

WHO OR WHAT ARE FOUNDATION GOVERNORS?

The inclusion of Foundation Governors on the governing body of an Aided school is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a Church school. Foundation Governors represent the historic link with the original establishment of the school and its distinctive religious ethos. All governors are entrusted with the responsibility for formulating policies which produce a well-managed school. Their duties cover monitoring the curriculum, finance, personnel and premises to ensure that the school functions efficiently. Essentially acting as a critical friend of the school, supporting the headteacher and staff and offering pastoral support.

Our Foundation Governors total 8, but our strength is currently 6 with 2 vacancies at Bowes Hutchinson's Church of England (Aided) School. They are appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education (the Diocese of Leeds) after nomination by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Giles' Church Bowes. This is in recognition of the fact that the PCC is the voice of the Church in the locality and the Diocesan Board of Education has responsibility for formulating policies which affect all Church schools in the Diocese. Foundation Governors serve a four-year term of office which may be renewable. Foundation Governors form the majority of governors on the Governing Body. This reflects the financial contribution made by the Church to the maintenance and improvement of the buildings, and the requirement that Voluntary Aided schools should provide (within a programme of Religious Education) Christian religious education and collective worship.

The Church's interest in education stems from a philosophy that education is not just about acquiring knowledge which will enable children to earn a living in a competitive world. It begins from a position that this is God's world and everything in it has value. Religious education is important, but it is not the only subject which reflects spiritual values. The whole curriculum is given value by being considered in this way.

Therefore, Foundation Governors should be at pains to make sure that all people in a school are valued. Church schools do not have a monopoly on caring, but in the Church school community no one, regardless of role, should be undervalued.

For Christians, worshipping together is very important. Church schools provide worship which is in accordance with the custom and practice of the Church of England. The aim is to enrich the life of the school and church community.