



Birchwood High School

your dreams, your future, our challenge

02 June 2026

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have vacancies on the Board of Trustees for two Parent Trustees, and I am writing to all parents and carers of current Birchwood students to invite you to stand for election. While being a trustee is a significant commitment, it is also an extremely rewarding role.

Our Board is a professional and committed group, but we are also very friendly and approachable. You don't need any specific qualifications or background, but you do need a commitment to supporting the school to be a great place to learn and to work for all of our students and staff.

There is more detail about the role on the next page. If you have any questions or would like to discuss what is involved, please get in touch by emailing turnerg@birchwoodhigh.org.uk or by phoning the school and leaving a message for me with your contact details.

If you would like to stand for election, please complete the attached nomination form and return it to me by Monday 22nd June at turnerg@birchwoodhigh.org.uk or by handing it to reception marked for my attention. If more than two people stand for election there will be a confidential vote of the parent body.

Yours sincerely,

Gill Turner

Chair of Trustees

Birchwood High School

Principal, Mr Sam Griffin

Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 5BD

Telephone: 01279 655936 | Email: admin@birchwoodhigh.org.uk | Website: www.birchwoodonline.co.uk

Birchwood High School is a charitable Company Limited by Guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 7791971.
A full list of Directors is on our website



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Parent Trustee Vacancy – More Information

What do the Trustees do?

The role of trustee is strategic oversight. We are not involved in the day-to-day operation of the school, but we support and challenge the school to:

- develop and implement the overarching vision and strategy,
- oversee financial performance and make sure money is well spent,
- hold the Principal to account for the educational performance of the school, and
- ensure that all stakeholders views are heard and taken into account.

What is the difference between a trustee and a school governor?

You may be more familiar with the term governor – we use trustee and governor interchangeably. We formally use the term trustee to emphasise the legal responsibilities of a trustee in a single academy trust. You can find out more about the role here [Academy trust governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Do I need any particular skills or qualifications?

You don't need any particular skills or qualifications to be a trustee. Professional experience in areas such as education, finance, law, estates management, marketing or HR could be useful, but is not a requirement and full training will be given.

Being comfortable using a computer for applications such as Outlook, Word and Teams is useful, but again we can provide support if you need it.

You need to be interested in education and all of the aspects of running of a school and be confident in critically evaluating and applying information from a range of sources. You need to be able to understand and take into account other people's needs and opinions, especially where they might be different to your own.

How much time will it take?

All trustees are unpaid volunteers, the time commitment varies depending on what particular responsibilities a trustee takes on, but the minimum expectation will be 4 full board meetings and 5 committee meetings a year, together with time for meeting preparation and for training.

When do meetings take place?

We currently hold meetings on a Wednesday evening from 7pm to 9pm. In addition, many Trustees also sit on additional panels, committees or working groups, take on key responsibilities for a

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particular area such as SEND, Safeguarding or Health and Safety and visit the school for monitoring visits and school events.

How long would I be appointed for?

Trustees are appointed for a 4-year term. To be a parent trustee you need to be a parent at the time of your appointment, but if your child subsequently leaves Birchwood you will continue to be a parent Trustee up to the end of your term.

Are there any reasons why I couldn't be a Trustee?

All trustees need to have mandatory checks and will need to sign a fit and proper persons declaration. We will also ask for references prior to your appointment.

The next page sets out reasons why someone may be excluded from being a trustee.

Where can I find more information?

Contact Gill Turner at turnerg@birchwoodhigh.org.uk to find out more about the trustee role at Birchwood.

There is a lot of information online about being a trustee, some useful links are:

[Interested in becoming a school governor or trustee? | National Governance Association](#)

[Academy trust governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[School Governors: who are they and what do they do? - GfS](#)

How do I stand for election?

Fill in the nomination form attached to this email and return it to me at turnerg@birchwoodhigh.org.uk or by handing it to reception marked for the attention of Gill Turner by Monday 23rd June.

What happens if there is more than two Nominees?

The form asks you to provide a few words about yourself and why you are interested in the role. If there are more than two nominations we will circulate these words along with your name and the name of the person who has nominated you (if relevant) to all parents and carers of pupils at the school and ask them to vote in a secret ballot.

All parents and carers will be eligible to vote and the two nominees with the greatest number of votes will be appointed.

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Eligibility and disqualifications to serve as a trustee

A person must be aged 18 or over at the date of their election or appointment. No current pupil of the school shall be a trustee.

A trustee shall be disqualified from holding office or continuing to hold office if they:

- become incapable by reason of illness or injury of managing or administering their own affairs;
- are absent without the permission of the trustees from all meetings held within a period of six months, and the trustees resolve that their office be vacated;
- have been declared bankrupt and/or their estate has been seized from their possession for the benefit of their creditors and the declaration or seizure has not been discharged, annulled or reduced; or
- are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order;
- are subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; or
- are subject to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order);
- cease to be a trustee by virtue of any provision in the Companies Act 2006;
- are disqualified from acting as a trustee by virtue of section 178 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); or
- are otherwise found to be unsuitable by the Secretary of State;
- have been removed from the office of charity trustee or trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which they were responsible; or to which they were privy; or which they, by their conduct, contributed to or facilitated;
- have, at any time, been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of any offence which falls under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011;
- have not provided to the chair of trustees a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1997.

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