



Would YOU like to be a Governor of The Swange School?

What it involves and how to apply



The Swange School is an academy free school, accountable directly to the local community and the Department for Education. It is run along cooperative principles. The school is managed by the Headteacher and staff and overseen by the Governing Body.

Why be a Governor?

School Governors are people who want to make a positive contribution to children's education. Governors are one of the largest volunteer forces in the country and have an

important part to play in raising school standards.

Being a governor is an enormously challenging and rewarding opportunity. Here are a few of the benefits:

- Satisfaction through knowing the students and community will benefit from your efforts



- Developing new skills and strengthening existing ones
- Working with a range of people from all backgrounds
- Gaining experience in key areas such as finance, target setting, personnel and planning, communication and teamwork

Through solving problems ranging from finance to site management, human resources to marketing, pupil welfare to curriculum development, every Governor is guaranteed to broaden their skills and knowledge in some way and this is enhanced through training offered by the school.

What does the Governing Body do?

Governing bodies are responsible for the strategic management of a school and make decisions about a wide range of issues. The core responsibilities are:

- Ensuring accountability
- Acting as a 'critical friend' to the Headteacher
- Monitoring and evaluating the school's progress
- Budgetary allocation and control
- Planning for the long-term future of the school
- Setting the school's aims and values
- Appointing senior members of staff including the Headteacher

Anyone over the age of 18 can be a governor – you don't need to be a parent or have any particular qualifications. Enthusiasm and a desire to make a difference, plus a commitment to dedicate some time to the role, are the most important qualities.

Of course, any skills and qualifications you can bring are valued, and our school also has some more specialist governor roles, such as overseeing Special Educational Needs.

Committees

The Governing Body is split into a number of committees, each with different responsibilities:

- Students and Curriculum
- Staff
- Finance and Premises



These committees meet separately from the main Governing Body to discuss relevant issues in more detail. Discussion is then fed back at a full Governing Body meeting.

Training and information

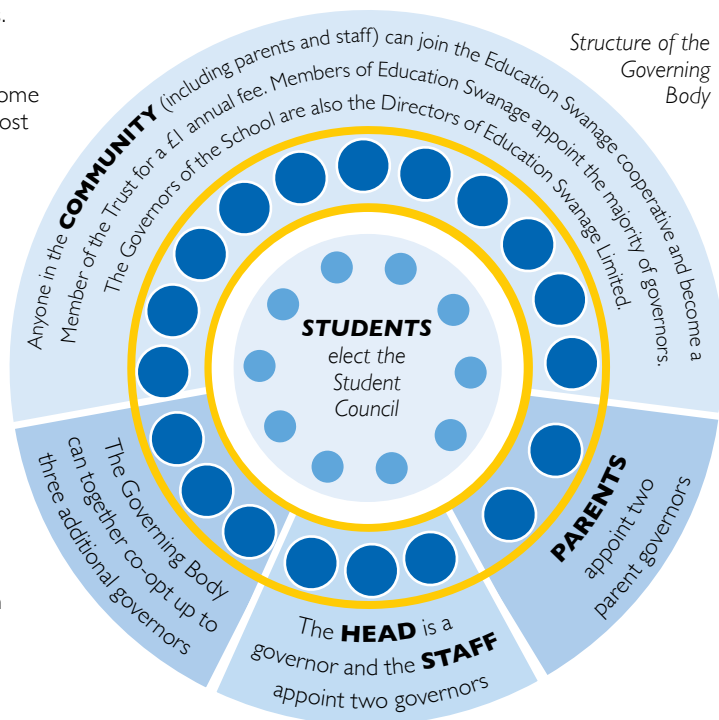
Training for new and existing Governors will be arranged as appropriate by the Clerk to the Governors. On becoming a Governor, you will receive a copy of the National Governors' Association induction guide *Welcome to Governance*. You will also need

to read the *Academies Financial Handbook*, which sets out responsibilities and requirements relating to our financial governance and management, and *The Governors Handbook*, which are available free online via the Policies & Useful Information page of the school website.

Locally accountable

A free school is a type of academy school. It is funded directly by central government and independent of the local authority, just like other Dorset academies such as Thomas Hardy and Twynham.

The school is run by the Headteacher and staff and the Governing Body is accountable for its success. Governing bodies are established in law as corporate bodies. Individual Governors may not act





The Swanage School at
www.theswanageschool.co.uk

Education Swanage is open to all who support its vision and ethos...

independently of the rest of the Governing Body and decisions are the joint responsibility of all.

At The Swanage School the Governing Body are also the Directors of the academy trust, Education Swanage. An academy trust takes on many of the responsibilities of the Local Authority.

Education Swanage has been set up as a cooperative, which means anyone can become a member for a £1 annual fee if they sign up to its values. Members then appoint the majority of the Governors. By adopting cooperative principles of openness and democracy, Education Swanage seeks to make itself locally accountable and to embed The Swanage School in the heart of the community.

In addition to the Governors appointed by the Education Swanage, the Governing Body will contain the Headteacher and two Staff Governors and two Parent Governors. All Governors must have a current DBS (formerly CRB) check, paid for by the school.

Elected posts run for four years and if governors want to serve again they must stand for re-election.

The Governing Body also welcomes input from the wider community and from a Student Council, elected by the students.

You can find full details about the governance of

Membership of Education Swanage, and thus the right to vote for the majority of Governors, is open to all, but we do ask that anyone wishing to join agrees to support our commitment to co-operative values and principles:

- It is an autonomous organisation controlled by its members and organised on the principle of one member, one vote
- As an Academy Trust, it holds its assets in trust for the benefit of present and future students and in so doing delivers related benefit to its members by supporting their primary objective to develop and maintain an effective and successful school
- It provides education, training and information to its students, employees, governors and members so they can develop effective cooperative behaviour and contribute successfully to the development of the school, the company and the wider community
- It seeks to develop and strengthen cooperation with local organisations, cooperatives and other mutual organisations
- It seeks to develop and improve the social and economic wellbeing of the community, locally and internationally

Members must also sign up to the school's vision and ethos, as laid out in our charter:

THE SWANAGE SCHOOL CHARTER

The Swanage School is a human scale school with an innovative, intellectually challenging curriculum where:

- 1 *Excellence is central to teaching and learning*
- 2 *It is a pleasure to teach and learn*
- 3 *Every student's needs are understood and catered for*
- 4 *Students are known and treated as individuals*
- 5 *Students are encouraged to take responsibility*
- 6 *All aspects of development are encouraged: Intellectual, Physical, Creative, Cultural, Emotional, Moral and Spiritual*
- 7 *All students engage in The Swanage School Challenge curriculum extension programme*
- 8 *Students' positive experiences of school extend into their adult lives*
- 9 *Behaviour is characterised by respect for others and the environment*
- 10 *Staff are supported through continuing professional development*
- 11 *Parents and local residents are welcomed as partners in learning*
- 12 *Horizons and global awareness are broadened through national and international partnerships.*

GOVERNOR ELECTIONS

Our Governors are appointed for up to four years and if they want to serve again must stand for re-election at the end of their term. All vacancies will be advertised through parent newsletters, school email lists and on the website. If there are more applications than places available on the Governing Body then there will be a formal ballot.

Parents will be asked to vote for Parent Governors

A list of volunteers who have applied to be Parent Governors will be sent to all families with students at the school, with some brief information about each person. Parents and carers will be able to vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies for Parent Governors and will be asked to return their voting slips to the school office.

Staff will be asked to vote for Staff Governors

A list of volunteers who have applied to be Staff Governors will be given to all members of staff, and staff will be able to vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies for Staff Governors. Staff will be asked to return their voting slips to the school office.

Members of Education Swanage will be asked to vote for other Governors

Anyone who wants to become a member of Education Swanage must complete the



• *All Governor vacancies will be advertised through parent newsletters, school email lists and on the website* •

accompanying form and return it to the school office with £1 in cash. The £1 goes towards the general funds of Education Swanage Limited.

Whenever Education Swanage members need to vote to appoint a new Governor, there will be a General Meeting of the members of Education Swanage. At that meeting, any new applications for membership will be considered by the existing members, and any resignations will be noted. Then the existing and new members will vote on the

appointment of new Governors.

Members who are not able to be present at the meeting may vote by proxy.

There will be up to 12 Governors appointed by the members of Education Swanage, and these can include parents, staff, members of Education Swanage and people who are not parents, staff or members of Education Swanage.

In each category, voting is by simple majority of those who have voted validly. If there is a tie, the Chair of Governors will have the casting vote.

If you have any questions about governance at The Swanage School, or about standing as a governor, please get in touch. Email office@theswanageschool.co.uk or phone 01929 500599.