

What it means to be a Parent Governor at The Greville

Our lives are busy and chaotic. Most of us are trying to juggle work, after school clubs, housework and general life... of course not forgetting various mufti, world book or comic relief fancy dress days! We just haven't the capacity to grasp anything else the school might need.

So, when the school asks for volunteers to be a Governor or join the PTA, it is probably the very last thing on all our long lists, that we want to do....if we even know about it in the first place as we missed the email.

But there are multiple reasons why we shouldn't feel this way, why we should be prepared to step up and give some of our time to these very good causes and the best bit is, the roles can give so much back, but it is just not often seen this way.

The board of Governors work with the headteacher and senior leadership team to drive the strategic development of the school and raise standards of achievement. They are there to ensure the school is doing what it needs to do and that the people that are doing this are getting the help and support they need to do it.

Parent Governors are a very important part of this, holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. They have first hand experience on the delivery of the curriculum, and how the school is perceived through their children and their own viewpoint.

Let me ask you, if you had the opportunity to have a say in how your children and 650 other children develop into the adults they want to be, why wouldn't you want to contribute?

Primary school education is everyone's future. It gives children the best possible start to their academic and vocational lives, as well as ensuring their emotional and social well-being and instilling learnings they will forever keep with them. And, lets not forget, these will be people running the country and paying our pensions one day. As a parent Governor you get to see "behind the scenes" all the hard work and determination that goes into making everything a success. You help and contribute, you listen and observe and your understanding and respect for the people whose job it is to do all the actual hard work reassures you your children are being well looked after.

Yes, you have to attend 4/5 evening meetings a year. Yes, you have to read documentation, offer feedback and take some training courses. Yes, you have to potentially (not always) allow a morning once a term to attend a school visit, but that is basically it! And for this, you get to see how a school works, your ideas / contributions can and will make positive change, and you will meet some lovely like-minded people and maybe have an occasional meal out with them. Worth also noting that for working parents most organisations will recognise the role of School Governor and might provide reasonable paid time off to undertake duties. Make sure to add the role to your CV as well!

For me though, best of all is that you get to see your kids at school in a way that most parents do not have the opportunity to see. With Governor visits you can see your children in the class room learning. You can attend school assemblies and give out Governor awards. You get to see the smiles on all the children's faces and how happy and supportive of one another they are and this makes your small efforts feel very worth it. You feel PRIVILEGED – that you are there; PROUD – that you are contributing to the school and the children's success; LUCKY – to have the opportunity.

Many people would see being a Governor as a time drain, you should actually see it as an opportunity to understand more, see more and to give back in a way that will also give back to you.