



Education Act 1996

1996 CHAPTER 56

PART III

GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURE FOR ACQUISITION OF GRANT-MAINTAINED STATUS

Ballot of parents

189 Ballot of parents

- (1) Where the governing body of a school are under a duty by virtue of section 186 or 187 to secure that a ballot is held, they shall secure that all necessary arrangements for the ballot are made by such body as may be prescribed.
- (2) The arrangements shall provide for a secret postal ballot.
- (3) The governing body shall secure that the prescribed body take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every person who is eligible to vote in the ballot is—
 - (a) given the prescribed information,
 - (b) informed that he is entitled to vote in the ballot, and
 - (c) given an opportunity to do so.
- (4) The governing body shall make available to every person employed to work at the school for inspection at the school (at all reasonable times and free of charge) a document containing the information required by subsection (3)(a) to be given to persons eligible to vote in the ballot.
- (5) In determining the arrangements they require to be made by the prescribed body, the governing body shall take into account any guidance given by the Secretary of State

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from time to time as to the arrangements he considers appropriate for ballots held in accordance with this section.

- (6) The governing body may promote (otherwise than as part of the arrangements made for the ballot) the case for seeking grant-maintained status for the school and, in doing so, they shall take into account any guidance given by the Secretary of State as to the action he considers appropriate for the purpose.

190 Persons eligible to vote in ballot

- (1) For the purposes of this Chapter, a person is eligible to vote in a ballot held in respect of a school in accordance with section 189 if he is a registered parent of a registered pupil at the school.
- (2) In subsection (1) “registered” means shown in the register kept under section 434 as that register has effect on the date immediately following the end of the period of 14 days beginning with—
- (a) the date on which the relevant resolution or request was passed or received by the governing body, or
 - (b) where the Secretary of State gives his consent for the purposes of section 186(3) or 187(5), the date on which he gives that consent.
- (3) In subsection (2) “the relevant resolution or request” means the resolution under section 186, or request under section 187, by reference to which the ballot is required to be held (or, where the ballot is a second ballot held by virtue of section 191, by reference to which the first ballot was required to be held).

191 Second ballot to be held if insufficient votes cast

- (1) Where in any ballot held in accordance with section 189 (other than one held by virtue of this section)—
- (a) the total number of votes cast by persons eligible to vote is less than 50 per cent. of the number of persons eligible to vote, or
 - (b) the number of votes cast in favour is the same as the number of votes cast against,
- the governing body shall secure that a second ballot is held within the period of 14 days beginning with the day after that on which the result of the first ballot is determined.
- (2) In such a case—
- (a) the result of the first ballot shall be disregarded for the purposes of section 193(1), and
 - (b) subject to the modifications mentioned in subsection (3), section 189 shall apply as it applies in a case where the governing body of a school are under a duty by virtue of section 186 or 187 to secure that a ballot is held.
- (3) The modifications are—
- (a) that section 189(3)(a) shall be omitted, and
 - (b) that section 189(4) shall be read as if the information there referred to were the information given for the purposes of the first ballot.

192 Power to declare ballot void for irregularity

- (1) Subsection (2) applies where it appears to the Secretary of State—
 - (a) that any requirements of section 189 or 191 have been contravened in the case of a ballot held in purported compliance with section 189,
 - (b) that the arrangements for a ballot so held did not accord with any guidance given by him for the purposes of section 189,
 - (c) that a governing body have acted unreasonably in the discharge of their duties under section 189 or 191,
 - (d) that persons other than those eligible to do so have purported to vote in a ballot so held,
 - (e) that ballot papers returned for the purposes of a ballot so held have been marked by persons other than those to whom they were issued or those duly authorised to act on their behalf,
 - (f) that persons who were eligible to vote in a ballot so held have been prevented or hindered from doing so, or from doing so freely in accordance with their own opinions, by any other person, or
 - (g) that voting in a ballot so held is likely to have been influenced to a significant extent by the dissemination of information appearing to the Secretary of State to be to a material extent false or misleading.
- (2) The Secretary of State may by notice in writing given to the governing body—
 - (a) declare the ballot void, and
 - (b) require that a fresh ballot be held in accordance with section 189 before such date as he may specify in the notice.
- (3) Where—
 - (a) by a notice under subsection (2) the Secretary of State requires the fresh ballot to be held in the school year following that in which fell the date which was the effective date for the register used for the ballot he declares void, and
 - (b) the notice specifies a date for the purposes of this subsection,section 190(1) shall have effect in relation to the fresh ballot as if “registered” meant shown in the register kept under section 434 as that register has effect on the date specified for the purposes of this subsection.

193 Publication of proposals

- (1) Subsection (2) applies where the result of a ballot held in accordance with section 189 shows a simple majority of votes cast (by persons eligible to vote in the ballot) in favour of seeking grant-maintained status for the school.
- (2) Before the end of the period of four months beginning with the date on which the result of the ballot is determined, the governing body shall—
 - (a) publish proposals for acquisition of grant-maintained status for the school in accordance with any provisions made by or under paragraph 1 of Schedule 20,
 - (b) publish any notice in respect of the proposals for the time being required by any such provisions, and
 - (c) submit to the Secretary of State a copy of the published proposals.
- (3) References in this Part to proposals published under this section are, in any case where the Secretary of State has modified such proposals in pursuance of this Part, references to the proposals as so modified.

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- (4) For the purposes of this Part, proposals published under this section shall be regarded as pending in respect of a school until either the proposals are withdrawn or the Secretary of State makes his determination in respect of them.
- (5) Part I of Schedule 20 has effect for the purpose of supplementing this section.