

Diocese of St Albans Schools Team

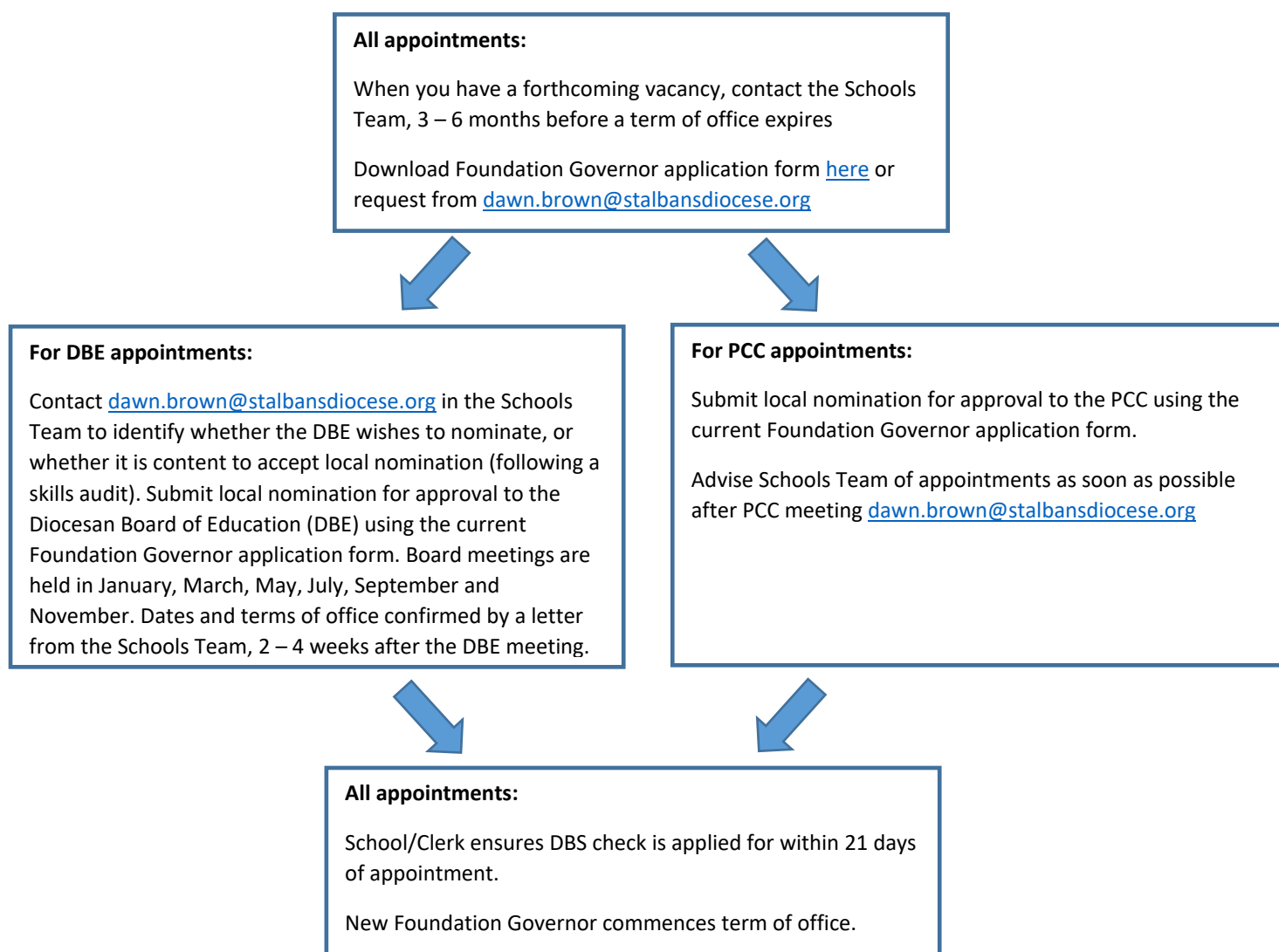
FOUNDATION GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

This briefing provides detailed guidance for Chairs of Governors, Clerks to Governors, Headteachers, Incumbents of church schools, and Parochial Church Councils.

The briefing document outlines the necessary steps a governing body should follow when filling a Foundation Governor vacancy in a maintained school where the appointing body is the Diocesan Board of Education or the Parochial Church Council. A similar process may be followed when appointing Foundation Governors from educational trusts associated with the school.

Please note that appointments often differ in the case of academies. If the vacancy occurs for an academy foundation governor, please contact the Schools Team in good time for guidance on the appropriate procedure.

A simplified flow chart of the main stages of the appointment process is below:



Please ensure you are using the latest version from our website at www.stalbandsdiocese.org/schools/school-governance/
This version is dated January 2025.

Diocesan Board of Education Foundation Governor Appointments: Processes and Responsibilities

- a) **When you have a forthcoming vacancy:** Contact the Schools Team, 3 – 6 months before a term of office expires, and as soon as possible if a governor stands down mid-term. The term of office is usually four years.
- b) **Responsibilities for Foundation Governor application forms:** When the Schools Team becomes aware of a forthcoming or existing vacancy for a Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) Foundation Governor, we normally email the current Foundation Governor application form to the Clerk and the relevant member of the Clergy. (In exceptional circumstances, forms can at times also be sent direct to the Chair of Governors and/or the Head Teacher, depending on the local situation). The application form may also be downloaded from our website [from this link](#).
- c) **Consideration and nomination of candidates:** Locally this should include an informal interview, a skills audit and a short personal profile, looking at what strengths and skills are needed in the governing body and what contribution new candidates would bring. The DBE has the right to appoint its own candidates and in some situations may choose to nominate a candidate. Paperwork is completed, countersigned by Head Teacher and clergy, and returned to the Schools Team, along with the candidate's personal profile and skills audit.
- d) **Confirming appointments and terms of office:** Appropriate dates of term of office are identified. These are continuous where there is a reappointment. For new appointments this is by consultation between the Schools Team and the Clerk/Chair of Governors. The candidate's details are submitted to the DBE (or between meetings, to the Chair of the DBE) for approval. Schools Team staff will then write to the Clerk and to the new Foundation Governor confirming the appointment, usually within two to four weeks of approval. *Appointments are not complete until letters of approval have been sent out, and are conditional on a successful DBS check. These are required for all governors and are carried out by the Clerk or appropriate designated local person.*
- e) **Joint DBE/PCC appointments:** A small number of voluntary controlled schools have one Foundation Governor nominated by the PCC and appointed by the DBE. In this situation, the nomination should be minuted by the PCC and the completed, countersigned forms then forwarded to the Schools Team immediately after the PCC meeting, by the Clerk to the Governors or other appropriate person. The DBE will then approve appointments in the usual way.

Parochial Church Council Foundation Governors Appointment Process: Guidance

- a) **When you have a forthcoming vacancy:** Please keep the Schools Team informed in the same way as for DBE appointments. We can email you the current Foundation Governor application form or it can be downloaded from the Governance page of our website at www.stalbansdiocese.org/schools/school-governance/. Local identification of possible candidates should include consideration of the skills needs on the governing body, and the skills that a candidate would bring to the role. The relevant member of the clergy then submits the signed nomination/s to the PCC. *It is essential that, as part of the appointment, candidates make a signed declaration of eligibility, similar to that completed for DBE appointments. This forms part of the nomination paperwork.*

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- b) **PCC approval:** The nomination goes on the agenda of the next PCC meeting for discussion and approval. The PCC minutes should record approval and the exact term of office as date/month/year (normally four years).
- c) **PCC notifies governing body:** The PCC Secretary will write to the Clerk (or Head Teacher or Chair of Governors, as appropriate locally) as soon as possible after the PCC meeting, to confirm the appointment. *Appointments are not complete until this confirmation and are conditional on a successful DBS check in the same way as DBE appointments. These are required for all governors and are initiated by the Clerk to governors, or other appropriate designated local person.*
- d) **PCC or school notifies Diocese of appointment:** We ask that the Clerk to the Governors notifies the Schools Team in writing of new PCC Foundation Governors, including their contact details and their terms of office, *within 2 - 4 weeks of appointment*. This enables us to keep accurate records of appointments and any vacancies.
- e) **Trust appointments:** A small number of schools also have Foundation Governors appointed by various Trusts. The process for PCC appointments also applies to Trust appointments and Clerks to Governors should liaise with the appropriate Trust Board/Secretary. We ask that Clerks keep the Schools Team informed of these appointments. As with DBE/PCC appointments, Trust appointments are also conditional on DBS checks.

Additional Notes:

- 1) **Reappointments:** in all the above situations, the process for reappointing a Foundation Governor whose term of office has expired is exactly the same as for appointing new candidates. It is essential that a new Foundation Governor application form is completed in all instances and that the Schools Team is informed of all reappointments.
- 2) **DBS checks:** All maintained schools and academies have a statutory responsibility to ensure that ALL governors (whether they visit the school regularly or not, and whatever the appointment process) have a DBS check; this must be applied for within 21 days of appointment.
- 3) **Archdeacon's substitute:** There is provision within schools' instruments of government for an Archdeacon to appoint an ex officio substitute to the governing body where the relevant member of clergy is unavailable to act as an ex officio governor; for instance, during an interregnum or where clergy have multiple church schools in the benefice. The Schools Team can advise on the process.
- 4) **Eligibility and recruitment:** The majority of Foundation Governors are from local Anglican parish communities; however, being an Anglican (or a churchgoer) is not an absolute requirement and there may be situations where it would be appropriate to appoint a candidate from outside the church community, for instance to fill a particular gap in skills. In such situations, please contact the Schools Team to discuss.
- 5) **Foundation Governor application form:** please ensure that you use the latest versions of these; available on our website at www.stalbansdiocese.org/schools/school-governance/ or for download [here](#), as earlier versions may not cover current statutory requirements.