclusion.

- ***Stands at local fêtes and other community events***

This would have the advantage of your getting out and about and covering a large audience. But the process might prove time-consuming.



hints and tips

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Example 1: Extract from the TEN report by Simon Bird: Governance Matters

Parent Governor Representatives in North Lincolnshire

North Lincolnshire LEA has fostered a close and productive partnership with its parent governor representatives (PGRs). **Angela Dunkerley**, the longest serving PGR in the locality, explains how the LEA has allocated specific resources and put in place structures for this partnership to develop.

The partnership between PGRs and the LEA is strongly supported by both the political and professional leadership of the LEA, which was reflected in the cabinet member for education and director of education attending a recent meeting for all parent governors organised by the three PGRs.

Meeting with the director

The director of education meets with each PGR within three weeks of their election, which consists of giving essential information, including providing relevant telephone lists, offering support in developing the role and exploring possibilities and new ideas, discussing possible ways of communicating and giving open access to all LEA officers.

Ready access to elected members

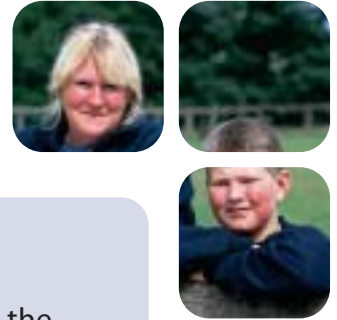
As well as being given open access to all LEA officers, PGRs also have easy access to all elected members. Members are encouraged to have regular contact with PGRs outside of formal meetings eg. scrutiny panels.

A named link officer

PGRs have a named officer who is available to help them to make links with others and to provide advice on the most appropriate person to contact on a particular subject and to deal with queries and any 'bugbears'.

Help with communications

The LEA's press office is on hand to provide advice and assistance with developing communications with all parents and parent governors.



Involvement in strategic groups

The LEA encourages PGRs to participate in strategic groups such as the education advisory group in order to get a parent governor perspective on key issues affecting education as they are being developed. PGRs take full advantage of these invitations and find the experience very worthwhile.

Consultation papers

The LEA ensures that PGRs are included on its main circulation lists and routinely receive copies of draft documents for consultation such as the education development plan and behaviour support plan.

Regular feedback

The LEA responds rapidly to any issues which have been raised by PGRs, and there is regular feedback given to them from the director and assistant directors of education and other LEA officers on any matters which impact on their role. Indeed, a climate of openness and trust has been established which allows the 'awkward' questions to be asked (in either direction) and addressed.

Administrative support

The LEA provides practical help to PGRs in the form of administrative support and other assistance such as the loan of a laptop. This extends to expense claims which are settled promptly.

Outward looking

The LEA encourages and supports PGRs to further develop their role by becoming actively involved in regional and national PGR networks.

For more information please contact:

Angela Dunkerley
Parent Governor Representative, North Lincolnshire LEA
Tel: 01724 297177

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Example 2: Extract from the TEN report by Simon Bird: Governance Matters

Parent Governor Representatives in Brighton and Hove

Brighton & Hove is another LEA to have fostered a very fruitful partnership with its parent governor representatives (PGRs). **Liz Lee and Kate Lewis**, both PGRs in Brighton and Hove, briefly describe the support they receive from the LEA in their important roles.

There is very good joint working in key areas such as training for parent governors and governor recruitment. There is an annual parent governor workshop, and we are involved in the planning and facilitation of this major event. At a recent workshop it was agreed to adopt a protocol for actions to be taken by parent governors when approached by parents with concerns.

The LEA supports the production and dissemination of an annual report for PGRs (in the form of a leaflet) that is distributed to all parents. The first annual report was designed to make parent governors and parents more aware of our roles – who we are and what we do. The leaflet also drew attention to the under-representation of minority ethnic groups on governing bodies, which it described as “*an area of concern*” (Chapter 3 on governor recruitment examines this issue in more detail). In conjunction with the governor support service, we also ran an *Education Day, Education in the Community – you can be part of it*, the main aim of which was to take education to the wider community and encourage participation and to publicise the role of school governors.

The LEA is also arranging for us to attend its ‘training the trainers’ course, to increase our confidence and skills in carrying out training for governors. We are running a training session on schools’ councils which includes parents’ councils as well, because we are keen to encourage parents to make their views known to parent governors and, through them, to the governing body.

For more information please contact:

Janis Winkworth, Manager, Governor Support, Brighton & Hove LEA
Tel: 01273 293506 Email: Janis.winkworth@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Liz Lee, Parent Governor Representative, Brighton & Hove LEA
Email: pgrep2bn@hotmail.com

Kate Lewis, Parent Governor Representative, Brighton & Hove LEA
Email: family@katelewis.fsnet.co.uk



EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Example 3: Parent Governor Representatives in Camden

Three Camden parents have taken a new step towards making sure get the best education possible in the borough. Steve Farrance finds out how...

Many parents go back to school and get involved with their children's education. They help with homework, go to parents' evenings and keep a close eye on what's happening in the classroom.

But three parents have gone a step further to make sure parents and carers throughout Camden are not just inquisitive, but influential too.

Parents have always been able to give their views on important education matters, but they now have direct means to help Camden's Local Education Authority continue providing first-class services to schoolchildren.

Jim Mulligan, Clio Whittaker and Luca Salice – three active local parents who are all school governors – have taken on the job of representing parents' views on Camden's Education Committee and Performance Sub Committee, joining the elected councillors to make important decisions on all aspects of education.

They take part in discussions and have the right to vote on many issues affecting Camden-run schools or the pupils who attend them.

From Ofsted reports to current national proposals to change the school year, they are directly involved.

"It's our job to represent the parents and express their views," says mother-of-three Clio, of Ospringle Road, Kentish Town.

"Obviously, all members of the committee are thinking about parents, but we bring that particular perspective to the fore. The main thing we all want to focus on is whatever's best for the children themselves."

The 46-year-old, who has been a governor at Eleanor Palmer School for seven years, adds: "In Camden, we know that we've got excellent schools. Part of the reason they are thriving is that all members of the community are involved, and I believe that we should all share the responsibility."

Anyone who has ever seen a committee report or been to a meeting knows that the amount of paper and discussion involved can be lengthy to say the least, but Haverstock governor Jim, 64, of Auden Place, Camden, says it's not too daunting.

"Camden really works hard to make it as easy as possible," says the self-employed education consultant. "There is often a lot to get through but we get all the support we need and any questions answered.

"I think our role is very important, but it's a waste of time unless we get other parents involved. We are their representatives after all, so they should use us if they have any concerns about education policy in the borough."

Luca, who has three children, has a slightly different role.

He sits on the council's Education Performance Sub Committee, which looks mainly at the huge number of Ofsted inspections of Camden's schools.

"I think it's great that we're doing what we're doing," says the 43-year-old, of Dartmouth Park Road.

"We are doing a useful, important job, and you get a bit of a kick out of knowing you are helping not just your own children, but others throughout Camden."

Camden's LEA sent a letter to all parent governors at the borough's schools asking for representatives to take the big step last spring.

The representatives, who have to be school governors, were elected for an initial two year term.

Subsequently, each term of office will be four years.

- If you have an issue you want to raise with Luca or Clio, you can write to them care of: Pete Whiteley, Head of School Support, Camden LEA, Crowndale Centre, 218-220 Eversholt Street, NW1 1BD.

Reproduced from Camden Citizen, February 2001.



EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Example 4: Parent Governor Representatives in Haringey

Haringey Parents in Education

Welcome to **Haringey Parents in Education**, the website that gives you a say in the education policies of the London Borough of Haringey. If you are a parent or carer of children attending a Haringey school, we are your voice on the Council.

Who we are and what we do

We are Liz Pine and Rob Sharp, your Haringey **Parent Governor Representatives**. We are parents of children in schools in Haringey and we represent Haringey parents on education matters. You can find out here what we can do for you.

How to contact us

You can contact us by post, by phone, by e-mail or through your own school's parent governors.

Latest Additions to the Site

17 June 2002

- new term dates for 2003-4;
- school Organization Plan 2002-7;
- you can read the most recent OFSTED report on Haringey LEA;
- next meetings of the Parent Governor Forum (17 June 2002) and Haringey Association of School Governing Bodies (28 May 2002);
- report on the Haringey Governors Conference 2002.

Parent Governor Forum

The **Parent Governor Forum** meets once a term to discuss issues of concern. Meetings usually include one or more key speakers. You can find details of past and future meetings here.

Education Scrutiny Panel

The **Education Scrutiny Panel** is part of the Council's committee structure. It is made up of a number of councillors and other education stakeholders, including the Parent Governor Representatives. Its role is to scrutinize the decisions of the Lead Councillors for Education, and to examine all aspects of the Council's education policies. You can find details of past and future meetings here.

Future Meetings and Events

This is the place to find out about forthcoming meetings about education matters in Haringey.

News Items

Here we will report any news items of interest.

Consultation Documents

One of the most important things we can do is to give you the opportunity to contribute to discussion about the future of education. Consultation documents are produced by the Department for Education and Employment, by Haringey and by other organizations. We will provide links to these documents here so that you can join in the consultation process.

Contacts and Links

There are numerous educational organizations and interest groups in Haringey. For links to all of them please visit our website www.haringeypie.care4free.net



EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Communicating with parents

Worcestershire: the post from the LEA is sent via the internal post service. The LEA has all the addresses of the schools so it makes sense for PGRs to make use of this service. The governor support/liaison officer also includes mail from the PGRs when mailing to all governors, who have access to schools and parents through the annual report to parents. Arranging for mail to go with other mailings is not generating additional work for any one department, and is a system that is used in **Coventry** too.

Coventry: utilised the Link Governor system already in operation through governor training. Opted to use Parent Governors, knowing them to be 'informed' parents. Clerks to governors set as an item on every schools agenda explaining PGRs role and asking for a named Link parent governor. LEA provided a venue for meeting. Meeting funded from a central budget. Produced a newsletter to be sent to all governors with the governor training pack.

Settling in to new roles

PGRs have been swapping experiences about settling in to their new roles. Here are some of the things that have helped PGRs to feel comfortable in their positions on the LEA.

Coventry

- issued with a basic stationery pack (staples etc);
- advised on funding available;
- named person at authority to deal with expense claims;
- passes and access to car park;
- introductory session with each of the senior education officers;
- quarterly meeting with the director for lifelong learning.

Hertfordshire

- the PGRs have access to the Director of Children and Family Services whenever required and the officers have been helpful at all times;
- PGRs now get all papers as and when Councillors receive theirs and get a briefing before each Committee meeting;
- a security pass for County Hall;
- a filofax, containing all members addresses and phone numbers;
- a copy of The Constitution of the council;
- a mileage allowance;
- a lunch allowance;
- reimbursement for loss of earnings;
- a meeting with the Director of Education, before every council meeting;
- a room before and after council meetings, to meet with each other, or any officials who may be able to advise them;

Oldham

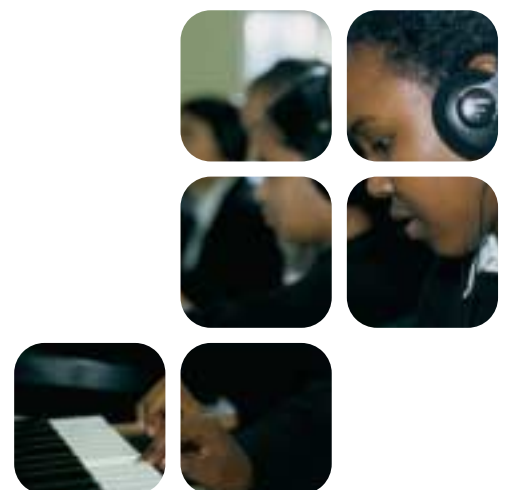
Sent out a **press release** to announce the arrival of their first PGRs.

Suffolk

- PGRs have been readily accepted by the already existing members of the Learning for Life Panel on which they sit. Prior to the first meeting they were invited to meet both the Director of Education and his Deputy in their offices at County Hall. At this meeting the PGRs were made aware of their duties and the way in which they would be able to join in the meetings. A short resume was given by all and this formed the basis of their introduction by the Chair of the Panel at the beginning of their first meeting;
- following that, a meeting was arranged by the Deputy Director of Education at a local hotel to enable them to express their views as to how they felt the meeting had gone and to also enable them to give their suggestions as to how future meetings could be improved;
- they were able to help structure future meetings by suggesting that the agenda be presented with all the school based educational content being

grouped together so that it would not then be necessary for PGRs to attend the whole meeting unless they wanted to;

- arrangements have been made for PGRs to have a pre-briefing meeting before every main meeting to enable the Deputy Director to bring out any points which they have not understood fully from the papers, which reach them about one week ahead of the meeting. They then meet briefly after the main meeting to discuss the outcomes with either the Director or his Deputy;
- they have been given every assistance by the Officers and Members of Suffolk County Council, and are in possession of the phone nos and e-mail addresses of all the major people in the Education Department. They have their own liaison officer available to them in County Hall.



annex A

procedures

NOMINATION PROCEDURES

LEAs must decide nomination procedures i.e.

- who can nominate a parent governor to stand for election;
- whether self-nominations are acceptable;
- are proposers and seconders required; and
- set up a system for inviting and receiving nominations.

DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY

It is the LEAs responsibility to determine any question that arises over an individuals' entitlement to vote or eligibility to stand for election.

ELECTIONS

Responsibility for election arrangements

LEAs are responsible for ensuring elections take place and all election arrangements are made. The LEA can choose to appoint another body, such as the local governor association to conduct or oversee the election. If an election is uncontested, a ballot is not necessary, however, if contested, the ballot must be secret.

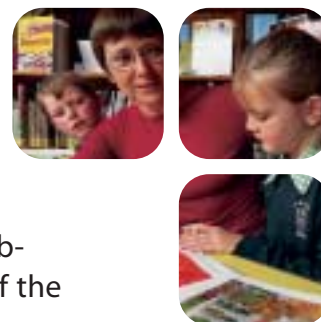
Election process

LEAs have wide discretion on the detailed arrangements for the elections, however, must adopt broad principles set out in the Regulations, explained below.

Timetable

Local authorities must follow statutory timescales when holding an election. They must:

- announce or publish the result of the election:
 - within one week of the final date for casting votes; and
 - within three months of the announcement of the vacancy and invitation of nominations



- appoint the PGR to the overview and scrutiny committees and sub-committees not more than one month after the announcement of the result;
- where the number of eligible candidates is the same as or less than the number of places available, appoint those candidates within four months of the invitation (that is, the three months within which representatives must in normal circumstances be elected plus the one month within which they must be appointed; and
- where there is a vacancy due to lack of an eligible candidate, re-announce the vacancy and make arrangements to hold another election (ballot only if needed) within one year of the original vacancy having arisen and at six monthly intervals thereafter until the vacancy is filled

Consultation on election process

There is no statutory requirement that LEAs should consult on their election procedures. They should, however, consult at least a representative sample of parent governors if they propose to:

- introduce a variation on the one person one vote method (e.g. allowing two votes to a parent governor of two schools);
- introduce a variation on the basic voting method of “first past the post”;
- introduce a voting mechanism to elect PGRs for different types of school or schools in particular geographic areas; and
- specify a term of office other than that originally agreed

LEAs should also consult on any other matter relating to the election and terms of appointment of PGRs on which there may be substantial differences of view locally.

Returning officer

The authority must appoint one person as ‘returning officer’. (The ‘returning officer’ is not a Returning Officer in the statutory sense.) The role is to ensure that the elections are fair and run in accordance with the procedures laid down in Regulations and by the authority. It is recommended that the ‘returning officer’ should:

- monitor the elections;
- intervene where necessary; and

- make arrangements for the announcement or publication of the result
- but should not otherwise have any responsibility in relation to the elections.

They must:

- ensure that the statutory requirements on announcing the election detailed below are complied with;
- investigate any complaints that they have not been complied with; and
- instruct the authority to issue a corrected announcement where appropriate.

The 'returning officer' may be an officer of the authority, including either the Chief Executive or the Director of Education.

Publication of information about elections

The authority are required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to inform those who can vote and stand for election that the elections are to take place. The authority should make its own judgement on what those steps might be. They would not be expected to compile an electoral role.

They must inform those who are eligible about:

- the vacancy, including the term of office, and whether the vacancy is to represent a particular category of school (primary, secondary or special) or to represent schools in a particular geographical area;
- their entitlement to vote;
- the qualifications required of those who wish to stand for office;
- a description of the role of a PGR;
- the election;
- the timetable and procedures for the election

This will include an explanation of how and when nominations should be made to the local authority and a contact point for the returning officer.

Authorities may distribute election details to parent governors via their schools. If they choose to send the information direct to parent governors, they should compile an up-to-date list of parent governors. In the cases of



the Corporation of London and the Isles of Scilly, the authorities will need a list of all parents.

Local authorities may decide the means through which they make the election announcement.

Vacancies

The local education authority shall ensure that an election is held to fill a vacancy and that the date of the election falls in time for the vacancy to be filled no later than six months after the date on which the vacancy occurred.

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Election address

Candidates should be given an opportunity to explain to voters why they want to become a parent governor representative. This can be done in several ways. Perhaps the fairest and most obvious is for them to prepare a written election address, which could be included with the ballot paper. Candidates should be responsible for preparing their own election addresses and for meeting the costs of doing so; while LEAs should be responsible for printing and distributing the election addresses to the electorate and for the related costs. LEAs should ensure that all candidates have the same opportunity to put forward their election address.

There are no statutory requirements about the conduct of candidates in the election campaign. LEAs are, however, strongly advised to ensure that campaigns to elect parent governor representatives are non-party political. Local authorities may wish to advise candidates that references during the campaign to any candidate's support for any political party are not appropriate and will be removed from any literature.

The returning officer should take care to monitor election addresses and the campaigns.

VOTING METHODS

Ballot method and postal voting

All ballots must be secret. It is up to the authority to determine the method of voting. To ensure every eligible person has the opportunity to vote the

option of a postal vote must be considered. If the ballot is by post only, LEAs should state when ballot papers are to be sent out and by what date they must be returned. They should allow a reasonable amount of time – a minimum of three weeks – for voters to consider election materials and return their voting forms would seem sensible.

If methods other than postal ballot are used, the LEA must ensure that the timetable for postal voting does not put those who choose this option at a disadvantage.

The Ballot Paper

There are no specific requirements about what to include on the ballot paper. As a minimum, it should include the candidate's first name and surname and the name of the schools their children attend.

If the election is for a representative of a particular category of school, or a particular geographical area, details of the type of school, or the area should also be included. Alternatively, candidates can be advised to give these details in their election address.

The ballot paper must not include any reference to membership or other affiliation to any political party

ANNOUNCING OR PUBLISHING THE RESULT

The results must be announced or published not more than one week after the election is held. How the result is made known is for the authority to decide. There is no requirement for every eligible voter to be notified individually.

TERMS OF OFFICE

The LEA will determine the term of office and when that term will begin within a range of two or four years. The term of office should be declared when inviting nominations. Upon coming to the end of your term of office, you may stand for re-election providing you still meet the eligibility requirements.

If during your term of office your child leaves school, you may complete your term of office.

Incomplete term of office

Where a PGR does not complete their term of office, the LEA may set the term of office of the successor as

- the remainder of the original term; or
- the normal full term; or
- the remainder of the original term added to the full term, provided this does not exceed four years.

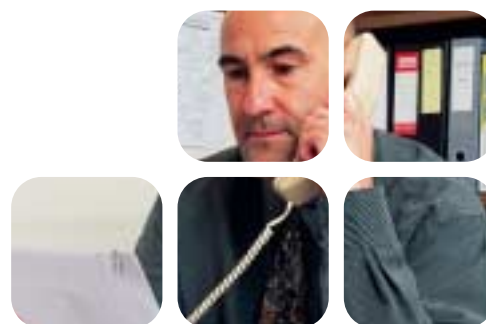
When the election is announced, the authority must explain the chosen option to those eligible to vote and stand.

Standing down

The LEA should explain to PGRs at the beginning of their term of office that they must inform the authority of any circumstance that would disqualify them from holding office.

You must stand down from office as parent governor representative if:

- you resign as a parent governor;
- you become disqualified from being a parent governor;
- you become an elected member of a local authority;
- you become employed by a local authority or a school maintained by a local authority;
- you fail to attend meetings for 6 months without explanation; and
- you are a local authority councillor.



annex B

committees

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Local authorities must appoint two and not more than five parent governor representatives to each overview and scrutiny committee that deals with education functions.

When there is more than one appropriate committee it may appoint the same representatives to all, different representatives to each, or adopt a mixture of these approaches. Authorities must comply with the political balance requirements in Sections 15 to 17 of, and Schedule 1 to, the *Local Government and Housing Act 1989*. (see Annex B)

Parent governor representatives should be provided with a copy of the local authority's constitution, which must include its standing orders, executive arrangements and code of conduct for local councillors.

Standing orders

Committees are set up and operated by Standing Orders. Each set is different so it is important that you obtain those of your own council. The Standing Orders explain how the council works as a whole, how the committees are set up and what they do and how a committee or sub-committee is expected to operate.

Raising issues for discussion

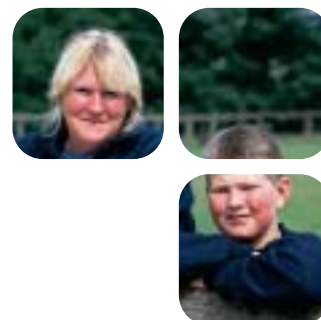
Advance notice should be given to the clerk of the committee or to the chair. An exception can be made and an item added later if it needs discussing urgently. The chair usually has the final say on agenda items, order of business and which (if any) items should be treated as confidential.

Right to speak

Parent governor representatives may participate in any discussion in a committee to which they have been appointed whether or not they have voting rights on the topic under discussion.

Right to vote

- Parent governor representatives on overview and scrutiny and sub-committees will be entitled to participate and where necessary vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the authority's executive unless:



- the decision relates to the determination of the local authority’s education budget; or
- any matter which would require the council to raise additional funds; or
- they have a financial interest in the matter under decision; or
- any matter in which the representative had some other direct interest, including a direct impact on the school at which they are a parent governor.

The rules governing the participation and disclosure of interests will be set out in members code of conduct established under the Local Government Act 2000.

Committee clerks should advise parent governor representatives on these and other matters in the same way as they advise council members.

Conduct

All committee members are expected to comply with the *National Code of Local Government Conduct*. You have been elected to represent the views of all parents across the authority, not your own political ideas. Be careful of other committee members asking for your support if it would affect the balance of power on the committee.

Non-elected, non-voting members

The provision for elected parent governor representatives should not be seen as a substitute for existing arrangements for co-opting non-voting members. The Secretary of State encourages the continuation of such arrangements both for parents and other groups such as teachers or governors

MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER COMMITTEES

School Organisation Committees

A parent governor representative does not have an automatic right to sit on a School Organisation Committee, but they are not prevented from becoming a member provided they satisfy the requirements for full membership.

Appeal Panels (Admission; Exclusions)

We suggest that PGRs should not sit on these panels, as the role of a panellist is not that of a representative. We consider that conflicts of interest may arise.

annex C

Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 478 Education, England

THE PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2001

<i>Made</i>	<i>20th February 2001</i>
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>	<i>21st February 2001</i>
<i>Coming into force</i>	<i>15th March 2001</i>

In the exercise of the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by section 105(2) of, and paragraph 9(4), (5) and (6) of Schedule 1 to, the Local Government Act 2000¹, and sections 499(6) and (7) and 569(4) of the Education Act 1996², the Secretary of State for Education and Employment hereby makes the following Regulations:

Citation, commencement and application

1. (1) These Regulations may be cited as the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.
- (2) These Regulations shall come into force on 15th March 2001.
- (3) These Regulations apply only in relation to England.

Interpretation

2. (1) In these Regulations:
 - “the 1998 Act” means the School Standards and Framework Act 1998³;
 - “the 2000 Act” means the Local Government Act 2000;
 - “the date of the election”, in relation to an election in which votes can be cast on more than one date, means the last date on which votes can be cast or postal votes received;
 - “education overview and scrutiny committee” means an overview and scrutiny committee or sub-committee of a local education authority appointed under section 21 of the 2000 Act, the functions of which relate wholly or partly to any education functions which are the responsibility of the authority’s executive;



“parent governor” means –

- (a) a person who is elected as a member of a maintained school’s governing body by parents of registered pupils at the school and is himself such a parent at the time when he is elected;
- (b) a person who is appointed as a parent governor by the governing body in accordance with regulations under the 1998 Act^[4];
- (c) a person who continues as a parent governor for the purposes of the reconstitution of the governing body on transition to the new schools framework by virtue of regulations under Part II of the 1998 Act⁵;

“parent governor representative” means, save where the context otherwise admits, a person elected in accordance with regulations 4 to 6 or treated in accordance with regulation 13 as so elected;

“relevant committee” means a committee or sub-committee appointed by a local authority, or by two or more local authorities, in accordance with section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972⁶ wholly or partly for the purpose of discharging any functions which are conferred on the local authority or authorities in their capacity as a local education authority or authorities, but it does not include any committee the decisions of which are subject to scrutiny by another committee which is itself a relevant committee;

“types of school” means maintained schools which are primary, secondary or special schools, excluding nursery schools which are special schools.

- (2) Except where the context otherwise requires, the expressions used in these Regulations set out in the first column of the table below have the meaning given by (or, as the case may be, are to be interpreted in accordance with), the provisions referred to in the second column of that table:

<i>“alternative arrangements”</i>	<i>section 32 of the 2000 Act;</i>
<i>“executive”</i>	<i>section 11 of the 2000 Act;</i>
<i>“executive arrangements”</i>	<i>section 10 of the 2000 Act;</i>
<i>“maintained school”</i>	<i>section 20(7) of the 1998 Act;</i>
<i>“school maintained by a local education authority”</i>	<i>section 142(1) of the 1998 Act.</i>

Requirement for education overview and scrutiny committees to include parent governor representatives

3. (1) A local education authority shall appoint at least two but not more than five parent governor representatives to each of their education overview and scrutiny committees and sub-committees.

Election procedures

4. (1) A local education authority shall make all the necessary arrangements for, and determine all other matters relating to, the holding of an election of a parent governor representative but nothing in this regulation shall prevent an authority from appointing another body to conduct or oversee that election.
- (2) A local education authority may make arrangements –
 - (a) dividing parent governor representatives into different categories representing –
 - (i) particular types of school, or
 - (ii) maintained schools in a particular area; and
 - (b) where they have done so, restricting the electorate for each such category to parent governors of the same type of school or parent governors of maintained schools in that area (but they need not do so).
- (3) Where a vacancy for a parent governor representative is required to be filled by election the local education authority shall announce that vacancy and at the time of that announcement shall –



- (a) appoint a returning officer who shall ensure that so far as possible the election is conducted fairly;
- (b) take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every person who is known to them to be eligible to vote in the election of a parent governor representative is –
 - (i) informed of the vacancy and that it is required to be filled by election;
 - (ii) informed that he is entitled to vote at the election;
 - (iii) informed of any arrangements made in respect of the election under regulation 4(2);
 - (iv) informed of the details of the electoral timetable and procedures;
 - (v) informed of the qualifications which a person requires in order to be elected as a parent governor representative, and of the term of office of a parent governor representative; and
 - (vi) provided with a description of the role of a parent governor representative.
- (4) Any election of a parent governor representative which is contested shall be held by secret ballot.
- (5) No ballot paper in such an election shall contain any indication of an affiliation with a political party.
- (6) Where a vacancy for a parent governor representative arises, the local education authority shall –
 - (a) determine, for the purposes of the election, any question as to a person's entitlement to vote or eligibility to stand for election;
 - (b) provide for every person who is eligible to vote in the election to have an opportunity to do so by post;
 - (c) secure that the results of the election are announced not more than one week after the date of the election, and not more than three months after the announcement of the vacancy.
- (7) Where a vacancy remains unfilled because no, or not enough, candidates seek election, the local education authority shall comply with the requirements of this regulation again within one

year of the original vacancy having arisen and at six monthly intervals thereafter, calculated from the first anniversary of the original vacancy having arisen, until the vacancy is filled.

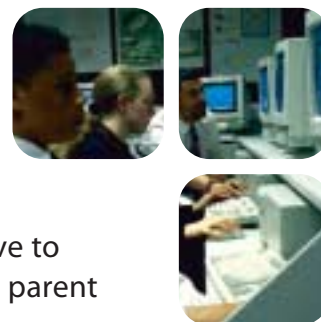
- (8) Nothing in these Regulations shall require a ballot to be held if the number of vacancies to be filled is equal to or exceeds the number of candidates for election.

Eligibility to vote in elections

5. A person shall be eligible to vote in the election of a parent governor representative if at the date of the election he is a parent governor at a maintained school maintained by the local education authority holding the election, and either –
- (a) where voting for a particular category of parent governor representative is restricted to parent governors of a particular type of school, he is a parent governor of that type of school; or
 - (b) where voting for a particular category of parent governor representative is restricted to parent governors of schools in a particular geographical area, he is a parent governor of a maintained school in that area.

Qualifications for election as a parent governor representative

6. (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (4), a person shall, unless disqualified under any enactment, be qualified to be elected as a parent governor representative in an election held by a local education authority if on the date of the election –
- (a) he is a parent governor at a maintained school which is maintained by the local education authority;
 - (b) he is the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by the local education authority, or who is educated by the authority otherwise than at a school;
 - (c) where the vacancy is for a parent governor representative to represent a particular type of school, he is a parent governor at that type of school, and



- (d) where the vacancy is for a parent governor representative to represent maintained schools in a particular area, he is a parent governor of a school in that area.
- (2) A person who is already a member of a local authority shall be disqualified from being elected as a parent governor representative.
- (3) A person who is a teacher at, or is otherwise employed in, a school maintained by the local education authority shall be disqualified from being elected as a parent governor representative.
- (4) A person who is employed by the local authority, shall be disqualified from being elected as a parent governor representative.

Disqualification from holding office as a parent governor representative

7. (1) A parent governor representative who qualified for election under these Regulations shall cease to be qualified to hold that office if –
- (a) he resigns or is disqualified from the office of parent governor,
- (b) he ceases to be a parent governor for any reason other than –
- (i) he has completed his term of office, or
- (ii) he no longer holds office as a result of the discontinuance of the school at which he was a parent governor, or
- (iii) he no longer holds office as a result of a change in the constitution of the governing body of the school at which he was a parent governor.
- (2) A parent governor representative shall cease to be qualified to hold that office if he is elected as a member of a local authority.
- (3) A parent governor representative shall cease to be qualified to hold that office if he takes up employment –
- (a) whether as a teacher or otherwise, in a school maintained by the local education authority, or
- (b) with the local authority.

- (4) A parent governor representative shall not hold the office of parent governor representative on an education overview and scrutiny committee of more than one local education authority at any one time.
- (5) A parent governor representative who has failed to attend the meetings of an education overview and scrutiny committee of which he is a member for a continuous period of six months beginning with the date of a meeting, shall, on the expiry of that period, cease to be qualified to hold that office.
- (6) For the purposes of paragraph (5), a parent governor representative shall not be taken to have failed to attend a meeting of an education overview and scrutiny committee if he has tendered an apology for his absence and that apology has been accepted by the committee.

Term of office

8. Subject to regulation 13 (transitional provisions) the term of office of a parent governor representative on an education overview and scrutiny committee –
 - (a) shall begin on such date as the local education authority shall determine, being a date not more than one month after the date of the announcement of the result of the election in which he has been elected, and
 - (b) shall (subject to regulation 9(2)), be of such duration as the authority shall determine, being a period not less than two years nor greater than four years.

Vacation of office

9. (1) Where a parent governor representative completes his term of office or that office becomes vacant for any other reason, the local education authority shall ensure that an election is held to fill the vacancy and that the date of the election falls in time for the vacancy to be filled not later than six months after the date on which the vacancy occurred.
- (2) Where a parent governor representative does not complete his term of office, the local education authority may decide whether



his successor should be appointed for a full term of office determined in accordance with regulation 8(b), for the unexpired portion of the previous term of office, or for the aggregate of the unexpired portion of that term and a further full term, provided that such aggregate period does not exceed four years.

Voting rights of parent governor representatives

10. A parent governor representative shall be entitled to vote at a meeting of an education overview and scrutiny committee of which he is a member on any question –
- (a) which relates to any education functions which are the responsibility of the authority concerned's executive, and
 - (b) which falls to be considered at the meeting.

Exceptional Provisions

11. (1) This Regulation applies in the case of a local education authority in the Isles of Scilly or in the City of London.
- (2) In this regulation "parent governor representative" means a person elected in accordance with this regulation.
- (3) In such a case –
- (a) such an authority shall appoint at least two but not more than five parent governor representatives to each relevant committee;
 - (b) regulation 4(1) and (3) to (8) shall apply in respect of elections for parent governor representatives;
 - (c) a person shall be eligible to vote in the election of a parent governor representative in an election held by such an authority if on the date of the election –
 - (i) he is the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by the authority, or who is educated by the authority otherwise than at school; or
 - (ii) he is resident in the area of the authority and is the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by another local education authority, or who is educated by another authority otherwise than at school;

- (d) subject to regulation 6(2) to (4), a person shall, unless disqualified under any enactment, be qualified to be elected as a parent governor representative in an election held by such an authority if on the date of the election –
 - (i) he is the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by the authority, or who is educated by the authority otherwise than at school; or
 - (ii) he is resident in the area of the authority and is the parent of a registered pupil who is educated at a maintained school which is maintained by another local education authority, or who is educated by another authority otherwise than at school;
- (e) regulation 6(2) to (4) shall apply in relation to the qualifications for election as a parent governor representative;
- (f) regulation 7 shall apply in relation to disqualification from holding office as a parent governor representative, save that the references to an overview and scrutiny committee shall be treated as references to a relevant committee;
- (g) regulation 8 shall apply in relation to the term of office of a parent governor representative, save that the reference to an education overview and scrutiny committee shall be treated as a reference to a relevant committee;
- (h) regulation 9 shall apply in relation to the vacation of office of a parent governor representative;
- (i) regulation 10 shall apply in relation to the voting rights of parent governor representatives, save that the reference to the authority concerned's executive shall be treated as a reference to the authority concerned.

Revocation and Transitional Provisions

- 12. (1) The Education (Parent Governor Representatives) Regulations 1999⁷ ("the 1999 Regulations") are hereby revoked.
- (2) The revocation of the 1999 Regulations shall not invalidate the appointment of parent governor representatives to relevant committees under the 1999 Regulations.



- (3) Until a local education authority (other than an authority to which regulation 11 applies) operate executive arrangements or alternative arrangements these Regulations shall have effect in relation to that authority as of –
- (a) references to an education overview and scrutiny committee were substituted by references to a “relevant committee”; and
 - (b) the reference in regulation 10 to “the authority concerned’s executive” were substituted by “the authority concerned”.
13. (1) In this regulation “a 1999 Representative” means a representative of parent governors –
- (a) elected and appointed to a relevant committee of a local authority pursuant to the 1999 Regulations,
 - (b) whose term of office, calculated in accordance with the 1999 Regulations, has not expired on the date on which that authority establish an education overview and scrutiny committee.
- (2) Subject to paragraph (3), on the establishment by a local authority of an education overview and scrutiny committee, a 1999 Representative shall be treated as having been appointed to that education overview and scrutiny committee.
- (3) A 1999 Representative who is treated as having been appointed to an education overview and scrutiny committee in accordance with paragraph (2) shall continue in office until the expiry of his original term of office (as a member of the relevant committee).
- (4) Nothing in paragraph (3) shall prevent a 1999 Representative from being disqualified, by virtue of provision made under these Regulations, from continuing to hold office.
14. Any representative of parent governors elected to a relevant committee in the Isles of Scilly or the City of London in accordance with the 1999 Regulations shall be treated as having been elected in accordance with these Regulations.

Jacqui Smith
 Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,
 Department for Education and Skills
 20th February 2001

EXPLANATORY NOTE *(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations make provision for representatives of parent governors at maintained schools to be included in overview and scrutiny committees of local education authorities in England. They also provide for the election of parent governor representatives to be included in the education committees of authorities in the Isles of Scilly and the City of London.

Regulation 3 provides for overview and scrutiny committees dealing with education matters to include between two and five parent governor representatives.

Regulation 4 sets out the election procedures for parent governor representatives, and provides, in particular that they can represent particular types of schools (primary, secondary or special), or schools in particular areas.

Regulation 5 deals with the eligibility criteria for voting in elections. In the majority of cases, any parent governor can vote, unless the vacancy is either for a parent governor representative to represent a particular type of school, and eligibility to vote is restricted to parent governors at the same type of school, or to represent maintained schools in a particular area, and eligibility to vote is restricted to parent governors at schools in that area.

Regulations 6 and 7 set out circumstances which may disqualify a person from being elected or continuing to act as a parent governor representative.

Regulation 8 provides for the term of office of a parent governor representative to be between two and four years, unless the office is vacated mid-term.

Regulation 9 sets out what happens when the office is vacated, and, in particular, provides for the term of office of a representative's successor.

Regulation 10 deals with the voting rights of a parent governor representative. Broadly, he can vote on any matter relating to the authority's executive's education functions.

Regulation 11 deals with the position in the Isles of Scilly and the City of London. The authorities in these areas are not subject to the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 2000. The Regulations deal with the appointment of parent governor representatives to old style committees in these areas, in line with the procedures relating to appointments to overview



and scrutiny committees. The voting rights of such parent governor representatives are extended. In the case of the City of London and the Isles of Scilly different criteria for the eligibility to vote in elections apply. In these cases only, a parent of a pupil educated by the authority or a parent residing in the authority's area whose child is educated by another authority may vote, even if they are not parent governors. Different criteria also apply in relation to the eligibility of parent governors for election. In the case of the City of London and the Isles of Scilly only, a parent of a child educated by the authority or a parent residing in the authority's area whose child is educated by another authority may be elected, even if he is not a parent governor.

Regulation 12 revokes earlier regulations dealing with parent governor representatives in so far as they apply in relation to England and regulations 12 and 13 set out transitional provisions to deal with the situation before the new arrangements begin to operate, and the transfer of parent governor representatives elected under the old regulations to new education overview and scrutiny committees.

Regulation 14 deals with parent governor representatives elected under the old regulations in the Isles of Scilly and the City of London. They are treated as having been elected under the new regulations.

NOTES

- ¹ 2000 c. 22.back
- ² 1996 c. 56. By virtue of the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/672), the powers conferred by these provisions are exercisable by the Secretary of State only in relation to England. Section 499 was amended by the 1998 Act, section 9. For the meaning of regulations see Section 579(1)
- ³ 1998 c. 31
- ⁴ See regulations 9 and 12 of, and Schedules 2, 4 and 5 to, the Education (School Government) (England) Regulations 1999 (S.I. 1999/2163)
- ⁵ See regulations 13 and 20 of the Education (School Government) (Transition to New Framework) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/2763)
- ⁶ 1972 c. 70. Section 102 was amended by section 108(5) of, and paragraph 31(1) of Schedule 13 to, the Children Act 1989 (c. 41), and by sections 13(8) and 194 of, and Part II of Schedule 12 to, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (c. 42)
- ⁷ S.I. 1999/1949

annex D

TIMETABLE FOR ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES

Action	Statutory timescale	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – committee places; – type of representation; – election method; – election date; – term of office; – support/training delivery; – Standing Orders revisions where necessary 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – returning officer; – those who will run election 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> publish: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – announce vacancy; – explain eligibility and election procedures; – invite nominations by deadline 		Week 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check nominations 		Week 5-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> issue ballot papers 		Week 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> returning officer monitors campaign 		Week 7-10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold poll, if not solely by post 		Week 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> count ballots 		Week 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> announce result 	within one week of the election; within three months of the announcement of the vacancy	Week 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> term of office of previous incumbent expires 		Week 11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appoint representatives 	no more than one month after the announcement of the result	Week 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin support of the representatives explain committee rules/local government legislation 		Week 12

annex E

EXAMPLE OF A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE OF A PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVE (Regulation 4(2)(b)(v))

The role of a parent governor representative

The role of a parent governor representative is to:

- act as an apolitical voice for parents in the area; representing to the local authority the main education issues which concern parents of pupils maintained by the authority
- liaise with the other parent governor representatives on their own local authority
- attend and contribute to the committees to which they have been appointed
- establish good relations with other members and officers
- feed back the local authority's discussions of and decisions on education to the parents
- abide by the local authority's rules on committee procedure (Standing Orders)
- act with due propriety according to standards laid down for conduct in local government

annex F

The National Code of Local Government Conduct is reproduced from the Annex to the Joint Circular from the Department of the Environment (8/90), the Welsh Office (23/90) and the Scottish Development Department (11/90) issued on 10 April 1990

THE NATIONAL CODE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDUCT

Introduction

The *National Code of Local Government Conduct* provides, by way of guidance to members of local authorities, recommended standards of conduct in carrying out their duties, and in their relationships with the council and the council's officers.

The Code is issued jointly by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Secretary of State for Wales, under the provisions of the *Local Government and Housing Act 1989*. The Code has been agreed by associations representing local authorities in all three countries, and approved by both Houses of Parliament.

The Code applies to all members of

- in England, county councils, district councils, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London, the Council of the Isles of Scilly and parish and town councils;
- in Scotland, regional councils, islands councils, district councils, and joint boards and committees;
- in Wales, county councils, district councils and community and town councils.

All councillors are required on accepting office to declare that they will be guided by the Code.

The Code also applies to all members of committees, joint committees, and sub-committees of these authorities, whether or not they are councillors, and whether or not they are voting members of those bodies.

The Code represents the standard against which the conduct of members will be judged, both by the public, and by their fellow councillors. The local ombudsmen may also regard a breach of the Code as incompatible with good administration, and may make a finding of maladministration by the council in these circumstances.



THE CODE

The Law and standing orders

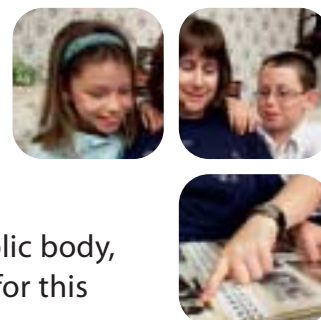
1. Councillors hold office by virtue of the law, and must at all times act within the law. You should make sure that you are familiar with the rules of personal conduct which the law and standing orders require, and the guidance contained in this Code. It is your responsibility to make sure that what you do complies with these requirements and this guidance. You should regularly review your personal circumstances with this in mind, particularly when your circumstances change. You should not at any time advocate or encourage anything to the contrary. If in any doubt, seek advice from your council's appropriate senior officer or from your own legal adviser. In the end however, the decision and the responsibility are yours.

Public duty and private interest

2. Your over-riding duty as a councillor is to the whole local community.
3. You have a special duty to your constituents, including those who did not vote for you.
4. Whilst you may be strongly influenced by the views of others, and of your party in particular, it is your responsibility alone to decide what view to take on any question which councillors have to decide.
5. If you have a private or personal interest in a question which councillors have to decide, you should never take any part in the decision, except in the special circumstances described below. Where such circumstances do permit you to participate, you should never let your interest influence the decision.
6. You should never do anything as a councillor which you could not justify to the public. Your conduct, and what the public believes about your conduct, will affect the reputation of your council, and of your party if you belong to one.
7. It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. You should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct.

Disclosure of pecuniary and other interests

8. The law makes specific provision requiring you to disclose both direct and indirect pecuniary interests (including those of a spouse with whom you are living) which you may have in any matter coming before the council, a committee or a sub-committee. It prohibits you from speaking or voting on that matter. Your council's standing orders may also require you to withdraw from the meeting while the matter is discussed. You must also by law declare certain pecuniary interests in the statutory register kept for this purpose. These requirements must be scrupulously observed at all times.
9. Interests which are not pecuniary can be just as important. You should not allow the impression to be created that you are, or may be, using your position to promote a private or personal interest, rather than forwarding the general public interest. Private and personal interests include those of your family and friends, as well as those arising through membership of, or association with, clubs, societies and other organisations such as the Freemasons, trade unions and voluntary bodies.
10. If you have a private or personal non-pecuniary interest in a matter arising at a local authority meeting, you should always disclose it, unless it is insignificant, or one which you share with other members of the public generally as a ratepayer, a community chargepayer or an inhabitant of the area.
11. Where you have declared such a private or personal interest, you should decide whether it is clear and substantial. If it is not, then you may continue to take part in the discussion of the matter and may vote on it. If, however, it is a clear and substantial interest, then (except in the special circumstances described below) you should never take any further part in the proceedings, and should always withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is being considered. In deciding whether such an interest is clear and substantial, you should ask yourself whether members of the public, knowing the facts of the situation, would reasonably think that you might be influenced by it. If you think so, you should regard the interest as clear and substantial.
12. In the following circumstances, but only in these circumstances, it can still be appropriate to speak, and in some cases to vote, in spite of the fact that you have declared such a clear and substantial private or personal interest:



- (a) if your interest arises in your capacity as a member of a public body, you may speak and vote on matters concerning that body; for this purpose, a public body is one where, under the law governing declarations of pecuniary interests, membership of the body would not constitute an indirect pecuniary interest;
- (b) if your interest arises from being appointed by your local authority as their representative on the managing committee, or other governing body, of a charity, voluntary body or other organisation formed for a public purpose (and not for the personal benefit of the members), you may speak and vote on matters concerning that organisation;
- (c) if your interest arises from being a member of the managing committee, or other governing body of such an organisation, but you were not appointed by your local authority as their representative, then you may speak on matters in which that organisation has an interest; you should not vote on any matter directly affecting the finances or property of that organisation, but you may vote on other matters in which the organisation has an interest;
- (d) if your interest arises from being an ordinary member or supporter of such an organisation (and you are not a member of its managing committee or other governing body), then you may speak and vote on any matter in which the organisation has an interest.

Dispensations

13. Circumstances may arise where the work of your authority is affected because a number of councillors have personal interests (pecuniary or non-pecuniary) in some question.
14. In certain circumstances, you may be able to get a dispensation to speak, and also to vote, in spite of a pecuniary interest. Such dispensations are given under statute by the Secretary of State in the case of county, regional, islands, district and London borough councils, and (in England and Wales) by the district council in the case of town, parish and community councils.
15. In the case of non-pecuniary interests, there may be similar exceptions to the guidance contained in paragraphs 9 to 12 of this Code. In the circumstances below it may be open to you to decide that the work of the council requires you to continue to take part in a meeting which is

discussing a matter in which you have a clear substantial private or personal interest.

16. Before doing so, you should

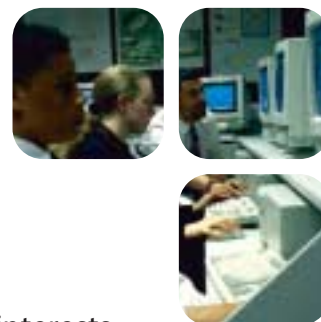
- (a) take advice from the chairman of your local authority (if this is practicable) and from the appropriate senior officer of the authority as to whether the situation justifies such a step;
- (b) consider whether the public would regard your interest as so closely connected with the matter in question that you could not be expected to put your interest out of your mind (for example, the matter might concern a decision by the council affecting a close relative); if you think that they would, you should never decide to take part in a discussion of, or a vote on, the matter in question; and
- (c) consider any guidance which your council has issued on this matter.

17. The circumstances in which (after such consultation and consideration) you may decide to speak and vote on a matter in which you have a clear and substantial private or personal non-pecuniary interest are if, *but only if*:

- at least half the council or committee would otherwise be required to withdraw from consideration of the business because they have a personal interest; or
- your withdrawal, together with that of any other members of the council or committee who may also be required to withdraw from consideration of the business because of a personal interest, would upset the elected party balance of the council or committee to such an extent that the decision is likely to be affected.

18. If you decide that you should speak or vote, notwithstanding a clear and substantial personal or private non-pecuniary interest, you should say at the meeting, before the matter is considered, that you have taken such a decision, and why.

19. The guidance set out in paragraphs 15–18 above also applies to sub-committees. However if the sub-committee is very small, or if a large proportion of members declare a personal interest, it will usually be more appropriate for the matter to be referred to the parent committee.



Disclosure in other dealings

20. You should always apply the principles about the disclosure of interests to your dealings with council officers, and to your unofficial relations with other councillors (at party group meetings, or other informal occasions) no less scrupulously than at formal meetings of the council, committees and sub-committees.

Membership of committees and sub-committees

21. You, or some firm or body with which you are personally connected, may have professional, business or other personal interests within the area for which the council are responsible. Such interests may be substantial and closely related to the work of one or more of the council's committees or sub-committees. For example, the firm or body may be concerned with planning, developing land, council housing, personnel matters or the letting of contracts for supplies, services or works. You should not seek, or accept, membership of any such committee or sub-committee if that would involve you in disclosing an interest so often that you could be of little value to the committee or sub-committee, or if it would be likely to weaken public confidence in the duty of the committee or sub-committee to work solely in the general public interest.

Leadership and Chairmanship

22. You should not seek, or accept, the leadership of the council if you, or any body with which you are associated, has a substantial financial interest in, or is closely related to, the business or affairs of the council. Likewise, you should not accept the chairmanship of a committee or sub-committee if you have a similar interest in the business of the committee or sub-committee.

Councillors and officers

23. Both councillors and officers are servants of the public, and they are indispensable to one another. But their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the council. Their job is to give advice to councillors and the council, and to carry out the council's work under the direction and control of the council, their committees and sub-committees.

24. Mutual respect between councillors and officers is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity between individual councillors and officers can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other councillors and officers.
25. The law and standing orders lay down rules for the appointment, discipline and dismissal of staff. You must ensure that you observe these scrupulously at all times. Special rules apply to the appointment of assistants to political groups. In all other circumstances, if you are called upon to take part in appointing an officer, the only question you should consider is which candidate would best serve the whole council. You should not let your political or personal preferences influence your judgement. You should not canvass the support of colleagues for any candidate and you should resist any attempt by others to canvass yours.

Use of confidential and private information

26. As a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member, you necessarily acquire much information that has not yet been made public and is still confidential. It is a betrayal of trust to breach such confidences. You should never disclose or use confidential information for the personal advantage of yourself or of anyone known to you, or to the disadvantage or the discredit of the council or anyone else.

Gifts and hospitality

27. You should treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing, or seeking to do, business with the council, or may be applying to the council for planning permission or some other kind of decision.
28. There are no hard or fast rules about the acceptance or refusal of hospitality or tokens of goodwill. For example, working lunches may be a proper way of doing business, provided that they are approved by the local authority and that no extravagance is involved. Likewise, it may be reasonable for a member to represent the council at a social function or event organised by outside persons or bodies.
29. You are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in local government. The offer or receipt of



gifts or invitations should always be reported to the appropriate senior officer of the council.

Expenses and allowances

30. There are rules enabling you to claim expenses and allowances in connection with your duties as a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member. These rules must be scrupulously observed.

Dealings with the council

31. You may have dealings with the council on a personal level, for instance as a ratepayer or community chargepayer, as a tenant, or as an applicant for a grant or a planning permission. You should never seek or accept preferential treatment in those dealings because of your position as a Councillor or a committee or sub-committee member. You should also avoid placing yourself in a position that could lead the public to think that you are receiving preferential treatment: for instance, by being in substantial arrears to the council, or by using your position to discuss a planning application personally with officers when other members of the public would not have the opportunity to do so. Likewise, you should never use your position as a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member to seek preferential treatment for friends or relatives, or any firm or body with which you are personally connected.

Use of council facilities

32. You should always make sure that any facilities (such as transport, stationery, or secretarial services) provided by the council for your use in your duties as a councillor or a committee or sub-committee member are used strictly for those duties and for no other purpose.

Appointments to other bodies

33. You may be appointed or nominated by your council as a member of another body or organisation—for instance, to a joint authority or a voluntary organisation. You should always observe this Code in carrying out your duties on that body in the same way you would with your own authority.

annex G

frequently asked questions

Who are parent governor representatives (PGRs)?

PGRs were established in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, amending section 499 of the Education Act 1996, and are subject to their own Regulations, The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001. PGRs were elected from serving parent governors from June 2000 to represent the views of all parents, in a non-politically biased way, on local authority committees dealing with education matters.

Which committees do they serve on?

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to set up new constitutions, usually involving small decision-making executives, and scrutiny committees to question and examine those executives. These new style constitutions must be in place by 1 June 2002. Under these regulations, PGRs are able to vote on any matters relating to education functions.

Exceptions: the Isles of Scilly and City of London. Not covered by the 2000 Act, but PGRs there will have the same voting rights as everywhere else.

What support do PGRs receive from local authorities?

DTLR guidance on the 2000 Local Government Act suggests that, to operate effectively, PGRs require similar support to elected members. This support includes induction and further training, advice from the committee secretariat, providing relevant meeting papers, travel and other necessary expenses, access to a PC, and advice on communicating with parents.

What funding is available to PGRs?

DfES makes available, through the Standards Fund, up to £1200 per LEA to help with this support. However since 2001/2002, due to changing commitments, this amount has not been ring-fenced and must be match-funded by the LEA. Acceptable expenses would include travel and subsistence, child care, financial loss allowance (where applicable) and stationery costs.

Are PGRs entitled to time off work from their employment to undertake their duties?

No, time off only applies to members, however, the Department has recently undertaken an exercise to produce a Regulatory Impact Assessment for DTI



Employment Regulations which will, hopefully, result in PGRs being allowed time off work to undertake duties.

How many PGRs are there?

Between 2 and 5 PGRs can be elected for each LEA. All but 6 LEAs now have between one and five – a total of 304 for England as a whole. Elections to fill vacancies have to be held within a year of posts becoming vacant.

What is the PGRs term of office?

The term of office for a PGR is not less than two but no more than four years.

Why are PGRs elected by and from parent governors rather than all parents?

Logistical reasons. It is much more practical for LEAs to handle elections on this basis; and as PGs are elected by parents, this is a good 'proxy'.

What other support is available?

When PGRs were first established Ministers promised a support network. Since July 2000, the Department has contracted the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to establish and develop a paper and electronic-based network, with a website and termly newsletter, for all PGRs. The network is open to all PGRs who wish to join and the majority have done so.

helpful contacts

Parent Governor Representatives

Department for Education and Skills
School Government Team 2
Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington DL3 9BG
Tel: 01325 391102
Fax: 01325 391173
Email: parent.representative@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/parep/index.shtml>

The PGR Network

The PGR Network – administered by
National Foundation for Educational Research
RDS, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ
Tel: 01753 695800
Website: <http://www.pgrnet.org.uk>

DfES Parents' Centre

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/parentsgateway/index.shtml>
This site tells you about your child's education and how you can help.

School Governors' Centre

DfES website for school governors.
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/governor/index.cfm>

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)

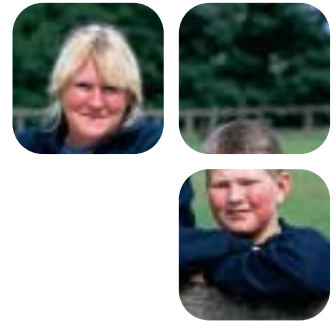
<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/>

LGA

Local Government Association
Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ
Tel: 020 7664 3000
Fax: 020 7664 3030
Email: info@lga.gov.uk
Website: www.lga.gov.uk

Parents + School Magazine

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/parentsmag/>



The National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA)

<http://www.ncpta.org.uk/>

The National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA) is a registered charity promoting home school links and providing advice and support for PTAs in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. NCPTA represent over six million parents and teachers through some twelve thousand member associations

Home and School Council

<http://www.homeschoolcouncil.freeola.com/index.htm>

Produce parent & governor-friendly booklets that can help parents and some governors understand what and how children are learning at school and how they can help.

Parents Online

Lots of information and ideas to accompany the Parents Online initiative.

<http://www.parentsonline.gov.uk/>

Parental guidance – Learning to Read & Write

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ltraw/>

This website sets out some of the main things we know about how children learn to read and write & describes ways that reading and writing are taught in schools

The ‘Local Government Ombudsman’

The Commission for Local Administration in England
21 Queen Anne’s Gate, London SW1H 9BU
Tel 020 7915 3210
Fax 020 7233 0396

Parents for Inclusion

Unit 2, 70 South Lambeth Road, London SW8 1RL
Tel: 020 7735 7735
Email: pi1@btinternet.com

legislation/publications/ reference books

DfES Legislation

The requirement for local authorities to appoint parent governor representatives stems from section 9 of the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*. Section 9 adds a sub-section to section 499 of the *Education Act 1996*, which covers the power of the Secretary of State to direct the appointment of members of education committees. It provides for detailed requirements to be set out in Regulations: *SI 1999 No. 1949 The Education (Parent Governor Representatives) Regulations 1999*. Regulations are priced and available from The Stationery Office (see below). Also available on the DfES website.

DfES Circulars

A detailed explanation of what local authorities are required to do under the Parent Governor Representatives regulations is given in Circular No. 13/99: *Parent governor representatives on committees dealing with education*. Also available on the DfES website. (When ordering from DfES publications please quote CIR 13/99.)

The general direction to local education authorities stating the place they should provide for church representatives on committees dealing with education is contained in Circular No. 19/99 *Church representatives on local authority committees dealing with education*. This took effect from 1 November 1999 and replaced Circular No. 19/94: *Arrangements for Education Committees*. (Please quote CIR 19/99.)

Circulars and other DfES publications are available from:

DfES Publications

PO Box 5050, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ

Tel: 0845 60 222 60

Fax: 0845 60 333 60

Minicom: 0845 60 555 60

Email: dfes@prolog.uk.com

Department for the Environment Transport and the Regions

Website: www.detr.gov.uk

Local Government Legislation:

Local Government Act 1972

Local Government and Housing Act 1989



Modern Local Government series: Discussion Paper, *Local Leadership*, *Local Choice* (available on DETR's website and from The Stationery Office)

Improvement and Development Agency (IDA)

The IDA's website is at www.idea.gov.uk/

The site includes IDA's training materials on education issues for councillors entitled "The Informed Councillor", also available in CD-ROM format.

Local Government Association

Local Government: a councillor's guide (Improvement and Development Agency, 1999, ISBN 0 7488 9381 4, £16.00).

The Local Government Association's publications on the modern local government agenda include *modern local government: taking the initiative (a LGA survey of local authorities)* (LGA ISBN 1 84049 105 1; £20; £10 to local authorities; LGA reference CA076)

LGA publications can be ordered from:
 IDA Publication Sales, Layden House, 76–86 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5LG
 Tel: 020 7296 6600
 Fax: 020 7296 6666

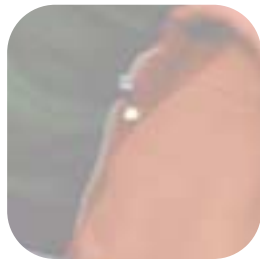
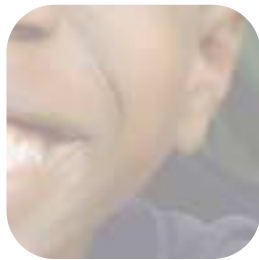
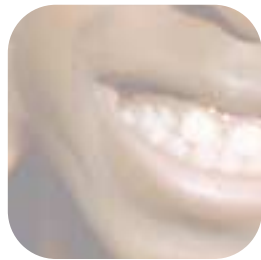
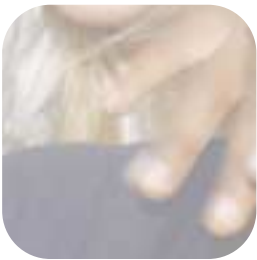
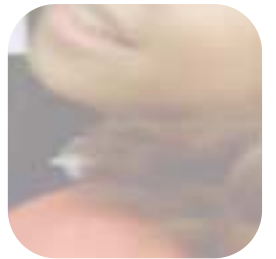
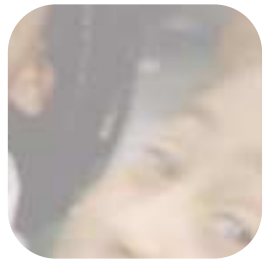
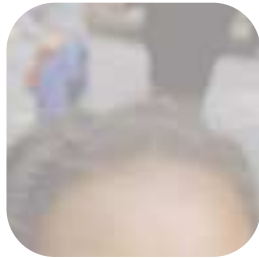
Audit Commission

Audit Commission publications include:
Held in Trust: The LEA of the future
 (national report; February 1999; ISBN 1 86240 133 0; £20)

Changing Partners: A Discussion Paper on the Role of the Local Education Authority (management paper; 1998; ISBN 1 86240 074 1; £15)

The Stationery Office

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 Fax orders: 020 7873 8200
 Website (for Parliamentary publications On Line, including Hansard):
www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk



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Fax: 0845 60 333 60
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Email dfes@prolog.uk.com

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