

Substitute Ex-Officio Foundation Governors: Appointment Process and Guidance

Guidance for the appointment of a substitute ex-officio foundation governor

This guidance document explains the process for the appointment of a substitute ex-officio foundation governor. The document should be used as a guide for governing boards, incumbents and Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) when seeking authorisation for a substitute ex-officio foundation governor.

In what circumstances might a substitute ex-officio foundation governor be appointed?

The ex-officio foundation governor seat on the governing board of a Church school is reserved for the incumbent (or, where relevant, priest-in-charge or team vicar) of the parish. This is noted in the statutory Instrument of Government in a maintained school and, if a requirement, in the Articles of Association for local governing boards in academy trusts.

Occasionally, the incumbent has responsibility for several parishes and schools in their benefice and consequently the Instrument of Government/Articles of Association may state that the position on the governing board can be filled by a substitute. A substitute could be any member of the ministry team, or an approved suitable candidate other than the current incumbent. Alternatively, a parish may be in vacancy and not have an incumbent in post. In this instance, in the interim period, a substitute ex-officio foundation governor may be appointed.

Responsibility for appointing a substitute ex-officio foundation governor

It is the responsibility of the governing board to maintain the correct number and type of governors on the board and ensure appointments are made in line with the Instrument of Government or Articles of Association.

If the incumbent does not have the time to undertake the role of ex-officio foundation governor or has more than one Church school within their benefice, then they are able to seek permission from the Archdeacon for a substitute ex-officio foundation governor to be appointed in their place. The **Substitute Ex-Officio Foundation Governor Application Form** must be completed and submitted to the Diocesan Education Team Principal Advisor.

It is acceptable for the incumbent or governing board to suggest someone suitable, and who is able to fulfil the role, to the Archdeacon. If there is no-one identified as a suitable substitute, then it is important to have a conversation with the Diocesan Education Team who will aim to offer support.

What is the role of the substitute ex-officio foundation governor?

The substitute ex-officio foundation governor fulfils the same functions on the governing board as the ex-officio foundation governor, including working in partnership with all other governors on the board, to monitor and support the school's distinctive Christian vision. This may also include specific responsibilities relating to monitoring SIAMS outcomes, ensuring that the school lives and embeds its Christian vision in all decision making, and that the vision drives all governor business.

With high aspiration for excellence, we are passionate for all within our family of schools to experience God's love in a culture of care, dignity and hope.

Who might be a suitable candidate for the substitute role?

When seeking someone with the appropriate skills and commitment to undertake the role of a substitute ex-officio foundation governor, governing boards may wish to consider speaking with:

- Lay readers
- Curates
- Clergy staff
- The PCC
- Organisations and charities underpinned by a Christian ethos

This is not an exhaustive list, and governing boards should look to their worship communities for conversation about wider partnerships and networks where an appropriate substitute may be found. It is important to consider the skills required for governance when seeking a substitute ex-officio foundation governor. A skills audit is included on the application form, which is used to identify skill strengths and also areas of development where training opportunities might be required.

Is the substitute ex-officio governor required to live in the parish?

No, this is not a requirement, but the governing board may wish to explore their parish connections as a priority when seeking a suitable substitute.

Do substitute ex-officio foundation governors have a term of office?

Yes, the term of office is four years, the same as other members of the governing board. This is confirmed by the Diocesan Education Team in the appointment letter issued when authorisation is granted by the Archdeacon.

Is it a requirement that the substitute ex-officio foundation governor is a member of the ministry team?

No, the suitable person can be appointed from other organisations or charities underpinned by a Christian ethos as well as lay readers, curates, and other clergy staff.

Is it a responsibility of the substitute to lead collective worship in school?

No, collective worship remains the responsibility of the vicar of the parish or their representative.

Can a substitute be elected as chair of governors?

It is permissible for the substitute to be elected as chair of governors in line with the school's procedures, but this is discouraged within the Diocese of Gloucester.

Does the PCC have to approve the nomination of the substitute?

No, the appointment is at the discretion of the relevant Archdeacon.

Is there training available for the substitute ex-officio foundation governor?

Yes: on appointment, the substitute will be provided with the Diocesan Education Team's foundation governor welcome pack and be invited to attend the next Diocesan Education Team free welcome session for foundation governors. There is further training available from the Diocesan Education Team; further details can be found [here](#). The governing board should ensure an effective induction is provided alongside this.

Please note that the process for appointing a substitute ex-officio foundation governor is the same regardless of why the vacancy has arisen.

