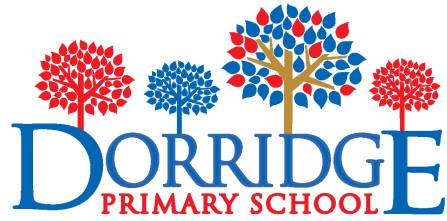




Handbook for School Governors 2020-2021



1. Governing Body Structure
2. Committee Membership 2020-2021
3. Role of the Governing Body
4. Delegation Planner
5. Code of Practice
6. Seven Principles of Public Life
7. School Visits Policy
8. Governing Bodies Core Functions

Dorridge Primary School
Governing Body Structure 2020-2021

Chair of the Governing Body
Mrs Fisher

Vice Chair of Governing Body
Mr B Williams

Education
Chair- Viv Randall

Resources
Chair- Laura Rippington

Mr Fortune (Vice Chair)

Mrs Fisher

Mrs Doyle

Mrs Pickard

Mrs Randall

Mrs Ashe

Miss Chislett

Mr N Williams

Mrs Nyland

Mrs Whalley

Mr Edginton (Vice Chair)

Mrs Fisher

Mrs Rippington

Mrs Ashe

Mr B Williams

Mrs Gow

Resources Committee	Education Committee
Mrs Rippington (Chair)	Viv Randall (Chair)
Mr Edginton (Vice Chair)	Mr Fortune (Vice Chair)
Mrs Fisher	Mrs Doyle
Mrs Ashe	Mrs Fisher
Mrs Gow	Mrs Ashe
Mr B Williams	Mrs Pickard
	Mrs Nyland
	Mr N Williams
	Miss Chislett
	Mrs Whalley

Governor	Title	Initial	Surname	Role
Community	Mrs	A	Doyle	Education Committee
Community	Mr	M	Fortune	Vice Chair of Education Committee
Community	Mrs	V	Randall	Chair of Education Committee
LA	Mrs	A	Fisher	Chair of Governors, Resources Committee and Education Committee
Parent	Mrs	B	Nyland	Education Committee
Community	Mr	A	Edginton	Resources Committee
Parent	Mrs	J	Pickard	Education Committee
Parent	Mrs	L	Rippington	Chair of Resources Committee
Parent	Mrs	C	Gow	Resources Committee
Parent	Mr	B	Williams	Vice Chair of Governors, Resources Committee
Parent	Mr	N	Williams	Education Committee
Staff	Miss	B	Chislett	Education Committee
Head Teacher	Mrs	R	Ashe	Full Governors, Resources Committee and Education Committee
Community	Mrs	A	Whalley	Education Committee

Role of Full Governing Body

- To determine the strategic direction of the school
- To monitor and evaluate the performance of the school by receiving reports from the head teacher
- To agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the governing body has discretion
- To consider whether or not to exercise delegation of functions to individuals or committees
- To establish the committees terms of reference and membership
- To agree standing orders
- To receive reports and ratify recommendations from committees or from individual governors
- To consider business provided by the LA and other sources
- To investigate financial irregularities (head suspected)
- To agree selection panel for head teacher and deputy head appointments
- To suspend or end suspension of head teacher
- To draw up the instrument of government and amendments thereafter
- To appoint or remove the chair and vice chair
- To appoint or dismiss the clerk
- To hold at least 3 governing body meetings a year
- To set up a register of governors' business interests
- To recruit and appoint new governors where appropriate
- To appoint the chair of any committee (*if not delegated to the committee itself*)
- To suspend a governor
- To manage the school budget and consider proposed revisions to the budget
- To decide whether to delegate power to spend the delegated budget to the head teacher and if so establish financial limits of delegated authority
- To review delegated spending limits
- To approve the first formal budget plan of the financial year
- To approve the Statement of Internal Control
- To ensure a policy review cycle is in place
- To review and approve the Governor Code of Conduct

Autumn	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declaration of Interests • Consideration of Urgent Business • Membership • Election of Chair • Election of Vice Chair • Review Committee Terms of Reference/ Membership/ Standing Orders • Minutes & Matters Arising • Committee Reports • Governor Monitoring Reports & Review of Links • H/T Report (approval of SIP and self evaluation update) • Budget • Agree Targets • Review SAT's and other results • Governor Training • LA Reports • Dates & Times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declaration of Interests • Consideration of Urgent Business • School Improvement Report to Governors • Membership • Minutes & Matters Arising • Committee Reports • Governor Monitoring Reports • H/T Report (+ progress towards targets, SIP update) • Budget Preparation/SLA's • Governor Training • LA Reports • Dates & Times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies • Declaration of Interests • Consideration of Urgent Business • School Improvement Report to Governors • Membership • Minutes & Matters Arising • Committee Reports • Governor Monitoring Reports • H/T Report (SIP Update, annual safeguarding report) • Approval of Budget & School Fund, Statement of Internal Control • GB Self Review • Governor Training • LA Reports • Dates & Times

DELEGATION PLANNER

This planner shows to which level the governing body may legally delegate functions
KEY

Level 1: Full governing body

Level 2: A committee of the governing body

Level 3: An individual governor

Level 4: Delegate to Head

Level 5: Head Teachers day-to-day role

Column blank: Action could be undertaken by this level.

Column blocked off: Function cannot be legally carried out at this level.

Column shaded: Can be delegated to this level but not recommended

X: Suggested delegation

Although decisions may be delegated, the governing body as a whole remains responsible for any decision made under delegation

Area	Tasks	Decision level				
		1 FGB	2 Comm	3 Ind Gov	4 Dele to HT	5 HT day to day
Curriculum	To ensure NC is taught to all pupils & consider any disapplication				x	x
	To monitor, evaluate and review implementation of the curriculum and ensure curriculum information is published online		Educ			
	To ensure the school meets for 380 sessions in a school year				x	x
	To decide which subject options should be taught having regard to resources, and implement provision for flexibility in the curriculum (including activity outside of school)				x	x
	To ensure that only approved external qualifications and syllabuses are offered to pupils of compulsory school age				x	x
	To monitor standards of teaching					x
	To take responsibility for individual child' education					x

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To prepare and keep up to date a written policy on sex and relationships education		Educ			
	To prohibit political indoctrination and ensuring the balanced treatment of political issues				x	x
	To review and amend curriculum policies				x	x
	To ensure the school appoints and trains a SENCO				x	x
	To review and monitor the school SEN policy		Educ			x
	To discharge other duties in respect of pupils with SEN					x
	To review and monitor the governing body's other policies to ensure inclusion (in regard to gender, social disadvantage, race equality and disability discrimination, religion, sexuality, age)		Educ			x
	To ensure that the school had appointed a designated teacher to support the achievement of LAC				x	x
	To ensure that the head teacher sends Foundation Stage assessments and KS 1 teacher assessments to the LA				x	x
	To monitor pupil achievement against set targets		Educ			x
	To approve off site visits and activities of up to 1 day				x	x
	To approve off site visits and activities of more than 24 hours or which involve a hazardous pursuit or journey by air or sea		Educ			x
RE	To provide RE in line with schools basic curriculum (implementation)				x	x
	To ensure provision of RE in line with schools curriculum (monitoring)		Educ			x
	To decide RE syllabus (VAVC only)				x	x
Collective Worship	In all maintained schools to ensure that all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship				x	x
	To make application to SACRE to disapply the Christian requirements for collective worship				x	

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To make arrangements for collective worship in schools without religious character				x	x
Pupil Voice	To plan and coordinate strategies to collect and consider pupil views		Educ			x
Behaviour	To decide a behaviour and discipline policy		Educ			
	To consider use of penalty notices		Educ			x
	Head teacher's have powers to search, with or without consent, a pupil whom they reasonably suspect is carrying a knife or other weapon					x
	Decide that it is appropriate for a particular pupil to receive educational provision off site intended to improve behaviour					x
	To arrange for requested pupils to be directed off site in order for them to receive educational provision which is intended to improve behaviour					x
	To exclude a pupil for a fixed term (not exceeding 45 days in total in a year) or permanently					x
	To review the use of exclusion and to decide whether or not to confirm all permanent exclusions (and fixed term exclusions where necessary)		Educ			
	To direct reinstatement of excluded pupils		Educ			
	To review exclusion data		Educ			
	To monitor and review pupil attendance				x	x
	To decide whether parenting contracts should form part of the schools attendance policy	x				x
	To implement parent contracts/home school agreements					x
Pupil Welfare	To decide the content, presentation, and cost of school food, and where there is a cash cafeteria system, set the standard meals allowance for those entitled to free meals	x				x
	To ensure that school policy and procedure for LAC are consistent with the measures set out in the statutory guidance		Educ			x

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To decide whether to appoint a designated governor for Safeguarding Children or to retain as a full governing body task	x				
	To carry out annual review of Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy and procedures and report to the LA		Educ			
Parents	To plan and coordinate strategies by which the governing body can demonstrate its accountability and consult parents and community	x				
	To adopt and review parent contracts/home school agreements		Educ			
	To ensure that the school has an effective complaints policy		Educ			
	To hear complaints and appeals		Educ			
	To ensure that parents are provided with a privacy notice explaining how the school will use information provided by parents				x	x
	To publish a FOI scheme				x	x
	To respond to FOI requests					x
	To ensure that school lunch nutritional standards are met				x	
Community	To consider matters relating to the role of the school in the community, including PR	x				x
	To ensure that the school contributes to community cohesion		Educ			x
Finance	To prepare the first formal budget plan having regard for best value		Res			
	To approve the first formal budget plan each financial year	x				
	To monitor monthly expenditure					x
	To consider use of pupil premium		Res/Educ			
	To receive and consider monitoring reports at least 3 times a year		Res			
	To enter into contracts above a set limit		Res			
	To enter into contracts below set limit				x	x

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To approve/make payments according to approved system					x
	To establish and review ordering and payment systems		Res			
	To set a charging and remissions policy		Res			
	To ensure provision of FSM to those pupils meeting the criteria				x	x
	To approve transfer between budget headings within agreed limits		Res			
	To receive and where appropriate respond to reports from the LA auditors		Res			x
	To ensure that the school fund is audited properly for presentation to the GB				x	x
	To ensure that the school meets SFVS		Res			x
Planning	To agree how the GB will be involved in self evaluation	x				
	To collect, analyse and present data to inform school self evaluation				x	x
	To consider evidence and judgements for school self evaluation presented by the head teacher	x				
	To publish OfSTED report following inspection				x	x
	To ensure that recommendations following OfSTED inspection are incorporated in to the SDP	x				
	To agree priorities for SDP	x				
	To prepare draft SDP on agreed priorities					x
	To approve SDP	x				
	To monitor SDP	x				
Staffing	To develop, review and oversee implementation of GB personnel policies		Res			
	To appoint head teacher	x				
	To appoint deputy head teacher	x				
	In VA schools to agree whether or not the Director of Children's Services/diocesan authority should have advisory rights	x				
	To appoint other teaching staff				x	
	To appoint teachers to SLT		Res		x	
	To appoint non teaching staff outside of SLT				x	

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To ensure that all staff have necessary checks and are recorded on the SCR				x	x
	To monitor that the staff safeguarding checks are complete and up to date			Res		
	To ensure that qualifying volunteers have DBS clearance				x	x
	To draft/amend and review whole school pay policy		Res			
	To decide on recommendations relating to the pay of all staff		Res			
	To implement disciplinary procedures					x
	To agree disciplinary/capability procedures		Res			
	To dismiss head teacher		Res			
	To dismiss other staff				x	x
	To suspend head teacher			Chair		
	To suspend staff					x
	To end suspension HT		Res			
	To end suspension except HT		Res			
	To determine staff compliment		Res			
	To approve applications for early retirement, secondment and leave of absence, flexible working		Res			
	To establish and annually review the appraisal policy		Res			
	To implement appraisal of staff					x
	To implement appraisal of HT considering external advice		HTApp			
	To draft and review a policy on absence management and monitor absence		Res		x	x
	To agree and monitor a training strategy for teachers, support staff and governors	x				x
Premises	To obtain buildings insurance		Res			
	To develop a schools buildings strategy and contribute to asset management planning arrangements		Res		x	x
	To procure and agree a maintenance strategy for new building including developing a properly funded maintenance plan		Res			
	To review security of premises and equipment				x	x
	To agree level of maintenance service the school will buy				x	x

		Decision level				
Area	Tasks	1	2	3	4	5
		FGB	Comm	Ind Gov	Dele to HT	HT day to day
	To research and be involved in drawing up an Accessibility Plan for the school				x	x
	To recommend a hiring policy to the GB and oversee its implementation				x	x
	To approve hiring policy and charges		Res			
H&S	To establish a H&S policy in VA schools	x				
	To implement H&S arrangements					x
	To monitor H&S arrangements		Res			
	To ensure that suitable risk assessments are prepared and action taken to minimise risk				x	x
	To monitor accident book and agree appropriate action		Res			x
Admissions All schools	To appeal against LA directions to admit pupils	x				
Organisation	To draw up an Inst of Govt and amendments thereafter	X				
	To ensure all statutory information features on the school website	x				
	To agree proposals to change category of school	x				
	To consider forming, joining or leaving a federation	X				
	To consider acquiring a trust	X				
	To elect and remove a chair and vice chair of a permanent or temporary GB	X				
	To appoint or dismiss a clerk	X				
	To decide on voting rights for associates on committees	X				
	To appoint and remove community/co-opted governors	X				
	To appoint and remove associate members	X				
	To set up a register of governors interests	X				
	To establish and approve a governor allowances scheme		Res			
	To consider whether or not to exercise delegation of functions to individuals or committees	x				
	To regulate GB procedures	X				
	To establish and review committees membership annually	X				
	Agree a policy for governor visits to the school		Res			

DORRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SCHOOL GOVERNORS

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from Governors in order for the Governing Body to properly carry out its work within the school and the community.

The purpose of the Governing Body

The Governing Body is the school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The Governing Body aims to ensure that children are attending a successful school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

The Governing Body:

Sets the strategic direction of the school by:

- Setting the values, aims and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving those aims and objectives
- Setting statutory targets
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure

Challenges and supports the school by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:

- The implementation and effectiveness of the policy framework
- Progress towards targets
- The implementation and effectiveness of the school improvement strategy
- The budget and the staffing structure

Ensures accountability by:

- signing off the Self Evaluation Form
- responding to School Improvement Partner and Ofsted reports when necessary
- holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school
- ensuring parents and pupils are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- making available information to the community

Appoints and performance manages the headteacher who will deliver the aims (through the day to day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy, and delivery of the curriculum) and report appropriately to the governing body.

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

The Role of a Governor

In law the Governing Body is a corporate body, which means:

- No governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body;
- All governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and

- Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority Community, Foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

General

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the headteacher as set out above
- We are aware of and accept the seven principles of public life: see appendix
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the headteacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the headteacher.

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

Breach of this code of practice

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the governing body.
- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor and of Schedule 6 to the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (held as a separate document)

Governors will sign the Code at the first governing body meeting of each school year.

Undertaking:

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of the school at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Body, the Headteacher or staff.

Signed

Printed name

Date:

Appendix: The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

SCHOOL VISITS POLICY

Purpose

We link governors to subjects or classes as a way of fulfilling their responsibilities for monitoring the curriculum. This too, usually involves classroom visiting.

Ofsted assumes that governors know the strengths and weaknesses of their school. This will depend on governors assessing pupil performance data in the context of an understanding of what happens in the classroom.

Potential benefits to Governors and Staff

Governors

- To recognise and celebrate success
- To develop relationships with the staff
- To get to know the children
- To recognise different teaching styles
- To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them
- To understand the environment in which teachers and other staff work
- To see policies and schemes of work in action
- To inform decision making
- To act as a 'researcher'

Staff

- To help governors understand the reality of the classroom
- To get to know the governors
- To understand better the governors' roles and responsibilities
- To have the opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
- To highlight the need for particular resources

At Dorridge Primary School the Governing Body recognises that governors' visits to classrooms are not a form of inspection in terms of making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher. That judgement remains a task for the Head Teacher and other education professionals.

Governors will not:

- Make judgements about the quality of teaching;
- Check on the progress of their own children;
- Pursue a personal agenda;
- Monopolise teachers' time;
- Look for evidence to support inflexible pre-conceived ideas.

Protocols

Our governors fully recognise the value of observing the correct protocols.

They are committed to what should always and never happen before, during and after a visit.

Our Governors will follow the agreed policy for classroom visits. Their role will be one of a critical friend.

	Always	Never
Before	Arrange details of visit Agree level of confidentiality Agree purpose of the visit Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed	Turn up unannounced
During	Observe any class guidelines and rules Fulfil the agreed purpose	Interrupt the teacher
After	Thank the teacher and the pupils Discuss observations with the teacher	Leave without a word

Focus

There will be an agreed focus for each visit.

Some examples of appropriate focus for classroom visits could be:

Observation of one group of pupils working together on a task

Noting the relative numbers of questions and responses to the teacher from boys and girls

Observation of English and/or daily dedicated Maths Lessons

Cause for Concern

As far as possible, governors will refrain from becoming involved with the classroom management or delivery of the lesson.

The governors will follow set guidelines in a situation where they have a cause for concern.

<u>What if situation from the Governors' point of view</u>	<u>Guidelines for action</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if I see children misbehaving when the teacher does not • What if a pupil asks me how to do something? • What if the teacher has problems controlling the class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing and let the teacher get on unless you sense the misbehaviour is likely to result in a hazardous situation. • Depends on the activity –unless the pupils are engaged in a test situation, help would be welcomed • Allow some time – remain in the background. If the problems persist, leave the room

Feed back

As we see the role of our Governing Body as being that of a critical friend, we value constructive feed back.

After each visit the governors will feedback as follows:

Informal oral feed back and discussion with the Class teacher.

After the discussion with the Class teacher, the governor will submit a report

Formal written feed back to the Education Committee

Feed back will comprise:

Acknowledgement of positives seen during the visit

Two suggestions highlighting areas for development

Concerns

Particular concerns or questions arising from the classroom visit will be taken up with the Head Teacher in confidence. The Head Teacher will then take it up with the member of staff concerned.

Distribution of Visits

The Governing Body will ensure a reasonable distribution of visits across the year and across subjects, classes, year groups and teachers.

Commitment

Our Governing Body includes members who can give varying degrees of commitment to the work, including visiting Dorridge Primary School and the classroom.

Each named governor linked to curriculum subjects will endeavour to commit to half a day's visit once a term.

Documentation

Governors will use the Governor Visits Planning Form to plan, carry out and evaluate classroom visits. (ANNEX A)

After the visit, the visiting governor will feed back to the Education Committee using the Governor's Report form. (ANNEX B)

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Governing Body at the first meeting of each academic year.

This policy will reviewed formally by the Governing Body every three years.

DORRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governor Visits Planning Form :

What is the purpose of the visit?	Notes
What has prompted my decision to visit? Who has prompted my decision to visit? Is the reason specific or general? What are my expectations? How can my visit benefit the teacher?	
How shall I carry it out?	
What particular areas of the school am I interested in? What activities? Age group? Are there any questions that can be answered by the observation? What questions should I ask? Who should I ask?	
Did I achieve my aim?	
To extent did I fulfil the reason for my visit? Which of my questions did I answer? To what extend did I fulfil my expectations? What difficulties did I meet and why?	
Is there any follow up?	
Have I recorded my experiences? Did I report back to the head and teacher? Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting? How can I build on this for the next visit?	

DORRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report on Governor's Visit

Name:	Responsibility	Date:
Staff visited:		
Objectives of the Visit: 1. 2. 3.		
Brief Notes:		
Strengths: (classroom observation) 1. 2. 3.		
Areas for development/concerns: 1. 2.		
Discussions with Head Teacher (if relevant)		

Governing Bodies' Core Functions

We have high expectations of governing bodies. They are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For maintained schools this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'

In all types of schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

This amounts to a demanding role for governing bodies. Evidence suggests that those that deliver it well do so by:

- understanding their strategic role – building a productive and supportive relationship with the headteacher while holding them to account for school performance and taking hard strategic decisions in the light of objective data;
- ensuring governors have the necessary skills and commitment, including to challenge the school to bring about improvement and hold leaders to account for performance;
- appointing an effective chair to lead and manage the governing body – guidance on the crucial role of the chair of governors, developed jointly with the National Governors' Association (NGA), is available on the NCTL website;
- appointing a high quality clerk to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and ensure the governing body operates efficiently and effectively;
- evaluating their performance regularly in the light of Ofsted expectations and other good practice and making changes as necessary to improve their effectiveness; and governing more than one school to develop a more strategic perspective and create more robust accountability through the ability to compare and contrast across schools.

Effective governing bodies also think carefully about how they are organised. This includes thinking about whether and how to use their powers to delegate functions and decisions to committees or individual governors.

Setting vision, ethos and strategic direction

Governing bodies are the key strategic decision-making body of every school. It is their role to set the school's strategic framework and to ensure all statutory duties are met. The governing body should ensure that the school has a medium to long-term vision for its future – which it may be helpful to articulate in a specific written vision statement. The governing body should also ensure that there is a robust strategy in place for achieving its vision. This strategy should address the fundamental questions of where are we now, where do we want to be, and how are we going to the type of school which would offer the best opportunities for achieving future aims. The strategy should provide a robust framework for setting priorities, creating accountability and monitoring progress in realising the school's vision. The strategy should include SMART3 targets and key performance indicators (KPIs). The focus should be on significant strategic challenges and opportunities for school improvement. Avoiding unnecessary detail and peripheral issues will prevent the governing body's attention being spread too thinly and help create a practical and powerful tool for facilitating the board's core business. Additional detail, such as those things needed to deliver the headline KPIs, may be recorded in a separate more detailed plan maintained by the headteacher.

The governing body should set and safeguard a school ethos of high expectations of everyone in the school community. This includes high expectations for the behaviour, progress and attainment of all pupils in the school, and for the conduct and professionalism of both staff and governors.

Every effort should be made to ensure the school's ethos promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs; and encourage students to respect other people.

Holding the Headteacher to account

Governing bodies should work to support and strengthen the leadership of the headteacher, and hold them to account for the day-to-day running of the school, including the performance management of teachers. Governing bodies should play a strategic role, and avoid routine involvement in operational matters. It should focus strongly on holding the headteacher to account for exercising his/her professional judgement in these matters and all of their other duties.

However, since the governing body is responsible in law for the school, it may need to intervene in operational matters if a circumstance arises where, because of the actions or inactions of the headteacher, the school may be in breach of a duty if the governing body did not intervene. Having advised the governing body, the headteacher must comply with any reasonable direction given by it.

Division of Responsibilities at Dorridge Primary School

Area	Headteacher (HT)	Governing body (GB)
Overall responsibilities	Runs the school on a daily basis	Determines the aims, ethos and priorities of the school
	Advises governors	Critical friend
	Is the main influence on GB's decisions	Delegates to the HT the power to run the school
Planning and policy making	HT or senior leadership team (SLT) does the nitty-gritty work of formulating the plan	Involved in planning discussions and decisions through its committees
	Drafts the detailed action plans	Agrees the final school improvement plan (SIP)
		Ratifies whole school policies
Curriculum	Supplies the information and advice and basically produces the curriculum plan	Determines curricular policy and agrees the curriculum
Staffing	Draws up the initial staffing plan based on the school's needs	Decides the complement of staff
		Decides the proportion of the overall budget to be spent on staff
Appointments	Manages the appointment process; e.g. draws up job descriptions, organises the day in school and timetable	Has responsibility for managing appointments
		In academies, is the employer
		Should work within the agreed criteria

Finance	Produces the budget headings	Responsible for approving and monitoring the budget
	Manages the school's spending	Monitors the school's financial management
Salaries	Interprets the regulations for the governors	Determines salary levels for all members of staff
		Ratifies the statutory pay policy
Personnel	Day-to-day management of staff	Deals with personnel issues

Asking the right questions

Effective governing bodies hold their headteacher and other senior school leaders to account for improving school performance by asking the right questions. This might include asking:

- Which groups of pupils are the highest and lowest performing, and why? Do you have credible plans for addressing underperformance or less than expected progress? How will we know that things are improving?
- Which year groups or subjects get the best and worst results and why? How does this relate to the quality of teaching across the school? What is your strategy for improving the areas of weakest performance?
- How are you going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those with special educational needs, those receiving free school meals, boys and girls, those of a particular ethnicity, and any who are currently underachieving?
- Pupil Premium spending decisions? How will you know if your approach is working? Will the impact of decisions and interventions be monitored and supported, using appropriate tools such as the EEF DIY Evaluation Guide?
- Do we have the right staff and the right development and reward arrangements? related pay? If appropriate, is it compliant with the most up to date version of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document?
- Is this a happy school with a positive learning culture? What is our track record on attendance, behaviour and bullying? Are safeguarding procedures securely in place? What are you doing to address any current issues, and how we will know if it is working?
- How good is our wider offer to pupils? Is the school offering a good range of sports, arts and voluntary activities? Is school food healthy and popular?
- Do we listen to what pupils and parents are telling us?

The importance of objective data

Governing bodies must have good and timely data to help them to know the questions they need to ask and to provide answers to their questions. Many governors may not be familiar with looking at and understanding data. There is a large volume of data available. It is essential that every governing body have at least one governor with the skills to understand and interpret the full detail of the financial and performance data available. These governors should make sure that the wider governing body has a correct understanding of the school's performance and finances. They should identify from the data the issues that most need to be discussed. Other governors should learn from them and confidence and skills in looking at data. While governing bodies may decide to establish a committee to look in detail at performance data, all governors should be able to engage fully with discussions about the performance of their school.

It is the headteacher's job (and in maintained schools it is their legal duty) to give governing bodies all the information they need to do their job well. This means they should help governing bodies access the data published by the department and

Ofsted. They should also provide regularly whatever management information the governing body particular, governing bodies will need to see information relating to the priorities they have identified for improvement.

This might include data on:

- pupil learning and progress;
- pupil applications, admissions, attendance and exclusions;
- staff absence, recruitment, retention, morale and performance; and
- the quality of teaching.

The headteacher and school should not be the only source of information for the governing body. That would make it hard to hold the headteacher to account properly.

Governors need to make sure that at least once a year they see objective data from other sources so that they can feel empowered to ask pertinent and searching questions.

Governing bodies can get annual performance data direct from a number of sources.

Sources of data

ASP (Analysing School Performance)

KS2 data

ASP is focused on your Key Stage (KS) 2 progress and attainment data.

For each of the reading, writing and mathematics KS2 tests, it shows:

- Your school's progress scores in reading, writing and maths
- The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard (a scaled score of 100 or more) in **all of** reading, writing and maths, compared to the national and local authority (LA) average
- The percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard (a scaled score of 110 or more) in **all of** reading, writing and maths, compared to the national and LA average
- Your school's average scaled score in both reading and maths

KS1 data

As with the KS2 data, you can get a breakdown of the data by pupil group and prior attainment. For KS1, the following for each of reading, writing and maths, compared to the national benchmark can be viewed:

- The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard
- The percentage of pupils achieving a higher standard
- The percentage of pupils working below the pre-KS1 standard
- The percentage of pupils working at the foundations standard
- The percentage of pupils working toward the expected standard

Phonics

- Percentage achieving the expected standards in phonics against the LA and national average
- Phonics average score against the LA and national average
- A graph which provides the number of pupils that scored between 1-7; 8-15; 16-23; 24-31 and 32-40 (and those with no score recorded)
- The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard compared to the national benchmark
- The average mark compared to the national benchmark

EYFS profile data

- You can view the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development against the LA and national average.
- It also displays achievement in each of the 17 early learning goals (ELGs) by gender and for Ever 6 FSM/non-Ever 6 FSM, compared to the national benchmark.

Absence and exclusions data

The absence report shows the percentage of sessions missed due to absence and the percentage of 'persistent absentees' (pupils absent for 10% or more sessions).

The exclusions report shows:

- Fixed term exclusions as a percentage of the pupil group
- Percentage of pupils with 1 or more fixed-term exclusions
- Percentage of pupils with more than 1 fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusions as a percentage of the pupil group

Both of these reports also include pupil group breakdowns. There is also a '3 year trend' report showing this information combined over 3 years.

Pupil characteristics data

Pupil characteristic data is not provided in ASP in its own table, but is included in your Ofsted inspection data summary report (IDSR).

The report provides whole school contextual information, with the percentage of the cohort who are:

- Girls
- Ever 6 FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEN support
- Pupils with an SEN statement or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

There is also a pie chart showing pupil ethnicity groups (where 5% or more of the cohort are part of the group).

Using the IDSR

As well as providing pupil characteristic data, your IDSR also sets out some of the performance data included in ASP. The IDSR replaces the former inspection dashboard, and is used by inspectors when preparing to inspect your school.

You can use it to view data that is not included in ASP. For example, it includes some performance data with trends over 3 years.

School and college performance tables

The performance tables provide information on pupil attainment and progress, school finances, pupil absence and school workforce. They also contain the most recent overall Ofsted judgement on each school and a link to inspection reports. Governors can use performance tables to compare their own school with other local or similar schools to see:

- how well their school is doing against a range of performance measures – including each of our 'floor standard' measures on attainment and progress;
- how well a primary school is doing at key stage 2 in reading; writing; grammar, punctuation and spelling, and mathematics;

- how attainment and progress compares between different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with English as an Additional Language (EAL), and 'non-mobile' pupils (i.e. those who have been in the school throughout each of the last two years);
- how the school spends its money, shown as £ per pupil to allow comparison between schools of different size; and
- information about people who work at the school, including the number of teachers, teaching assistants, support workers; their average salaries; and the ratio of teachers to pupils.

Other data sources

School visits

Governors need to know their school, if accountability is going to be robust and their vision for the school is to be achieved. Many governors find that visiting, particularly during the day, is a helpful way to find out more about the school. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors can see whether the school is implementing the policies and improvement plans they have signed off and how they are working in practice. Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views.

Governors are not inspectors and it is not their role to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning. They are also not school managers and should make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Both are the role of the headteacher. If governors wish to spend time within a classroom, they need to be very clear why they are doing so.

'Need to know' timeline

At the start of each term (January, April and September), the Department for Education produces a package of communications designed for schools. The package, called 'Need to Know' is available on GOV.UK. It contains everything schools need to help them plan and implement forthcoming changes during the academic year and where possible, beyond. Set out in two timelines, one containing statutory information and legal requirements, which schools must adhere to, and the other containing useful information.

Both timelines are broken down by term, to help schools see at a glance what is coming up, and plan accordingly. The timelines also include a key so that schools are clear about whether specific legislation applies to their type of institution.

Overseeing financial performance

Governing bodies are responsible for making sure their school's money is well spent. They should do this by making sure they have at least one governor with specific skills and experience of financial matters, and by asking questions such as:

- Are we allocating our resources in line with our strategic priorities?
- Are we making full use of all our assets and efficient use of all our financial resources?
- Are other schools buying things cheaper or getting better results with less spending per pupil?
- How can we get better value for money from our budget?

Accountability of governing bodies

The government values every person who volunteers to help improve their school by being a governor. How well a success of a school. Therefore, although they are made up of volunteers, governing bodies cannot afford to be amateur and must be accountable for their effectiveness.

Governors' first line of accountability is to parents and the wider school and local community. They can use performance data from the Department and Ofsted to see how their school is doing.

Governors should be mindful that in exercising governing body functions, and as required in maintained schools by legislation, they must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular should be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties. Similarly, governors should be aware of and accept the seven principles of public life, as set out by Lord Nolan and applying to anyone, locally and nationally, who is elected or appointed as a public office-holder. They are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In the interests of

transparency, all schools and academies should publish, including on their website, up to date details of the structure of the governing body and any committees, together with the names of their governors and their particular roles and responsibilities within that structure. They should also publish an annual statement setting out the key issues that have been faced and addressed by the governing body over the last year, including an assessment of school. For academies, these details of their governance arrangements must also be provided within the governance statement of their published annual accounts. Independent inspection plays a vital regulatory role and underpins the Department's accountability framework for education. Ofsted is independent, impartial and aims to promote improvement in the schools it inspects and regulates. Every week Ofsted carries out hundreds of inspections and regulatory visits and publishes the results on its website. To check that governing bodies are ensuring good use of money, LAs will look at the finances of maintained schools.

Inspection

What inspectors are looking for

Ofsted looks at how well those "responsible for governance":

- Understand their role and carry it out effectively
- Ensure the school has a clear vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- Ensure resources are well managed
- Hold executive leaders (the head teacher) to account for educational performance and the performance management of staff
- Oversee the financial performance of the school, and ensure money is well spent (including the pupil premium)
- Hold leaders to account for the quality of education or training
- Ensure the provider fulfils its statutory duties (like the ones placed on school by the Equality Act 2010, the 'Prevent' strategy or Keeping Children Safe in Education)
- Promote the welfare of learners
- Ensure that the education the school provides has a positive impact on all its pupils

These criteria include a strong focus on how governing bodies use data to challenge and hold the headteacher to account, and how they evaluate their own impact and develop their own skills. In every inspection report, inspectors will comment on the quality of governance as part of their overall judgement on the quality of the school's leadership and management. These criteria will help to make sure good governance gets the praise it deserves. They will also help inspectors identify when a school's governance is not good enough.

External Reviews of Governance

Where governance is judged ineffective, inspectors should include an external review of governance in their recommendations. This will help the school to identify how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Self-evaluation

In preparation for inspection, governing bodies should evaluate regularly their own effectiveness. As explained in departmental advice for maintained schools the chair of governors has a particular responsibility for ensuring the effective functioning of the governing body. Good chairs also ask for regular feedback from their governing bodies to improve their own effectiveness and have an annual conversation with each governor to discuss the impact of their contribution to the work of the governing body

Personal liability

Maintained school governing bodies are corporate bodies that are legally responsible for the conduct of the school. Because of this, individual governors are generally protected from personal liability because of the governing body's decisions and actions. Provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith, any liability will fall on the governing even if it exceeds its powers, rather than on individual members.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing arrangements are designed to respond to malpractice and wrongdoing areas including the following, but the precise coverage and terms used can vary:

- Any unlawful act, whether criminal or a breach of civil law
- Maladministration, as defined by the Local Government Ombudsman
- Breach of any statutory Code of Practice
- Breach of, or failure to implement or comply with Financial Regulations or Standing Orders
- Any failure to comply with appropriate professional standards
- Fraud, corruption or dishonesty
- Actions which are likely to cause physical danger to any person, or to give rise to a risk of significant damage to property
- Loss of income to the school
- Abuse of power, or the use of the school's powers and authority for any unauthorised or ulterior purpose
- Discrimination in employment or the provision of education
- Any other matter that staff consider they cannot raise by any other procedure

Maintained Schools

All maintained schools should have whistleblowing arrangements in place and governing body minutes should record should be based on the local authority policy (which applies to all schools within their remit) and could be tailored as appropriate for the school. The governing body should think how the local authority's policy could be tailored so that it fits the specific circumstances of the school and ensure that it has appointed named member(s) of staff and governor(s) whom other staff can report concerns to.

If staff are not currently aware of the whistleblowing arrangements, they should be informed about them in a way that I made aware of the:

- protection that is available to all members of staff (including e.g. temporary staff and contractors);
- areas of malpractice and wrongdoing that are covered; and
- routes available within the school and the local authority for raising issue

Enabling better governance

Support and training for governors

Governing bodies have a challenging job to do. High quality induction and continual professional development is vital to equip governors with the skills they need, but we do not think that it is for government to make training compulsory. Our focus is on the outcome of effectiveness, it is governing bodies that understand best the training and development needs of their governors. Good governing bodies set out clearly what they expect of their governors, particularly when they first join the governing body. The governing body's code of conduct should set an ethos of professionalism and high expectations of governors' role, including an expectation that they undertake whatever training or development any gaps in the skills they have to contribute to effective governance. If a governor fails persistently to do this, then they will be in breach of the code of conduct and may bring the governing body or the office of a governor into disrepute – and as such provide grounds for the governing body to consider suspension.

Good governing bodies also carry out regular audits of governors' skills in the light of the skills and competences they need, and actively seek to address any gaps they identify – through either recruitment or training. They have succession plans in place and develop future leaders by identifying and nurturing talent and sharing responsibility. It is for governing bodies to identify training and development opportunities and select those that meet their needs.

Governing bodies should consider giving the vice-chair or another governor a specific responsibility for ensuring every governor develops the skills they need to be effective. Rather than simply track governors' attendance at training courses, with administrative support from the clerk, this governor would be responsible for ensuring that every new and existing governor develops their skills to make an active and valuable contribution to the work of the governing body. Any persistent skills gaps across the governing body or for individual governors should be brought to the attention of the chair.

The NGA has developed a skills audit and matrix for governing bodies, to help them identify any skills and knowledge they still need to deliver their functions effectively. An updated version of the NGA skills audit is structured around the core functions of the governing body, as defined in this handbook, is available from the NGA site.

Other Support

Support for governing bodies is also available from:

- **SGOSS** – the governor recruitment charity funded by the department to help governing bodies recruit highly skilled new governors, particularly from the world of work. This service is available, free of charge, to all types of school, including academies.
- **GovernorLine** – a professional helpline funded by the department offering tailored support, free of charge, on queries relating to governors' specific circumstances, not generic advice already in the public domain. The helpline is available to governors and anyone working with them in a maintained school or academy. The service is available via telephone 08000 722181 or Textphone: 0845 6041230 from Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm.
- **National Governors' Association (NGA)** – a membership organisation for school governors and trustees in England from both maintained schools and academies. NGA aims to improve the effectiveness of governing bodies by providing expert and tailored information and advice, and challenge when appropriate.
- **Freedom and Autonomy for Schools - National Association (FASNA)** – represents the interests of self-governing schools to government, the National Employers'
- **Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST)**, unions and other groups in the educational field. FASNA aims to promote autonomy for schools to enable them to raise standards for students.
- **Independent Academies Association (IAA)** – a national membership organisation that supports the leadership and governance of academies. While primarily an organisation for academy principals, it also welcomes many chairs of academy boards as members.
- LAs who determine their own offer through their governor support services.
- Other commercial governor support organisations.

Governing bodies are responsible for approving the school budget and, within that, they should make provision for meeting their own training and clerking needs.

OVERVIEW OF KEY ACTIVITIES

Constitution and procedures

The effectiveness of a governing body depends on the quality of its governors and the ways in which they work together and with school leaders.

Structure and membership of the governing body

While governing bodies in some schools have more flexibility than in others, all governing bodies have a choice about how they are structured. It is the structure, or constitution, of the governing body that determines how many and what type of people govern the school.

The governance structure of maintained schools

All maintained school governing bodies must be constituted under the 2012 Constitution Regulations by September 2015. The statutory guidance, Constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools, is available on GOV.UK.

These regulations provide that the minimum size of the governing body is seven members and the governing body must include:

- at least two parent governors;
- the headteacher, unless the headteacher decides not to be a governor;
- only one staff governor;
- only one LA governor

The governing body may appoint as many additional co-opted governors as it considers necessary. The number of co-opted governors who are eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors must not (when added to the one staff governor and the headteacher) exceed one-third of the total membership of the governing body. The governing body can appoint associate members to serve on one or more governing body committees. Associate members can attend full governing body meetings but may be excluded from any part of a meeting where the business being considered concerns a member of school staff or an individual pupil. They are appointed for a period of between one and four years and can be reappointed at the end of their term of office. Associate members are not governors and they are not recorded in the instrument of government.

Skills-based eligibility criteria for appointed governors

The 2012 Constitution Regulations require that any newly appointed governor has, in the opinion of the person making the appointment, 'the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school'. This could include specific skills such as an ability to understand data or finances as well as general capabilities such as the capacity and willingness to learn. This requirement emphasises to all governing bodies the importance of appointing persons with the necessary skills to improve the overall effectiveness of the governing body. The eligibility criteria for elected parent governors and staff governors remain the same, but governing bodies should make clear, when a vacancy becomes available, the skills they are looking for to inform the electorate.

Ways of working

Governing bodies are generally best placed to decide how they can best work effectively in the light of their own local circumstances. There are, however, some key general principles and some specific basic rules to ensure a minimum level of effectiveness.

Equality

The Equality Act 2010 applies to all schools in their role as employers, as providers of education to the pupils in their care and as providers of a service or public function. The governing body or academy trust is responsible for compliance with the public sector equality duties of the Act and the specific education sections (part 4) for school pupils. The Equality Act's general and specific public sector equality duties mean that schools must:

- have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all characteristics; and
- publish equality objectives and information demonstrating how they are doing this.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) can enforce this duty by issuing a compliance notice to order a school to meet the duty within a certain timescale. Our departmental advice on the Equality Act 2010 gives detailed information for schools. Governing bodies should make sure that their school complies with all aspects of discrimination law. The best way to do this is to ensure that they apply the principles of fairness and equality in everything that the school does. Schools with a religious character have legitimate exemptions

Governing bodies' relationship with school leaders

The relationship between governing bodies, particularly the chair of governors, and the headteacher is crucial to effective governance. They should work in close partnership, but retain sufficient distance to allow the headteacher to run the school and the governing body to hold them to account effectively for doing so. Headteachers are responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school. It is their job to implement the strategic framework established by the governing body. The governing body should not be involved in the detail of the day-to-day management of the school. The governing body delegates powers to allow the headteacher to perform his or her management duties. The headteacher must report to the governing body regularly on how those powers have been carried out. The headteacher should give the governing body information on the performance of the school and other reports that the governing body may need to carry out its functions. The governing body should offer the headteacher challenge and constructive advice. The National Association of Headteachers (NAHT), the Association for College and School Leaders (ASCL) and the NGA has issued a joint statement on the principles for the working relationship between governing bodies and school leaders.

Time off work

Serving as a governor helps employees develop board-level skills and experience that they may not otherwise develop until much later in their careers. The learning and development benefits are therefore significant and more than compensate for the flexibility and time off that staff may need to fulfil their governor duties. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has stated clearly that it sees a robust business case for more employers supporting their staff to volunteer as governors. By law, employers must give employees who are school governors in maintained schools 'reasonable time off' to carry out their duties¹¹. The employee and employer must agree on what is 'reasonable time off'. Among the points they should discuss are:

- how much time is needed overall to perform the duties;
- whether the employee is also being given time off from work for other activities;
- the particular circumstances of the employer's business; and the likely effect that the employee's absence may have on it. Employers may give time off with pay but do not have to do so. This is for discussion between the employee and the employer. Guidance on time off for public duties is available on GOV.UK.

Governing body procedures

Any rules on how governing bodies of academies must operate will be set out in their Articles of Association. The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 for maintained schools and the management committees of pupil referral units replaced three separate sets of regulations covering governing body procedures, terms of reference and governors' allowances.

In respect of governing body procedures, the new regulations include provisions that:

- reduce prescription on how governing bodies exercise their functions, while retaining their overall legal responsibility and accountability;
- require the appointment of a clerk and define the role of the clerk in advising the governing body on the nature of their duties and functions;
- require clerks to provide written notice for meetings at least seven clear days in advance, together with a copy of the agenda and any reports and papers to be considered at the meeting. The chair may determine a shorter period is appropriate in cases of emergency.
- define the quorum for governing body meetings and for any vote at a meeting is one half (rounded up to the nearest governing body, not including any vacant positions).

- prevent a decision on a change of maintained school name from taking effect unless the issue was an agenda item at a meeting for which appropriate notice was given.
- give governing bodies the power to make arrangements for their members to be present at board and committee meetings 'virtually', for example by telephone or video conference, and therefore to participate in discussion and decision making remotely.
- simplify arrangements for the payment of allowances for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by governors in connection with their duties as governors.

Dealing with complaints

The governing bodies of all schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school and any community facilities or services that it provides¹². They must reassure themselves that their school has a procedure to deal with complaints and that the procedure is publicised. An academy is required, through the obligations set out in its funding agreement, to ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and carried out effectively.

Academies must make available on request a procedure for dealing with complaints. The expectation is that this should be published online. For complaints from parents of pupils, this procedure must comply with The Education (Independent School Standards)

Regulations 2010 and offer:

- an opportunity to resolve the complaint with the academy on an informal basis, for example through discussion with a senior member of staff;
- a formal complaint stage when the complaint is made in writing and usually responded to by the chair of governors; and
- a hearing with a panel set up by the academy trust, comprising at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint, one of whom must be independent of the management and running of the school. that arose in part or in whole before the academy opened. An individual can complain to the Secretary of State for Education if they believe that a governing body is acting 'unreasonably', or is failing to carry out its statutory duties properly.

Education and inspection

Governing bodies' primary interest should be in high and rising standards of education for all pupils in their school.

Governors should assist their school to build relationships with business and other employers in order to enhance the education and raise the aspirations of pupils

The national curriculum

Responsibility for the school curriculum in state schools is shared between the headteacher, the governing body and (to a limited extent) LAs. The law says that the curriculum for a maintained school (or maintained nursery school) should be balanced and broadly based, and should:

- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- Governing bodies in maintained schools should reassure themselves that:
- enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the national curriculum and other statutory requirements;
- the relevant assessment arrangements are implemented

Religious education

All state-funded schools must teach religious education. Maintained schools without a religious character should follow the syllabus agreed by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Collective worship

All maintained schools without a religious character must provide a daily act of broadly Christian collective worship for their pupils. In community schools and non-faith foundation schools, the head teacher is responsible for arranging this after consulting the governing body.

Political bias

Academy trusts, governing bodies, headteachers and LAs must not allow the promotion of one-sided political views. This applies both to the teaching of any subject and to extracurricular activities at the school. Where political issues are covered, opposing views must be presented in a balanced way.

Curriculum policy

There is no longer a duty on governing bodies and headteachers to prepare a policy for the school curriculum. If schools do choose to adopt such a policy, it should be 'broad brush'; it does not need to be a detailed map of all secular curriculum activities.

Sex education

Governing bodies and headteachers of maintained schools providing primary education must decide whether sex education, beyond that set out in the statutory national curriculum for science should be included in their school's curriculum. If so, they must decide what it should consist of and how it should be organised, and keep a record of their decisions. Governing bodies of maintained schools (excluding maintained nursery schools) and academies should reassure themselves that the school has a written statement of the policy they adopt on sex education and make it available to parents.

All schools providing sex education at both primary and secondary level, and including academies through their funding agreements, must have regard to the Secretary of State's 'Guidance on Sex and Relationship Education'. Sex education is therefore often known by the broader title 'sex and relationship education' (SRE). The guidance document ensures SRE is delivered appropriately to all pupils, and that such education covers a range of topics and issues.

The early years foundation stage (EYFS)

The EYFS framework sets out requirements for both learning and development, and safeguarding and welfare in early years provision. It is mandatory for all providers. This includes maintained schools and academies and all providers on the Early Years Register. The EYFS statutory guidance outlines the framework. A range of policies and procedures may be needed by schools delivering the EYFS; these are outlined in the statutory guidance. Governing bodies of establishments delivering the EYFS should reassure themselves that the policies and procedures are in place. Further guidance and supporting materials are available on GOV.UK

Children with special educational needs (SEND)

Legally, a child or young person is defined as having SEND if he or she has a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty means that the child or young person has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children do or young people of the same age do. Alternatively, it means that the child or young person has a disability that prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children or young people of the same age in schools within the area of the LA.

Looked after children

School admissions

Admission authorities are required, with some limited exceptions, to give priority to looked after children, children adopted from care under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and those who left care under a 'Special Guardianship Order' or 'Residence Order' in their oversubscription criteria²⁸. The practical effect of this is that in a school's published admission arrangements, the first and highest oversubscription criterion must be looked after children (see paragraph 1.7 of the 'Admissions Code'). Provisions also apply to schools with a religious character and grammar schools (paragraphs 1.37 and 1.19 of the 'Admissions Code'). The law gives an LA that looks after a child the right to direct the admission authority of any maintained school to give them a place. This applies, even where the school is currently full, or is in another LA area (see paragraph 3.19 of the 'School Admission Code 2012').

Governing bodies of all maintained schools are required to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on the school roll. Academies are under an obligation to do this through their funding agreements. Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of designated teachers is available online.

Governing bodies must ensure, as a minimum, that:

- a designated teacher is appointed;
- the teacher undertakes appropriate training;
- it considers an annual report from the designated teacher; and
- acts on issues that the report raises.

Regulations specify that the role should be carried out by:

- a qualified teacher, within the meaning of section 132 of the Education Act 2002, who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required); or
- the headteacher or acting headteacher at the school.

All looked after children have a personal education plan (PEP) as part of the care plan that is drawn up by the LA that looks after them. The PEP forms part of the child's education record.

Assessing attainment and achievement

Teachers should monitor their pupils' progress in each subject as a normal part of their teaching. By law, schools must assess pupils' attainment at key points in their compulsory education. These key points are when pupils have completed the early years foundation stage and the programmes of study for key stages 1, 2 and 3, usually at the ages of 5, 7, 11 and 14. There is also a statutory check of phonics at the end of year 1 (age 6). This process is known as statutory assessment. While governors are not directly involved in these processes, they may find our guidance provides useful background in the context of their responsibilities to drive up school and pupil level performance.

Section 5 inspections

The handbook applies to all schools in England that are to be inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The schools subject to inspection under this section of the Act are:

- community, foundation and voluntary schools
- community and foundation special schools
- pupil referral units (PRUs)
- maintained nursery schools
- academies
- city technology colleges
- city technology colleges for the technology of the arts
- certain non-maintained special schools approved by the Secretary of State under section 342 of the Education Act 1996.

An inspection of boarding or residential provision in a boarding or residential special school will be integrated with the school inspection, where possible (for details, see part 3 of this document). Integrated inspections cannot be carried out when inspection cycles do not coincide. In these cases, we will only inspect the boarding or residential provision.

All schools have a unique reference number (URN). Any institution with its own URN that we inspect will receive an inspection report. We may try to coordinate the inspection of certain groups of schools, where this is possible.

Ofsted is required to inspect at prescribed intervals all schools to which section 5 applies. The regulations set the interval for section 5 inspections as 'within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last section 5 inspection took place'. The exceptions to this requirement are schools that are, by regulations, exempt from section 5 inspection (known as 'exempt schools').

Risk assessment

We use risk assessment to ensure that our approach to inspection is proportionate, so that we can focus our efforts on where we can have the greatest impact. Risk assessment combines an assessment of each school, based on analysis of official national data, with a more in-depth desk-based review of a wider range of available information.

We use a broad range of indicators to select schools for inspection. The risk assessment process normally takes place in time for the start of the third school year after the most recent inspection.¹³

In a risk assessment, we analyse:

- progress and attainment data from the DfE
- school workforce census data
- the views of parents and carers, including those shown by Ofsted Parent View, our online questionnaire for parents
- qualifying complaints¹⁶ about the school referred to us
- pupil mobility¹⁷
- time since last inspection, and inspection framework inspected under, for schools exempt from routine inspection.
- the outcomes of any inspections, such as survey inspections, that we have carried out since the last routine inspection
- statutory warning notices
- any other significant concerns that are brought to our attention.

We may also carry out unannounced inspections and monitoring visits under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 at any time.

Outstanding/exempt schools

Maintained primary and secondary schools and academies that were judged to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection are exempt from routine inspections under section 5. This exemption also applies to academy converter schools¹⁸ when the overall effectiveness of the predecessor school was outstanding at its most recent section 5 inspection.

This exemption does not apply to special schools (including maintained special schools, special free schools, alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools), PRUs and maintained nursery schools. We will continue to inspect these schools routinely.

If Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) or the Secretary of State has concerns about the performance of an exempt school (or any other school covered by section 5), HMCI has power to inspect it at any time under section (2) of the Act. Under section (1), the Secretary of State may require HMCI to carry out an inspection of an exempt school (or any other school covered by section 5). Under section (3) of the Act, the Secretary of State may also require HMCI to treat the section 8 inspection of an exempt school as if it were carried out under section 5.

Exempt schools are subject to risk assessment. If the risk assessment process raises concerns about the performance of an exempt school, we may inspect it under section 8 of the Act at any time after the risk assessment. We will consider the length of time since the last inspection in the risk assessment. If no concerns arise from the risk assessment, the school will not be informed.

If a risk assessment identifies sufficient concerns about a decline in the performance of pupils' academic/vocational/technical achievement and an overall decline in performance, these outstanding schools will receive a section 8 'no formal designation' inspection (see paragraph 23 for an explanation of this). If, during the course of the inspection, the lead inspector finds that the school's overall effectiveness may be lower than outstanding, then the lead inspector may deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection.¹⁹

If an exempt school makes structural changes, such as adding a new key stage or merging with another school, the school will receive a section 8 no formal designation inspection.

In addition, exempt schools may be inspected between risk assessments if:

- safeguarding concerns, including a decline in the standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline, and/or welfare concerns suggest that we should inspect the school
- a subject or thematic survey inspection raises more general concerns

- we have received a qualifying complaint²⁰ that, taken alongside other available evidence, suggests that we should inspect the school
- concerns are raised about standards of leadership or governance
- concerns are identified about the curriculum (including if the statutory requirement to publish information to parents is not met)
- HMCI or the Secretary of State have concerns about a school's performance.

If any of the concerns listed above are identified in exempt schools, we will usually inspect them under the section 8 no formal designation procedures, as set out in the section 8 handbook

Other Ofsted inspections (section 8 inspections)

Section 8 inspections do not fall under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. They include:

- inspections of schools previously judged to be good (unless they've changed significantly or are flagged by our risk assessment process)
- inspections of special schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools previously judged to be outstanding
- monitoring inspections for schools previously judged inadequate or require improvement
- inspections where we have a particular cause for concern (for example, about behaviour and attitudes, safeguarding or leadership)

Schools causing concern

By 'schools causing concern' we are referring not just to schools 'eligible for intervention' but also those about which the LA and/or the Secretary of State have other serious concerns which need to be addressed. This might be where attainment levels are consistently below the floor standards, where there has been a serious drop in performance or where the performance is not meeting the expected standards of comparable schools.

Ofsted's involvement in parental complaints about schools

By law, and in certain circumstances, Ofsted is able to investigate complaints by parents about their child's school for the purpose of deciding whether to use its inspection powers. It has powers to obtain information to facilitate an investigation. Governors may find it useful to familiarise themselves with Ofsted's guidance to parents.

If requested to do so, the governing body must provide Ofsted with any information held by it which Ofsted specifies and any other information that the school considers to be relevant to the investigation of a complaint.

Should Ofsted consider it appropriate for the purpose of an investigation that Ofsted meets with parents, the governing body (or in the case of a school which does not have a delegated budget, the LA) must co-operate with Ofsted in arranging the meeting. This includes allowing a meeting to take place on the school premises, fixing a date for the meeting and notifying parents and the LA of the meeting. A representative of the governing body and the LA may also attend the meeting. If Ofsted prepares a report of an investigation, that report must be passed to the governing body (or in the case of a school that does not have a delegated budget, the LA). The body must then send a copy of the Ofsted report to all registered parents.

Excluding pupils

An explanation of governing bodies' and academy trusts' legal duties in relation to exclusion, as well as statutory guidance on performing these duties, is provided in 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England: A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion'. The governing body has key responsibilities in relation to reviewing headteachers' exclusion decisions⁴³ and must arrange suitable full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed-period exclusion⁴⁴. Academy trusts are also responsible for arranging an independent review panel to consider permanent exclusions, where requested by parents. For maintained schools, this duty rests with the LA. Governing bodies have a wider role to hold headteachers to account for the lawful use of exclusion. Exclusion must be for disciplinary reason and all exclusions must be done in line with the legal requirements. Where a pupil is removed from the school premises without being excluded there needs to be a lawful basis for this decision, for example, under the powers of a maintained school to direct a pupil offsite to improve their behaviour

School attendance

The governing body of a maintained school or academy trust must reassure itself that the school keeps admission and attendance registers in accordance with regulations. Further information and guidance is available in the school attendance section of GOV.UK. The governing body must make sure that the school provides information requested by the Secretary of State, including the termly absence data the department collects

Parenting measures

The maintained school governing body, academy trust, headteacher and LA have powers to intervene where a pupil's behaviour or attendance at school becomes problematic. Information on parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices are in section 3 of the statutory guidance 'Advice on school attendance'. Governing bodies, academy trusts, headteachers and LAs must have regard to it when carrying out their duties.

The school day and school year

The headteacher of a maintained school will recommend the length of the school day, including session times and breaks. The governing body must agree the recommendation. School employers determine the term dates⁴⁸. Maintained schools must open for at least 380 sessions (190 days) in a school year⁴⁹. The school year must begin after July. If a school is prevented from meeting and it is not reasonably practicable for arrangements to be made for it to make up the lost session(s), it can be deemed to have been open for the required 380 sessions.

Liability for health and safety

The main legislation covering this area is the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and regulations made under that Act. The employer is responsible for health and safety. Information about the law on pupil health and safety is in departmental advice on Health and Safety for Schools. This advice summarises health and safety law relevant to schools and explains how it affects governing bodies as well as LAs, headteachers and other school staff. It covers activities that take place on school premises as well as school trips. The advice applies to all state funded schools. Where the school is the employer, the governing body must make sure that the school has a policy on health and safety.

First aid

Where they are the employer, governing bodies have overall responsibility for first-aid under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. The regulations set out first-aid provision in the work place, and require employers to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and qualified first-aid personnel. It is recommended that treat pupils as if they were employees for the purposes of first aid and provide first-aid materials and expertise as appropriate, based on risk assessment. This responsibility may be delegated by the LA where they are the employer

Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs (SEN)

The governing body must reassure itself that the school prepares and implements an accessibility strategy to improve the physical environment of the school for pupils with disabilities and SEN⁵¹. This should include consideration of their particular health and safety needs on the school premises and how these can be met. Governors of schools providing extended services must also consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010. In particular, whether the proposed extended services affect their functions and responsibilities towards their pupils, users of these services or their employees. When services are provided by a third party on schools' premises, either independently of the school or on behalf of the school, governors should establish who would be regarded as the service provider with the responsibility to make 'reasonable adjustments' and/or access improvements for disabled users, pupils or employees.

School security

In community, voluntary-controlled and community special schools, the responsibility to make the school secure ultimately rests with the LA as employer. It may, however, delegate these duties to the schools. With all other schools, including academies, responsibility rests with the schools.

Fire Safety

Governing bodies of all schools must reassure themselves that annual risk assessments are carried out to make sure that the fire precautions needed in the school are in place.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils

General duty

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, and regulations under section 157 relating to safeguarding pupils in Independent Schools (including academies), place a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools, and academy trusts, to have arrangements in place to ensure that they:

- carry out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and
- have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in considering what arrangements they need to make for the purpose of that section.

The statutory guidance, 'Safeguarding children - Keeping children safe in education', places statutory requirements on all governing bodies. Governing bodies must make sure their school has policies and procedures in place and take into account any statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State, any LA guidance and locally agreed interagency procedures.

Educational settings have a central role to play in the early identification of any welfare concerns about an individual child, additional needs they might have and indicators of possible abuse and neglect. To be effective, all schools should work with other organisations, share and receive information about individual children in order to protect them from harm. All schools should have regard to the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

Employers have a duty of care to their employees. Governing bodies should make sure that the school provides effective support for anyone facing an allegation. They must also provide them with a named contact within school if they are suspended. If an allegation is made, the headteacher, chair of governors or chair of the management committee (the 'case manager') should immediately discuss the case with the LA Designated Officer (LADO). This nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. Statutory guidance 'Safeguarding children - Keeping children safe in education' sets out the procedures all schools must have in place for dealing with allegations. The procedures should make it clear that all allegations should be reported straight away, normally to the headteacher. The procedures should also identify the person, often the chair of governors, to whom reports should be made in the absence of the headteacher, or in cases where the headteacher themselves are the subject of the allegation or concern. Procedures should also include contact details for the LADO responsible for providing advice and monitoring cases. Chairs of governing bodies are expected to work with the headteacher (unless the allegation concerns the headteacher) and LADO to confirm the facts about individual cases. They are also expected to reach a joint decision on the way forward in each case. Chairs have a key role in deciding courses of action, including disciplinary action, in those cases where a criminal investigation may not be required. In cases where allegations have been substantiated, the chair should work with the LADO and headteacher to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. It is helpful if all governing body members have training about safeguarding, whether the governing body acts collectively or an individual member takes the lead. This will make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. Governing bodies should make sure that a senior member of the school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues; providing advice and support to other staff; liaising with the LA; and working with other agencies.

Safe recruitment procedures

A key aspect of safeguarding is the vetting of applicants and prospective volunteers working with children to make sure they are not unsuitable. Guidance about this is in section 5 of this Handbook, and also in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.