Heathfield
Community College and Sixth Form

Governing Board Recruitment Information Pack

2026/2027

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Welcome from the Headteacher

Thank you for your interest in Heathfield Community College. I am delighted that you are considering joining our Governing Board at this exciting stage in our journey. It represents an opportunity to be an important part of our development as we move this very good school into the outstanding future it deserves.

As the Headteacher I am privileged to lead such a fantastic school. Heathfield Community College is a high performing secondary school with an excellent Sixth Form. It is an inspirational community where young people excel. Our success is based on partnership and a clear focus on excellence for all students.

This is a school going from strength to strength. There is a sense of positive momentum at Heathfield. Repeated Ofsted Inspections have noticed: *"there is a tangible sense of pride, ambition and community within the college." which are "lived out in daily life" (May 2023)*

Our most recent inspection in May 2023 which confirmed we were an outstanding provider in three of the main judgements stating *"pupils receive a great education… and...flourish here"* with praise for our ambitious curriculum, teaching and high level of achievement.

Achievement has continued to improve and 2023 has again shown exceptional success for our students of whom we are very proud. Students here are expected to apply themselves fully to their studies and reap the rewards of hard work as a result.

Our students have a strong sense of belonging to Heathfield's community. A warm and collaborative ethos means students are well known to teachers and are supported by their peers; students develop a firm identity with college values and a sense of responsibility for one another.

The Governing Board supports our staff to promote high standards and deliver a rich and ambitious curriculum underpinned by our values. The Governing Board are an enthusiastic team who are always happy to welcome new faces to keep their ambitions fresh and forward looking.

CAROLINE BARLOW

Headteacher

Our College

About the School

Heathfield Community College serves the local community from a pleasant 26 acre site on the edge of Heathfield. Our size offers us many advantages: we have excellent facilities, allowing us to offer a wide and varied range of academic and vocational courses at all levels. The Heathfield campus has been steadily improved in recent years. We have both a Library and a dedicated Sixth Form Learning Resource Centre, we also enjoy large open space and a floodlit all-weather astro-turf pitch.

A rolling programme of refurbishment means we continue to upgrade and improve our site and facilities including Science rooms, Music Technology and ICT facilities, including our very own Apple-esque Genius Bar. There is also a fitness centre (adjoining the school site and run by Freedom Leisure), and multi-use games areas.

Our commitment to an innovative digital curriculum ensures a well-resourced college across all areas. 18 individual rooms offer a breadth of ICT provision ranging from Microsoft PCs for all subjects, Apple Macs for Media, Graphics and Music Technology. The iPads ensure that creative and innovative approaches to teaching and learning transform experiences across the college. A high-speed wireless across the site ensures reliable functionality. Full remote access for staff and students ensures high quality access to resources and dialogue about learning. We seek to constantly review and adapt our practise to ensure the most efficient and effective ways of working and promoting learning. It is highly likely teaching staff will require an iPad for their role. There are limited iPads available for staff use which can be loaned during term time.

Autistic Spectrum Facility

Heathfield Community College has a designated Specialist Facility for students on the Autistic Spectrum, including those with Aspergers Syndrome. There are twelve places within the Specialist Provision, although there are many more students with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the college. The College has previously achieved Autism Accreditation from the National Autistic Society.

Students with ASD have significant, core difficulties in the areas of:-

- Social interaction; social relationships.
- Social use of language; communication skills.
- Social understanding; imagination and theory of mind.

These are known as the Triad of Impairment.

As with all students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, at Heathfield Community College, we believe that the first important step towards Inclusion happens in subject classrooms through quality first teaching.

Our Learning Support Department is committed to supporting students, staff and parents to ensure that all students make progress and achieve their potential. Training is offered on a formal and informal basis and all new staff are expected to attend at least the three part ASD training, or the ASD Online Training during their first year.

Heathfield Community College offers all students:

- A well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum.
- A record of excellent examination results.
- Well qualified specialist staff combining innovative and traditional methods in the classroom.
- A secure, supportive, encouraging and happy environment.
- A wide range of extra-curricular and residential activities.
- Access to a digital curriculum with iPads for all KS3 students through a lease scheme.

Our Vision and Ethos

Heathfield Community College is committed to fulfilling the potential of each of its learners. The College achieves outstanding results for students of all abilities and aspires to meet the needs of all who live within the Heathfield community. We are a fully inclusive College with outstanding provision for the whole range of students from our most vulnerable to our most gifted.

From the moment that students join the College they are embraced into an ethos, which is widely recognised as aspirational with a strong community spirit **"Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are proud of it.". They "are well mannered and polite. Staff set a high bar in terms of pupils' conduct. Pupils feel happy and safe in this vibrant and nurturing school…make a real difference to continually improving life at their school." (Ofsted)**

Students play an active role in the College, develop leadership skills and support each other extensively including Sixth Form support for Year 7 reading and Year 10 Buddies to support the transition from Primary school.

Our Prefects, College Council and other representative bodies play a significant role in shaping the future of the College. A real and developing strength of the school is the broad range of leadership opportunities for students.

The school has a palpable ***"culture for learning where students engage happily in their work and succeed well"***

The journey from Year 7 through to the Sixth Form is a rich experience. There is an extensive range of clubs, opportunities to perform in concerts and productions, sporting success, and engagement with the community locally as well as more widely across East Sussex or even nationally.

Students from Heathfield Community College leave the College as well rounded young adults ready to be responsible citizens of the future with strong values, strong principles and ambition for success. This is achieved by a clear focus on the skills and attributes that we know are essential for future success in life.

The exceptional exam results achieved by our students will open doors but the key to sustained future success and happiness is the ability to demonstrate the qualities that rarely appear on an exam paper.

We call them our **Heathfield Habits** and we promote, recognise and reward them every day.

Heathfield Habits:

Ambitious & Confident
Compassionate & Considerate
Determined & Reflective
Engaged & Enthusiastic
Honesty & Integrity

Our Values

Heathfield
Community College and Sixth Form

Pride . Ambition . Community

There is no limit to what we can achieve with the right mind-set, focused hard work and attention to detail. We are all accountable for the responsibilities we hold.

A community of ambitious aspiration and high standards. High quality teaching and learning builds confidence, delivering exceptional outcomes through innovative, challenging and personalised curriculum.

Reflection on and celebration of our own and each other's achievements encourages **determination** and self-belief.

A vibrant centre for learning where students are **enthusiastic**, actively engaging with new challenges that build self-esteem.

Positive relationships are underpinned by mutual respect, **consideration** and **compassion**. Our words and actions have impact.

Every individual, experience and perspective is unique and matters, working collaboratively we are a powerful positive force.

Our well-being is enhanced through a balanced life that includes meaningful experiences undertaken whole-heartedly and with integrity.

Students are happy and enjoy College life, equipped to thrive in life, making a positive difference in and beyond the College.

As a result, Heathfield Community College ensures an exceptional educational experience for all, attracting and retaining the best staff based on career fulfilment, enjoyment and job satisfaction; committed to continual improvement working in partnership with our community.

Types of Governors

There are four categories of governor; Local Authority (LA), Co-Opted, Parent, and Staff.

Local Authority governors are appointed by the LA and you should make enquiries to Governor Services, East Sussex County Council, to seek out any opportunities in your local area – you may wish to enquire about a specific school and Governor Services will be able to advise you of any vacancies. You can always visit the particular school's website which should have information on its governing body.

Co-Opted governors are appointed by the Governing Body itself, again enquiries can be made through Governor Services or through the school you are interested in.

Parent governors are elected by the parents of the school and you must have a child enrolled at the school at the time of the appointment. You are allowed to remain in post after your child has left the school for the remaining duration of your term of office.

Staff governors are elected in a similar way to parent governors, the criteria being that you are an employee at the school.

To clarify from the above eligibility criteria; it is possible for a parent of a student at the school to apply for a vacancy for either, LA, Co-Opted or Parent governor, and a member of the public to apply for either LA or Co-Opted posts. Staff at the school can only apply for a Staff post.

All governors are appointed for a term of 4 years, and have to apply for further terms of office if there is an interest to continue.

Purpose of Governors

To contribute to the work of the board in ensuring high standards of achievement for all students at the college.

Ofsted expects that “those responsible for governance understand their role and carry out this effectivity. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education”.

A governor is expected to:

- Contribute to strategic discussions at meetings while taking in to consideration the ethos and values of the college.
- Hold senior leaders to account by monitoring the college’s performance and improvement plan.
- Ensure the college staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well.
- Visit the college and staff members relevant to their link roles and produce a report after the visit to be shared at the appropriate meeting.
- Serve on panels when needed – these can include pay review panels, complaints, pupil exclusion and interviews for staff.

The role of a governor is largely a thinking and questioning role.

Time Commitment

The term of office for a governor is 4 years.

There are 3 Full Governing Board meetings per academic year which all members are required to attend.

There are also 3 meetings per academic year for the Finance and General Purpose and Education Committees. Any governor can be a member of these committees.

We ask each governor to focus on link roles depending on their individual skills and knowledge. This means communication directly with staff members and carrying out regular visits to the college as well as reporting on these visits at meetings.

An induction programme and buddy system is used to welcome newly appointed governors and full access to training is provided.

You could also be invited to attend events such as Honour Awards and Parent evenings.

Expenses

Governors are volunteers but can receive out of pocket expenses if incurred as a result of fulfilling their role within the college's expense policy.

Safeguarding

All governors are required to undergo a DBS check and provide evidence of their identity.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life outline the ethical standards those working in the public sector are expected to adhere to.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

These principles under pin the Governors Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from the governors of Heathfield Community College in order the governing board can properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

The governing board has the following strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for Heathfield Community College
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Reviewing the Curriculum
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the Headteacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the schools and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the schools leaders.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore, we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our group of schools. Our actions within the schools and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.

- We agree to adhere to the schools rules and polices and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views.
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation.

Commitment
- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits arranged in advance with the relevant link SLT member and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake all relevant & statutory training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on Heathfield Community College website.
- In the interests of transparency, we accept that information relating to governors will be collected and published on the government website Get Information About Schools (GIAS).

Relationships
- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct at meetings.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationship with the Headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality
- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding federation business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest
- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the

Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on Heathfield Community College website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

Ceasing to be a governor

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor leaves office.

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

How to apply

If you are interested in becoming a governor please complete an application form and send it to Verity Clark, Governance Professional.

vclark@heathfieldcc.co.uk