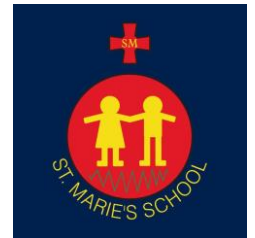


# ST MARIE'S SCHOOL, A Catholic Voluntary Academy

Fulwood Road, Sheffield. S10 3DQ  
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Website: [www.st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk](http://www.st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk)  
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Headteacher: Mr J Fernandes



## Parent Governor Information Pack

We have 1 place for an elected Parent Governor to fill this term.

### Could you help?

If you have a child at St Marie's and you have the time and commitment to serve as a Parent Governor this is your chance to get involved.

We would particularly welcome parents with skills, experience or an understanding of at least one of the following areas: different cultures and home backgrounds, finance, premises, and the law. These would enhance existing skills on the Governing Body and balance the support that Governors give School.

Find out more about what's involved Email Chair of Governors (Kevin Smith) –[chairofgovernors@st-marie's.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:chairofgovernors@st-marie's.sheffield.sch.uk)

If you want to go ahead we ask that you email or write to us with a short statement of around 250 words and a recent photograph of yourself. This should say why you are standing and what your strengths would be as a Parent Governor. The statements will be sent out to all parents and put on the website during the recruitment process.

Please send your statement and photograph by email to [lgraham@st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:lgraham@st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk). If this is difficult for you then please leave a printed copy of your statement and your photograph at the School Office to be collected. We need these to arrive **by the end of Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018**.

If only 1 parent stands they will take up the place. If more than 1 parent applies school will hold an election from **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 to Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018**. The parents elected will be informed as soon as possible after votes are counted and double-checked on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018**.

The successful new Parent Governors will be invited to join our full Governing Body meetings until the end of term.

Miss L Holmes  
Clerk to Governors





## 1. What do the Governors do?

**Parent Governors** are elected by other parents whose children attend the school. They represent parents of children at the school. Other Governors represent the staff, the local authority and the broader community, on the basis of offering skills and experience relevant to the Governing Body.

Governors work together to see that the school is run effectively and provides the best possible education for its pupils. This has to be done within the law and the policies of the school. In brief, we:

- agree what the school should focus on – we set the **Strategic Direction**
- ask about what is happening and why – we act as a **Critical Friend**
- respond to questions from parents and those outside the school – we ensure **Accountability**.

We have put more detail about the Parent Governor role and who can apply on pages 4 and 5.

If elected you will be a Parent Governor for up to 4 years (unless you have to leave earlier). You can still choose to complete your 4 years even if your child moves on from St Marie's. You can put your own name forward, or you can ask another parent to nominate you. If more parents want to stand than there are places to fill, school will hold an election for parents to choose who will represent them. We've explained more about how to apply on page 3.

## 2. What are we looking for?

Being a Governor requires time, effort and a willingness to work with information in words and figures. We also use email and our Governors Portal as our main form of communication. We expect all our governors to sign up to and follow our Code of Conduct at all times. We take decisions and agree actions as a corporate body, not as individuals. There is lots of help and training on offer to help you in the role.

Parents with children at St Marie's offer a wealth of knowledge and experience to help other Governors and support the school so that St Marie's children do as well as they possibly can.

As a Parent Governor you will help to make sure that the school makes improvements. You will also contribute to our committees and to any special working groups as needed.

## 3. Recruitment Timetable

If the number of parents standing is the same as the number of places then there is no need to hold an election – those parents are automatically invited to join the Governing Body. If there is more than 1 parent applying, school will hold an election.

Our timetable is:

### **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Elections declared**

Parents invited to apply



## **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September (before 3.20pm)**

Deadline for school to receive applications

## **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October to Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (before 3.20pm)**

School runs election if required; if not, school informs successful parents

## **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Votes counted from election is required

Successful new Parent Governors informed

## **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

Parents informed of results

### **4. How do I find out more?**

You are welcome to email the current Chair of Governors, Kevin Smith, on [chairofgovernors@st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:chairofgovernors@st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk) for more details; or you can look out for one of our current Parent Governors after school.

### **5. Personal statement**

We ask all candidates to provide a personal statement. This is your chance to say something about yourself, why you are interested in becoming a Parent Governor and what you would offer in the role. You should write about 250 words in your statement - no more please. This is so that everyone gives an equal amount of information. Please attach your contact details and a recent photograph of yourself to your statement. It's a good idea to include:

- Your name, and the name(s) and year group(s) of your child(ren).
- What interests you about becoming a Parent Governor.
- How you would carry out the role.
- Relevant experience – this could be from raising your family, volunteering, spare time activities, or employment.

There are 2 made-up examples of personal statements on page 6 below – these give an idea of different approaches and are for guidance only.

### **6. The recruitment process**

We will send out the personal statements (in alphabetical order of family name) for all parents to read and post them on the school website, <http://www.st-maries.sheffield.sch.uk>. There is 1 place available, so if there is more than 1 parent interested in standing, school will write out to parents asking them to vote for their preferred candidate. The parent who receives most votes each will be elected, unless there is a tie. If that happens, the parent with the youngest child at school will be elected. Everyone entitled to vote will be able to read your statement before deciding who to vote for.



## 7. More about the role of the Parent Governor

Governors offer general guidance to the school. We answer to parents, the Diocese and the Department for Education for the way the school is run. We make decisions in many areas, such as the curriculum, staffing and the school's finances. Responsibilities are shared out but we make decisions together as one Governing Body and we respect confidentiality at all times. There is lots of support available; other Governors are always happy to help and there is plenty of training on offer including induction sessions from the Governor Support team at Sheffield City Council.

When you become a Governor you are a representative rather than a delegate. This means that if you are elected as a Parent Governor, you cannot be instructed by parents or anyone else to take a particular view. All Governors have a responsibility to listen to parents' views and to take them into account and Parent Governors will make sure this happens. We need to be clear that, when we are talking to parents as a Governor, our role is listen to what they are saying and then bring it to the attention of the Governing Body before reporting back.

We meet as a full Governing Body once every half-term, and we aim to keep the meetings to around 2 ½ hours. You will be invited to attend a meeting of one of our 3 committees to see which one you want to be part of. They all meet once a term. We offer a variety of roles which link in with school life and we will invite you to come into school for meetings and events too. There will be occasional working groups which will meet for particular tasks as required.

As well as agenda papers for meetings you will need to read other information and to look at information presented in figures. Governors are expected to keep in touch with school issues and wider education affairs. We provide lots of starting information in our Induction Pack and will always be happy to talk things through with you if needed.

Employers should give employees who are school governors "reasonable time off" to carry out their duties. This should be agreed in advance with your line manager. St Marie's offers to pay expenses for Governors as set out in our Governors Expenses Policy.

Most new Governors will need some time to settle in and nobody will expect you to know everything at once. You will be able to ask questions - and get answers - from other Governors, the headteacher, and other sources.



## 8. Can anybody become a Parent Governor?

You **must** have at least one child at the school before you apply to become a Parent Governor.

However the law says that there are some cases where you **must not** take on this role. You **must not** apply to become a Parent Governor or act as a Parent Governor if you:

- are a Councillor with the Local Authority
- work at the school for more than 500 hours in a school year
- are bankrupt
- have been sentenced to 3 months or more in prison, without the option of a fine, within the previous 5 years
- have been sentenced to a period of imprisonment of more than 2½ years, but less than 5 years, within the previous 20 years
- have ever been sentenced to a period of imprisonment of 5 years or more
- are disqualified from working with children.

All our Governors go through an Enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (which used to be called the CRB or Criminal Records Bureau) as part of our role in safeguarding children at St Marie's. We have the right to disqualify you if you refuse to take part in this. There is no charge to you for having the check done.



## Examples of personal statements (made-up)

### Example A.

Personal Statement

My first child XXXXXXXX is in Year 1, and I have another son XXXXXXXX who starts Foundation Stage in September. I have helped at our toddler group for 4 years, in Crookes which is where I live. I understand about children learning through play and spending time out of doors, not just using a classroom. I think this would help me work as a governor as I know something about the early years in education.

I would also like to represent parents as a governor because I am interested in making more of the links with the different parent groups in St Marie's. There are lots of ways of getting involved in school and I would like to help these groups and governors work well together. I have run a XXXXXXXX business before so I am used to dealing with accounts and financial information. This is important for governors to be comfortable with and I think I could learn about school finances quite quickly.

I bring XXXXXXXX to school and pick him up every day so parents will be able to see me quite easily if they want to chat or ask a question. I would talk about what they say with other governors and get back to them. I don't mind spending time in meetings and I am quite good at putting across parents' points of view as I already do this at playgroup. I would love the chance to help the school do even better in the next few years.

*(252 words)*

### Example B.

XXXXXXX – Personal Statement

My twins are in Year 1 at XXXXXXXX, so I already know how the school works. I am a lecturer at Sheffield University in the Education Department, working mainly with students interested in becoming primary school teachers. I would use this experience to support school in raising standards as I know how important this is.

I do think that S Marie's is about more than standards and I want to help governors celebrate everything else that goes on. That is because staff and parents work together to make things happen and I want to make sure that all parents and all children get involved as much as they can. I know that it can be difficult for parents who don't know so much about the education system, so I would like to help them more. The Parent and Community Committee would be a good way to start doing this so I would be very interested in working on it.

I also run English language sessions once a week so I would like to offer some language support for St Marie's parents. It would also be another way for some of our parents to talk to me if they want governors to know about anything. I take my children to school and pick them up at least twice a week, so it would be easy for parents to find me in the playground. I think being a parent governor would be a very good way to support other parents and the school. *(252 words)*