

A Day in the Life of a School Governor

I'm in my 4th year of being a school governor now so here is a little insight in what it entails. I joined the board of governors as a parent governor when my daughter started school. For me, it was a cross between wanting more of an insight into the running of the school my child was attending but also just throwing myself outside of my comfort zone. I moved roles within the board and am now what's called a co-opted governor but to be honest, the main difference is just the title.

The main challenge when you join is getting to grips with the many acronyms commonly used within the education circle and still today, I haven't grasped them all!

So, was it scary attending my first meeting? A little but the then chair and vice chair called at my house for me thus making it much easier walking in for the first time.

I've been on a few training courses here and there with a few more to come but I think the most valuable one is the induction for new governors which groups you with lots of other people who are also new to the role and you learn a grounding together.

There are the full governor meetings as well as the subcommittee meetings which occur every few months. It is a commitment and you can't just come and go as you please but of course its accepted you are a volunteer and of course there will be the odd time where you can't attend. We have an agenda each week and go through this along with any other items which crop up.

On the induction course, it was described to us in a football analogy which worked quite well for me but so imagine the head as the team manager, the teachers being the coaching staff and the pupils are the players. We as governors are sat in up the board room looking down and overseeing things. Being a critical friend it was also described as.

We can and often do ask what might seem awkward questions, but then the often the chairman of the football club might pop in to see the manager and gauge his thoughts on how his team are playing.

The key thing to remember is that we all have the same goal, to try and ensure the smooth and successful running of the school and when Ofsted viewed Roberttown School as Outstanding in all areas, it was like winning the league title! All the hard work from every single person at school had come together and paid off.

We have a diverse team of governors from different backgrounds with different skills. This I feel enables us to be productive as a team keep things ticking along within an environment that gets harder to work in with ultimately less and less money.

My favourite part of the job is when I get to come into school. I am the designated governor for online safety so I often speak to children about this, making sure they are all well drilled in being safe on the internet but then I also get time to spend in class and hopefully get my hands dirty and help out. None of this sat at the back with the clipboard watching, if a child needs help making an instrument out of a cornflake box, then it's time to get creative!

I have also been off on a couple of school trips which are great to do. Can be quite stressful constantly counting your group of kids! Well nobody wants to be the first governor to lose a child do we? 😊

The not so exciting part of the role is reading and trying to understand all the paper work. We get a pack before the meetings which we try and digest beforehand.

There is a lot to learn, but you learn as you go along and from the more experienced governors on the board. I have heard a few horror stories whilst off on training courses about how some governing bodies are run, it's safe to say that we have a really great team who all get along, try and keep it light hearted where we can and serious where we need to.

The biggest problem we tend to face at most meetings is Richard Burge hogging the plate of chocolate biscuits!!