**Information for Staff Governors**

The instrument of Government for the school provides for staff to be members of the Governing Body of St Anne’s Catholic School and Sixth Form College. The role of **Staff Governor** offers an opportunity to make a real contribution to the strategic management of the school, providing an interesting and rewarding dimension to work. This role is unique in that, by definition, staff are involved in the day to day running of the school and are asked as governors to put this to one side and be ‘strategic managers’.

As current members of staff, all applicants are already subject to DBS checks but staff applicants should also be aware that as St Anne’s is an academy, all governors are Directors of the Trust and will be recorded at Companies House.

**The Role of Staff Governor**

Staff governors are **representative staff members** rather than representatives of staff, bringing a staff viewpoint and perspective to discussion and debate. Staff governors are not a ‘go-between’ or ‘staff delegate’. Staff governors may advise staff on which internal processes and procedures to use but must not become personally involved in individual concerns – no governor has the authority to act individually on behalf of the school. Staff governors act according to their own conscience and should follow the appropriate rules of governor protocol and confidentiality, working with the board to carry out its statutory duties.

Achieving a balance between being an impartial representative member of staff and regular involvement in day to day issues, can sometimes be very difficult. Some practical ways to achieve this balance and effectively fulfil the role are shown below.

Staff Governors should:

* play an active part in governor meetings and committees
* follow the agreed procedure for putting items on the agenda
* feel free to express their own personal views, it being recognised that this is not necessarily the view of the majority of staff
* do not have a mandate to express any views other than their own. However, they should report in good faith any widely held staff views, even if in a vote they decide to vote differently
* try to attend in-service training sessions
* agree with the rest of the governing body how decisions can be shared with staff (not what was actually said) unless the matter is deemed confidential
* be aware of the sensitivity of governing body meeting discussions and clarify after such discussions which items can be reported and which items the governing body wish to remain unreported until the minutes of the meeting have been confirmed

However, there are some things that Staff Governors should not do:

* should not participate in discussions where they have a personal interest in the outcome
* should not participate in discussions about colleagues’ pay (NB this does not apply to the headteacher who should be involved in discussions about staff pay, but not about his/her own pay)
* cannot hold the office of chair or vice-chair of the governing body, but may chair committees
* must withdraw and not take part in discussions relating to the appraisal or pay of any school employee. This does not apply to the headteacher, who should be involved in discussions about staff pay but not about his or her own pay
* cannot take part in the headteacher’s appraisal
* cannot be an LA governor
* cannot be a parent governor if he/she works at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year
* cannot be a link governor for an area that is already their responsibility in school

Jacqueline Baker, a governance expert, said that the role of staff governors is to bring their views and experience to the governing board, and that they are not responsible for bringing staff grievances to the board's attention.

If another member of staff has approached a staff governor with a grievance, the governor should refer the staff member to the school’s grievance policy, which is a statutory requirement for all schools to have. This will outline the correct operational procedure for dealing with a grievance.

Staff governors should become familiar with the grievance policy, in order to be able to explain it to staff members who come to them for help.

All governors have a **strategic not operational role** in the leadership of the school. So, the role of staff governors is not to be a spokesperson for individual staff, the school has processes in place to handle operational questions, but to keep the **staff perspective** in mind when considering the strategic direction of the school.