

Parents Forum: Saturday 25th November 2017
Chingford Foundation School

Mr Morrall, Executive Principal, opened the meeting by thanking all those in attendance. He went on to explain that this morning's meeting would be about Governance but that he would be happy to meet with any parents following the meeting about any specific matters relating to their children that they wished to raise with him.

Today's meeting on Governance is particularly apt as it comes at a time of change in the governing structure of the Chingford Academies Trust. Geraldine Evans who has held the position of Chair of Trustees for the last four years will be stepping down this Autumn. Mr Morrall also took the opportunity to introduce Mr John Bruce, who has recently been elected as Chair of the CFS Local Governing Body. Chingford Foundation School is keen to involve parents in the governance of the school and knows that many of its parents and carers have skills and experience that would be useful to the strategic planning of the school.

Mr Morrall went on to give a Power Point presentation on what is involved in being a governor of a school and invited those present who were interested to submit a CV and a short paragraph outlining why they are interested in becoming a governor and send this c/o of Cathy Kitto (c.kitto@chingford.waltham.sch.uk) and they will be invited in to meet Trustees in the New Year.

Parents and carers also took part in a question and answer session and this provided further insight into what the role of a governor might take up.

Would Governors be interviewed by Ofsted Inspectors on their own?

Not necessarily ... it is now usual for governors to have interviews with Ofsted inspectors in a group thereby ensuring that Inspectors get a full picture of the subject they are being interviewed about. Governors can therefore support one another. In the Executive Principal Report to Governors the 20/21 Key Questions a governing body should ask itself are helpful preparation for any Ofsted interview (included in the presentation).

How long is a governors tenure of service?

Usually three years

How many people serve on the governing body?

The traditional model was 20/21 people – but this doesn't happen in the CAT ... which has smaller Trustee/Governor and Committee membership (around 12). It is felt in the CAT that smaller groups foster better discussion and decision making.

How much does the school use social media to communicate with parents and carers?

This is an underdeveloped part of the schools communication system with stakeholders and one that is in need of improvement. Although Mr Morrall cautioned that a school has to be extra vigilant when using these types of platform for a number of safeguarding and related factors.

What is the typical commitment if I were to become a governor?

Governors are required to attend a minimum of 3 meetings each year ... one each term. Governors who wish to be further involved in the life of the school might also wish to serve on one of the other Committees (Health and Safety, Finance, Premises, Pay and Personnel) again each of which meets three times a year. Visiting the school during the day is also very important.

Parents and carers were encouraged to seriously consider putting themselves forward to become Governors, for what is a challenging but enormously rewarding role.

If there is anything that you are not clear about please contact the school and Mr Morrall will be happy to assist. Mr Bruce also said that he would be pleased to speak to any prospective Governors to clarify matters and to share his experience of the process.