

Role description for Maintained School Foundation Governor

This document is intended to help people who are considering applying for the role of foundation governor in a church school within the Diocese of Lincoln.

The foundation governor is an integral part of the governing board. Governing Boards work together to:

- **Develop a distinctly Christian Vision and Strategy for the school**
- **Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent**
- **Hold the school leaders to account to ensure that every pupil has the best opportunities to flourish**
- **Ensure a robust safeguarding culture**

Governors work as part of a team on the Governing Board. It should be noted that the Governing Board holds overall responsibility for the performance of the school as a collective body. It is important that the core functions of the governing board do not fall to a small minority of governors on the governing board. Every governor should have a voice and the opportunity to contribute towards delivering the key responsibilities of the board.

All governors have equal rights and responsibilities; they are not expected to be experts in education. Each governor will bring their own skills and experience to the role and will be provided with training.

Role purpose as a member of the Governing Board

The role of a foundation governor includes the same duties as other members on the governing board to achieve the above responsibilities.

All governors are required to:

1. Regularly attend meetings of the governing board, and be willing to serve on committees;
2. Be well prepared for governing board meetings by reading reports to be discussed in advance;
3. Conduct school-related business in a professional manner, in line with the school code of conduct and in accordance with expectations of the LDBE;
4. Act as a 'critical friend' offering support and appropriate challenge to the headteacher and school leaders;
5. Support the work of the school;
6. Follow policies to achieve the aims and objectives of the school;
7. Identify risks to the sustainability of the school and implement a strategy to mitigate them;
8. When possible, visit the school, attend events and be a familiar face to staff and children;
9. Preserve, develop and safeguard the Christian Vision, ethos and religious character of the school and uphold the principles of the trust deed;
10. Understand and consider the issues facing the school fairly, objectively and through a Christian lens;
11. Observe confidentiality;
12. Ensure the voices of stakeholders are heard.
13. Work with the local authority and LDBE to strengthen the school.

Schools are encouraged to complete a skills audit annually to identify additional knowledge, skills, and experience that would be beneficial on their governing board. The skills audit may identify specific skills (such as chairing experience, financial or personnel management ability) which they are currently lacking and need to address through new governor appointments. Where this is the case, the LDBE may prioritise recruitment of foundation governors with these particular skills.

Additional Responsibilities of foundation governors

In addition to their generic role as governors, Foundation Governors should undertake the following activities:

14. Report back regularly to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) on the development of the school's distinctive Christian Vision and ethos.
15. Ensure the school's Christian Vision is at the centre of all decisions, policies and activities of the school
16. Ensure development of the school's Christian character and ethos is included in discussions at governing board meetings, and in the School Development Plan
17. Support and challenge the school and parish to strengthen the church-school link
18. Encourage promotion of the school in the parish magazine/ newsletter and website
19. Present the views of the Diocesan Board of Education to the full governing board
20. Undertake LDBE Church School Induction and SIAMS training, and develop knowledge and skills of church schools through regular attendance at LDBE Governor Briefings
21. Support the headteacher to evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school
22. Support the school with SIAMS inspections e.g. contribute to monitoring and evaluation, develop action plans with leaders and meet with inspectors, if required.

It should be noted that, although foundation governors have the above additional responsibilities, all types of governor in a church school are 'church school governors' and the full board should work collectively to ensure that the school's effectiveness as a church school is monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Panels

When required, foundation governors may be requested to serve on panels (or committees) to:

- appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the headteacher and set their pay
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

All governors are expected to undergo the necessary safeguarding checks. This will include completing the DBE's application form in full, successful receipt of 2 positive references by the DBE, and undertaking safeguarding checks required by the school.