



# **Governing Board Chair**

Information Pack

April 2021

# Pinner Park Primary School

## Governing Board Chair *Letter from the acting co-chairs*

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Dear prospective Chair,

We want to recruit an outstanding Chair for the opportunity to lead one of the UK's largest primary schools, in one of the most diverse areas of the country, so its pupils achieve even higher results and progress. We would like a Chair to begin their journey guiding Pinner Park Primary School's exciting future from September.

Pinner Park Primary School was formed in April 2019 following the amalgamation of Pinner Park Infant and Nursery School with Pinner Park Junior School. In the two years since the school was formed, we have appointed a new headteacher and together with senior leaders embraced opportunities, such as:

- Creating a new school vision, describing our medium-term priorities and goals, based on three key areas, 'Learning, Character, Community'
- Developing our curriculum so every pupil's progress and achievement is guided by teachers aided by a broader curriculum that much more clearly describes its intent, implementation and impact
- Establishing renewed assessment procedures for a consistent approach across the school
- Establishing shared policies, and procedures, such as a common behaviour policy
- Opening the school up to the community
- Transforming our Reception provision

A new Chair will shape the school's future and lead it to meet the standards that governors, staff, parents and pupils expect. We are expecting an Ofsted inspection as the school has undergone significant change since its last inspection. Ofsted graded the former infant school 'outstanding' in 2013 and the former junior school earned a good rating in 2017.

Exciting opportunities include:

- Rigorously monitor the introduction of, and national results from, our new curriculum which aims to inspire and support each child to make progress, and develop detailed knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Ensure its diverse and changing cohort become outstanding learners individually and together, and that the school makes the most of the strength of the community and its resources.
- Integrate further IT and digital skills to equip staff and pupils for cutting-edge teaching and learning.
- Support transformational programmes on parental engagement, play, and equality to support learning from which the community, and other schools, can learn.
- Attract the best staff by offering outstanding opportunities for development and work environment.
- Oversee a sustainable budget that reflects the efficacy of spending and draws in new funding that in turn liberates the school with resources to deliver a high-quality education for all.
- Develop school premises and outdoor space to ensure an outstanding environment for learning.
- Deliver outstanding governance and strategic leadership, including better links to other governing bodies.

Interested candidates should email us at [rsareen@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk](mailto:rsareen@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk) or [bmehta@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk](mailto:bmehta@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk). We would be delighted to discuss the position or the school with you. If you'd like to apply, please email us your CV by Sunday 16 May 2021.

Yours faithfully,

**Rahul Sareen and Bhumika Mehta**  
Acting Co-chairs

### What's important to us – three word summary

Learning · Character · Community

### What's important to us

We work together, as a school community, to empower and inspire each and every child to be an outstanding student who enjoys learning, to develop character, and to become a respectful citizen who makes a positive impact.

### Our key principles

#### Learning

- Each child makes sustained progress as a result of outstanding, motivating and inspirational teaching.
- Learning across the entire curriculum is highly valued and each subject and area of learning is treated as significant.
- Teachers plan challenging and enjoyable tasks based on accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding – supported by an outstanding, creative curriculum.
- Everyone is a learner – with opportunities for life-long learning. Continuous professional development of staff, rooted in research, is highly valued.

#### Character

- Our behaviour values form the basis of our approach to promoting positive behaviour and character: ready, respectful, safe and kind.
- As a 'Rights Respecting School' children's rights are learned, understood and lived.
- Children are enthusiastic, happy, engaged, confident, courteous, resilient and interdependent. They are highly motivated to do their best and to be their best.
- Children learn to make good choices and to take responsibility for their actions. They are responsible citizens.
- Children feel safe, and know how to keep themselves safe.

#### Community

- Each child is significant; known, valued, respected and cherished.
- At the heart of our work is the belief that parents are key partners in their children's education.
- The school is at the heart of the wider community, served by the community, and serving the community.
- Diversity is an integral part of our culture, and identity. The school is a fully inclusive, diverse community welcoming and celebrating all sections of the wider community. Equality is important to us.
- All members of the school community are responsible citizens of their local, national and global communities.
- Effective partnerships with other community organisations are formed and have a positive impact on the life of the school.
- Clear and effective communication enables every member of the community to be informed and to play their part.

# **Pinner Park Primary School**

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## **Governing Board Chair** *About the Governing Board*

### **Governing Board Constitution**

When the school amalgamated in April 2019, the Governing Board was reconstituted. The current Governing Board comprises members who had previously been part of the Infant or Junior governing boards as well as a number of newer governors who have joined since the Primary School was formed.

There are 15 governor positions:

- 8 Co-opted governors (7 in post, 1 vacancy)
- 1 Local authority Governor
- 4 Parent governors
- 1 Staff member
- 1 Headteacher

In addition, we have three associate members.

It is intended that the new chair will be appointed as a co-opted governor prior to being elected as chair at a subsequent full governing board meeting.

We employ our own clerk through a governor services company.

### **Committee Structure**

The Full Governing Board currently meets five times a year. In addition, we have four sub-committees:

- Resources – covering finance, personnel, premises, health and safety
- Curriculum – covering all aspects of curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour and attitudes, outcomes
- Pay Panel
- Headteacher performance management

All Governors attend full Governing Board meetings and serve on at least one of its sub-committees.

# Pinner Park Primary School

## Governing Board Chair *Recruitment Advertisement*

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### **The opportunity**

We are seeking to appoint an experienced school governor to make a valuable contribution to children's education, opportunities and futures as the chair of our governing board.

### **About us**

Our school is based in the north west of the London Borough of Harrow. The school is inclusive and provides a high quality, broad and balanced curriculum, which is appropriate for children of all abilities and irrespective of their ethnicity, social background or faith.

Our school has recently amalgamated from former Infant and Junior schools to form a large primary school, with over 850 students. We are in our second full academic year as a straight-through primary school so this is an exciting time to join the team! For more information about the school, please visit our website, <http://pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk>

### **About the role**

As an experienced governor, you will know that being a school governor is a challenging and hugely rewarding volunteer role. Governorship is the chance to make a real difference to young people, give something back to your local community and use and develop your skills in a board-level environment.

Schools need governing boards that have a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective. Ofsted has repeatedly noted that the most effective schools demonstrate effective leadership and management, including the governing board.

We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced governor to lead the work of the Governing Board at this exciting time for the school. We are looking for someone who:

- Has recent, relevant and successful experience as a school governor or as a leader in a comparable organisation. This is likely to include experience as vice-chair, chair, or a similar leadership role.
- Is able to provide leadership to the governing board, ensuring governors fulfil functions for the effective and proper governance of the school, and amongst the wider school community.
- Relishes the opportunity to lead a supportive group of governors to oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent, to hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Is able to work confidentially and with discretion
- Is professional, articulate and a team player

What we can offer:

- a recently amalgamated, over-subscribed, popular local school
- a well-resourced school with opportunities for governor development
- a supportive leadership team, governing body and PTA

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. All governors are subject to an enhanced DBS check and relevant background checks.

If you have any questions, or to discuss the role, please contact us on [rsareen@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk](mailto:rsareen@pinnerpark.harrow.sch.uk).

## Governing Board Chair *NGA Role Description*

*The National Governors Association (NGA) provides this role description for the Governing Board Chair.*

The role of the chair of governors should be viewed in the same light as that of the chair of the board in any other sector. The role of the chair is demanding, complex and multi-faceted. The chair leads the governing board ensuring it fulfils its functions well. A good chair will ensure the board's focus is on the strategic. The culture of the board is largely determined by its chair. The chair is "first among equals" but has no defined individual power. A good chair works well with school leaders to advise and shape proposals to be discussed at the board meetings.

The chair should facilitate the governing board working as a team to challenge, support and contribute to the strategic leadership of the school. As well as leader of the board, the chair is at times a confidante, a manager, a critical friend, a cheerleader, an ambassador, an arbitrator, and possibly a mentor and coach; the balance of these roles adopted will depend on the situation at hand and in particular the experience and strengths of the headteacher.

### **Role Purpose: Leading governance in schools**

To provide leadership to the governing board and ensure that governors/trustees fulfil their functions for the proper governance of the school.

### **Leading governance in schools**

- To ensure that the governing board and headteacher have a shared sense of purpose.
- To ensure the governing board sets a clear vision and strategy for the school(s).
- To lead the board in monitoring the headteacher's implementation of the school strategy.

### **Leading and developing the team**

- To ensure the board has the required skills to govern well, and that appointments made fill any identified skills gaps.
- To ensure all governors/trustees receive appropriate induction, ongoing training as needed and have a thorough understanding of their role.
- To ensure members of the board act reasonably and in line with the board's agreed code of conduct.
- To develop a good working relationship with the vice chair, ensuring s/he is kept fully informed and delegating tasks as appropriate.
- To ensure that board members feel valued and encourage their development.
- To carry out a performance review of each governor/trustee.
- To ensure that there is a plan for succession for the chair, vice-chair and any committee chairs, and that by recommending limits on office, there is always a mix of new and experienced members.

### **The chair, the headteacher and accountability**

- To build a professional relationship with the headteacher which allows for honest conversations, acting as a sounding board and ensuring there are no surprises at meetings.
- To meet regularly with the headteacher, which in normal circumstances is likely to be monthly.
- To ensure that there are transparent and effective processes for the recruitment and induction of the headteacher.
- To ensure appropriate governor/trustee involvement in the recruitment of senior leaders.
- To ensure all governors concentrate on their strategic role, receive information fit for purpose and hold the headteacher to account.

- To oversee and participate in the headteacher's performance review, ensuring that appropriate CPD (continuing professional development) is provided.
- To ensure that the headteacher provides staff with an understanding of the role of the governing board and acts as link between the two.
- Where required, represent the governing board in its dealings with external partners and be an advocate for the school.
- To attend school functions (plays/sports days/prize giving) as appropriate and encourage other governors to do so.
- To ensure that complaints made to the governing board are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
- The chair will also play a lead role in any decision to suspend the headteacher.
- Leading school improvement
- To ensure the board is involved at a strategic level in the school's self-evaluation process and that this feeds into the key priorities.
- To ensure the board's business is focussed on the key strategic priorities.
- To take the lead in representing the governing board at relevant external meetings with agencies such as Ofsted, the Department for Education and the local authority.
- To ensure the board has mechanisms in place to obtain and listen to the views of parents, pupils and staff.
- To ensure the governing board adopts a visits protocol which is linked to monitoring key strategic priorities:
  - The chair who should already have a good knowledge of the school will need to consider whether s/he needs to continue such formal monitoring visits or whether these are now best delegated to the team.

#### **Leading governing board business**

- With the clerk and the headteacher, to plan for the board meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the board's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and reducing unnecessary paperwork.
- Chair meetings effectively and promote an open culture on the governing board that allows ideas and discussion to thrive whilst ensuring clear decisions are reached as quickly as possible.
- To collaborate with the clerk to establish effective working procedures and sound committee structures.
- To ensure that decisions taken at the meetings of the governing body are implemented.
- To ensure the governing board appoint a professional clerk capable of providing advice on the board's functions and that s/he is appraised and developed.

#### **What skills/attributes should a chair have?**

Candidates for chair should be able to demonstrate a good selection of the skills/attributes set out below:

- Commitment to the school
- Good understanding of the environment in which the school is operating and wider education policy
- Personal integrity
- Negotiation and diplomacy skills
- Good understanding of the legal responsibilities of the board as both individuals and a corporate entity
- Strong communication skills
- Good organisational skills
- Ability to think strategically
- Ability to prioritise
- Ability to chair meetings well
- Ability to have courageous conversations and make courageous decisions
- Ability to build and get the best out of a team
- Capacity to process information quickly and understand relevant data
- Ability to delegate

**What are the extra time commitments?**

The expectation for charity trustees is that the time commitment should be between 10-20 days a year, with the chair of the board being at the upper end of the time commitment. There are many similarities between chairs of governing boards and charities so you should aim to keep your commitment at or below the 20 day limit.