The Role of Foundation Governor in the Diocese of Salisbury

As one who holds a role in governance for a church school (or schools), you carry the same responsibilities as all other governors in schools and Trusts.

In addition, there are specific responsibilities that as a Foundation Governor you also hold.

The role of governor in a school or academy Trust

‘All those elected or appointed to boards should fulfil their duties in line with the seven principles of public life ([the Nolan principles](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life)). They should also be mindful of their responsibilities under equality legislation, recognising and encouraging diversity and inclusion. They should understand the impact of effective governance on the quality of education and on outcomes for all children and young people. In addition, all those involved in governance should be:

* **Committed**: Devoting the required time and energy to the role and ambitious to achieve best possible outcomes for young people. Prepared to give time, skills and knowledge to developing themselves and others in order to create highly effective governance.
* **Confident**: Of an independent mind, able to lead and contribute to courageous conversations, to express their opinion and to play an active role on the board.
* **Curious**: Possessing an enquiring mind and an analytical approach and understanding the value of meaningful questioning.
* **Challenging**: Providing appropriate challenge to the status quo, not taking information or data at face value and always driving for improvement.
* **Collaborative**: Prepared to listen to and work in partnership with others and understanding the importance of building strong working relationships within the board and with executive leaders, staff, parents and carers, pupils/students, the local community and employers.
* **Critical**: Understanding the value of critical friendship which enables both challenge and support, and self-reflective, pursing learning and development opportunities to improve their own and whole board effectiveness.
* **Creative**: Able to challenge conventional wisdom and be open-minded about new approaches to problem-solving; recognising the value of innovation and creative thinking to organisational development and success.’[[1]](#footnote-1)

The specifics of the Foundation Governor role

As a Foundation Governor, at Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) we believe you have also been…

* **Called**: ‘The role of Foundation Governor is a Godly ministry, and it is to be exercised through the skills for which you have been appointed, the gifts which God in Christ has given to you and the faith in Christ which you profess…You have been appointed to contribute to the ministry of the Church by making our schools successful and to ensure that children are provided with a supportive environment within which they can learn and grow in Christ.’[[2]](#footnote-2)

You share the responsibility ‘to preserve and develop the character of the organisation, including any religious character’[[3]](#footnote-3) with your colleagues in governance, and also to develop your own spiritual leadership and that which is exercised by all those in leadership within your school and / or Trust community.

Alongside your Foundation Governance colleagues, you are the vital link between schools and their parishes and it is this ‘school parish partnership [that] is recognised as an important part of thriving Christian communities.’[[4]](#footnote-4)

In accordance with the expectations of the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education, you will;

* fully support, cherish, preserve and develop the distinctive Anglican and Christian ethos of the school, ensuring that the school has a distinctive Anglican and Christian vision and values which lead to effective practice and outcomes

* preserve and strengthen the links between church, school and diocese

* take an active role in the school’s self-evaluations of progress against the ‘Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools’ (SIAMS) schedule

* ensure that collective worship and religious education at the school follow the appropriate guidelines and/or syllabus

* ensure that collective worship at the school is in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England

* encourage, support and challenge the school towards aspirations that are transformational

* ensure that collective worship and religious education at the school are appropriately monitored

* ensure that the distinctive Anglican and Christian ethos of the school is encouraged and supported throughout its local community and is reflected in its policies and protocols, its curriculum and activities

* ensure that your own attitudes and behaviour in relation to the school reflect its distinctive Anglican and Christian ethos

* make sure that the School Improvement Plan includes strategy for the development of areas reflected in the school’s SIAMS self-evaluation document

* inform the SDBE when the head teacher post becomes vacant and, in partnership with the Chair of Governors, invite a representative of the Diocesan Director of Education to advise and attend throughout the appointment procedure

* support and challenge the leadership within the school in their links with the wider parish(es) and community and promote support for school activities and initiatives relating to its Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness[[5]](#footnote-5)

1. Competency Framework for Governance, September 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Foundation Governor Service of Commissioning, SDBE. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Governance Handbook, Department for Education, October 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ‘Renewing Hope through Rural Ministry and Mission’, Diocese of Salisbury, September 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. SDBE Foundation Governor Appointment Policy, April 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)