

ESSEX RACIAL EQUALITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



Essex Racial
Equality Council
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HELP SCHOOL, HELP CHILDREN A GUIDE TO BECOMING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR

Representation of BME groups on school governing bodies is low, so what can you do to ensure your communities voice is heard in your local schools?

The Department for education and skills have published an information guide on how to become a school governor. It covers questions such as How do governors help schools and children? What do governors do? What do I do if I want to become a governor?, and where to obtain further information.

How do Governors help schools and children?

School governors are people who wish to make a positive contribution to children's education. Anyone with an interest in education can be a governor. Governors are volunteers who spend about six hours each month attending meetings and working to further the schools development.

The governing body consists of people from the school's community. Each school's governing body has parents, school staff and representatives of the Local Education Authority. Most schools also have community governors and certain schools and foundation governors. Governors can also be

co-opted. New school governors receive a nationally designed induction programme covering roles and responsibilities. LEA's and others run training events to meet governors' needs. Governors can get independent advice from Governor Line—the national free helpline.



What do governors do?

Together with the Headteacher they set the future direction for the school and decide how the school's budget should be spent. Governing bodies make decisions collectively on matters such as performance targets, policies and the schools development plan.

Governors monitor the impact of policies and oversee the use of the school's budget. They report to parents on the school's achievements and respond to inspection recommendations. They hear appeals from pupils and staff

and consider complaints.

Governors provide the Headteacher with support and advice, drawing on their knowledge and experience. They ask searching questions and respect the Headteacher's position as professional leader of the school.

I'm interested—what do I do now?

You can contact your local school to ask if they need governors. Your local education authority will be able to help you find a school or advise on opportunities to become an LEA governor. If you are a parent ask your school about elections for parent governors.

What qualifications do I need to become a school governor?

No qualifications are needed. All that is required is that you are over 18 years of age. The general length of term for a governor is four years but you can resign as a governor at any time.

It is important that the school governing body represents the community in which the school belongs. As it stands, representation of Black and ethnic minority parents on school governing bodies is low. greatly increase the opportu-

**HELP SCHOOL, HELP CHILDREN
A GUIDE TO BECOMING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR Continued..**

Being a governor can greatly increase the opportunity to have your say about how your local school is run, and how it can best serve the pupils attending that school. If you think you could make a valuable contribution to your school and are interested in becoming a school governor, then contact Heather Leverette and Essex County Council on 01245 436669. Copies of the information leaflet produced by the Department of Education and Skills can be obtained by calling 0845 6022260 or email: dfes@prolog.uk.com quoting ref number: LEA/0356/2002.

Information in this article was taken from the Department of Education and skills document: Help Children Help Schools: How to become a School Governor.



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Essex Racial
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Mission Statement:

Essex REC works with individuals and organisations for a fair and just society which celebrates diversity and gives everyone an equal chance to work, learn and live free from discrimination and racism.


