In your recruitment literature, explain:

* The core functions of the governing board and the role of a governor
* The induction and training available to new governors
* Your expectations of governors, for example, the length of the term of office, frequency of meetings, membership of committees and willingness to undertake training and development
* Any specific skills or experience that would be desirable in a new governor, such as the willingness to learn, or specific skills that would make the governing board more effective and help address certain challenges

**Your board can’t specify any extra criteria**

By sharing the information above with the electorate, you're simply informing them of your board's ‘ideal skills’ for the role. It's up to the electorate to elect their own choice of candidate.

This means you can’t:

* Create additional eligibility criteria for potential candidates
* Endorse a particular candidate
* Run an interview process before or after the election to filter candidates

**Notify parents of a vacancy and invite applications**

Whenever there's a vacancy for a parent governor, whoever's responsible for organising the election must notify all of the parents of registered pupils at your school - this will be you as governance professional or chair of the board, or your headteacher (see the table in the first section on 'who's responsible' above).

This notice must inform parents:

1. That there's a vacancy for a parent governor and there'll be an election to fill it
2. That they have the right to stand for election
3. How to participate in the election

**Make sure all parents hear about the vacancy by:**

* Creating an advert highlighting the benefits of the role and mitigating the common concerns
* Using all your communication channels to publicise the vacancy (e.g. noticeboards, newsletters, website, social media, flyers)
* Hosting an open evening to explain more about the role (if it's practicable to do so – you could hold this remotely)

**Send out your recruitment literature at the same time (see the section on this above)**

This is so parents understand what the role entails, and whether they want to put themselves forward as a candidate.

**Ask candidates to publish a short statement**

You also need to ask candidates to publish a statement setting out:

* Evidence that they have the skills and experience the governing board wants
* Their commitment to undertake training to become an effective governor
* How they plan to contribute to the future work of the governing board
* If seeking re-election, details of their previous contribution to the governing board

**Returning applications**

Leave between 6 and 10 working days for parents/seconders to return application forms.

Get some ideas for how [you can encourage parents to become governors](https://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/the-governing-body/recruitment-and-competence/recruiting-and-retaining-governors/encouraging-parents-become-governors/) in our other article.

**What can we do about a candidate we think is unsuitable?**

Not a lot really. It might seem frustrating, but despite how unsuitable you think a candidate is, you can't stop someone from standing for election.

The best thing to do is to make it clear to all potential candidates what your expectations are. The chair can also meet with prospective candidates to explain the role, but remember, it's not an interview!

**Can we accept a parent governor application that we receive late?**

It depends. Your election procedure might include what to do, in which case follow that. Also check if your LA or trust has any guidance on this. If not, it's up to your board to decide, but it should be an impartial decision. Don't extend the deadline for this parent just because you want them on the governing board.

**If not enough parents stand for election**

When processing applications, if there are the same number of candidates as vacancies (or fewer), you don't need to hold a ballot and the candidates are elected unopposed. These parents still count as elected governors rather than appointed.

If you still have a remaining vacancy, or nobody stands for election at all, as a governing board you must appoint:

* A parent of a registered pupil at the school – *or, if that's not possible;*
* A parent of a former pupil  – *or, if that's not possible;*
* A parent of a child under or of compulsory school age who is not a pupil at the school