



Being a governor at Fircroft College

Fircroft College is a residential college for adult education based in Selly Oak, near central Birmingham. It was founded in 1909 by George Cadbury Jnr with a strong commitment to social justice which continues to this day and is reflected in the College's Vision, Mission and Values. These drive and lead Fircroft's work and apply to all staff, governors and volunteers.

Vision: Learning to become a better world

Mission: To promote social and climate/environmental justice by providing adults with an excellent learning environment for personal, professional and political development.

Values: Supportive; Collaborative; Anti-racist; Empowering; Brave and Authentic

To deliver this commitment to social and climate/environmental justice through education, the College has a strategic plan built on three main goals. These are to:

- provide an excellent education environment for all
- be a sustainable organisation for the future
- develop our networks, profile and reputation.

Being a Fircroft College governor: responsibilities

The frameworks that determine what Fircroft governors do and how they do it are set out in various pieces of legislation, regulation, and the College's governance documents. As part of the College leadership, governors oversee its work and provide strategic direction but are not involved in day-to-day operations. Management is the responsibility of the Principal and other staff. Governors are responsible for:

- ensuring the College complies with its governing document, and relevant legislation or regulations, including charity, company and further education law
- ensuring the College pursues the objectives set out in its Articles of Association and other governance documents
- determining Fircroft's strategic goals, educational character and overall direction
- oversight of College activities
- ensuring the proper management and administration of the College
- safeguarding Fircroft's reputation and values, and promoting the College externally
- approving and reviewing the quality strategy
- managing risk with a considered, proportionate and balanced approach
- ensuring the College's solvency and financial stability
- ensuring resources are used effectively, efficiently and only to achieve Fircroft's objectives for public benefit
- safeguarding any assets, ensuring College funds are invested properly

- approving annual estimates of income and expenditure
- following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal, suspension, dismissal and pay and conditions of service of Senior Post holders and the Clerk to Governors, and
- ensuring the Governing Body acts appropriately and within its powers.

Governors are accountable for:

- students' success and safety, whether they are learning on site or in the community
- Fircroft's financial solvency and sound management
- the quality of the education and other services provided
- the proper use of any public money received.

The normal term of office for governors is three years but a further two terms are possible with the approval of the Governing Body.

Being a Fircroft College governor: expectations

Although governors are individually responsible for these duties and accountabilities, the Governing Body works collectively as a team. All governors are expected to:

- ***commit to Fircroft's Vision and Mission and behave according to its Values*** - this means continuing to reflect, learn and grow, working collaboratively and supportively, and actively promoting equality, inclusion and diversity in the College and Governing Body
- ***maintain confidentiality, integrity and comply with the Code of Governance for Governors*** – see also the Seven Principles of Public Life
- ***always act in the College's best interests*** - governors are not 'delegates' and must not be bound by external mandates
- ***support the Principal and Senior Leadership*** – including through independent, impartial and constructive challenge
- ***prepare for and participate in Governing Body and committee meetings*** - expenses are available and virtual attendance, or entirely online meetings, are possible through Zoom and Microsoft Teams with training and laptops provided
- ***use their skills, knowledge, and professional and personal experience to improve the work of the Governing Body and the College*** – a diverse mix of governors is an asset, enriching thinking, challenging bias, supporting sound decisions, and strengthening governors' Ambassadorial' role through wider networks
- ***spend time outside meetings getting to know and understand the College*** - events such as open days, 'learning walks', and celebrations are essential to well-informed decision making and situating governors more firmly within the College community
- ***participate in training and development programmes*** – these are essential to ensuring governors stay up-to-date and able to discharge their responsibilities in a fast-changing environment