

Junior School

Infant School

01275 843969

office@highdownschools.org

www.highdownschools.co.uk



High Down Schools

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High Down Schools

Down Road
Portishead
North Somerset
BS20 6DY

Executive Headteacher

Mrs A Cowan

10 January 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

ELECTION OF PARENT GOVERNOR

Further to our notification of a parent governor vacancy, two parents wish to be considered for election as a Parent Governor:

(1) **Laura McMahon** child: Martha (*Robins*)

(2) **Adam West** child: Barnaby (*Puffins*)

Each has provided a profile and statement for your information (*at the end of this letter*).

The Governing Body, together with the Executive Headteacher, has overall responsibility for running the schools. The three strategic functions of governing bodies are: ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding school leaders to account for the performance of the schools, pupils and staff; and overseeing the financial performance of the schools, making sure their money is well spent. No specific qualifications are needed to be a governor. There is no need to have a background in education; experience in any number of fields could be useful. It is important to have enthusiasm, a keen interest in the schools, and be willing to take an active part in the Governing Body's discussions and work.

As there are more candidates than the single vacancy, there will be an election by secret ballot. All parents and carers of current pupils at High Down Infant and Junior Schools are entitled to vote; this includes the candidates themselves. Each parent/carer has one vote, regardless of the number of children that they have in school. The candidate who receives the most votes will be elected. In the event of a tie, lots will be drawn.

Ballot papers (on paper) are being sent home today with children. Completed ballot papers should be placed in the ballot box **by 3.30 pm on Thursday 24 January 2019**. The ballot box will be available in the schools' reception area from **Friday 11 January 2019** between 8.30 am and 3.30 pm each school day until voting ends. If you're not able to vote in person, you may post your completed ballot paper, marked for the attention of "The Returning Officer" to the schools address.

We hope that all parents and carers will take part in this election and look forward to welcoming our new parent governor. The outcome will be notified to parents and carers once the ballots cast have been counted.

Yours sincerely

Andrey Cowan
Executive Headteacher

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Statements Provided by Parent Governor Candidates

Laura McMahon

I'm mum of Martha, currently in Reception class, and Paddy, who is nearly two! My husband and I moved to Portishead in 2012 from North Wales. We have met some wonderful friends, and we feel very lucky to raise our children in such a thriving and welcoming community. I would now love to volunteer my time and share my skills to help make a difference as a school governor.

I qualified as a Secondary Drama and English teacher in 2000, and spent the next 14 years teaching full-time in FE colleges and secondary schools. In 2013, I completed an additional PGCert qualification in Special Educational Needs (whilst I was SENDCo at Sidcot School), and I am proud to have helped guide the school through the teaching and learning regulations arising from the new SEN Code of Practice.

Since having children, I have become self-employed, and I work part-time teaching and examining local young people taking Speech and Drama qualifications. Part of my working week is also taking PPA cover at St Joseph's Primary School, Portishead. My small business is very community-based, and through running my classes, I have got to know lots of local families.

I am very passionate about creativity and education, and would hope that my community knowledge, teaching background, and my SEND expertise, may be considered of use to the school, and I am very committed to help if and where desired.

Thank you for considering my application.

Adam West

My son Barnaby started at High Down Infant School in September last year, and I am keen not only to be informed about his learning and development from a parental point of view, but also to be involved in it as a parent governor. I believe being directly involved as a parent governor is a great way to be engaged in the daily running of the school, helping the management of it, setting the future vision etc. I am also keen to learn about the multiple disciplines and challenges the school board of governors have to manage to keep High Down improving and providing the best possible learning for its children, in the best possible environment.

I believe I can make a contribution to the board of governors thanks to my career to date, and personal experience. As a current project manager at Airbus, and previously with Ford Motor Company, I have sixteen years leadership and management experience of budget control, resource profiling, managing suppliers, reporting, business strategy, and driving delivery against targets etc. All of which I believe put me in good stead to offer appropriate recommendations and support to the board of governors. I have also been recommended for captaincy of the Bristol Aerospace Golf Society.

Having moved to the local area from central Bristol in 2017, I also believe this is a good opportunity to meet some local people with a similar interests in supporting High Down School. I look forward to the opportunity to support this core pillar of the local community.