



Governor Role Descriptions

Introduction

Boards of Governors have three core responsibilities:

1. **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
2. **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and**
3. **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

In order to achieve these responsibilities, the Governing Board works with the school on planning and developing policies and keeping the school under review. Its powers and responsibilities must be exercised in partnership with the Headteacher and staff.

Expectations of all Governors

Meetings

- Attend meetings of the Governing Board whenever possible, and provide good reasons for any failure to attend meetings
- Prepare for and contribute to meetings and complete any agreed follow-up work

Teamwork

- Contribute to the Governing Board's operation as an effective team by establishing and maintaining good working relationships with other governors and with staff
- Recognise the power of the Governing Board is vested in the group and that no governor has individual authority unless it is delegated by the Board
- Recognise the respective roles of the Governing Board and the Headteacher and staff (the Governing Board is a strategic body, the operational management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher)
- Recognise that governors are equal members of the Governing Board and accept collective responsibility. Speak or act on behalf of the Governing Board only when authorised to do so
- Accept a fair share of the Governing Board's work, including through active committee membership

Knowledge of the school

- Arrange to visit the school when teaching and learning are taking place and attend school events and functions
- Know the school's strengths, its areas for development and improvement plans

Personal interests

- Put responsibilities as a governor before personal interests
- Ensure any business or pecuniary interests are declared as required and withdraw from meetings as appropriate

Other

- Maintain confidentiality
- Act at all times fairly and without prejudice

- Support the school in the community, exercising prudence and tact if contentious issues affecting the school arise outside the Governing Board, and follow procedures agreed by the Governing Board in making or responding to criticism or complaints

Personal development

- Undertake training and take advantage of opportunities to increase understanding and effectiveness as a governor
- Keep up to date with governance through reading and accessing information via the National Governors Association material, The Key for School Governors, school information – the website and newsletter - and Local Authority information.

Chair of Governors

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

General

- Ensure the effective organisation of the Governing Board
- Maintain a focus on the predominantly strategic role of the Governing Board and establish a clear understanding of the different roles of governors and staff in the school
- Ensure that all governors are clear about their roles through a clear description of their key tasks
- Encourage and develop the Governing Board's role as critical friend
- Build a team by recognising and using people's strengths: delegate effectively, clarify objectives and use the whole Governing Board

Meetings

- Work closely with the Headteacher and Clerk to plan effective Governing Board meetings, ensuring relevant and realistic agendas
- Plan the year's cycle of meetings and a timetable for action and reports
- Chair Governing Board meetings effectively and efficiently: ensure meetings start and end on time, that agenda items are properly introduced, and that people are encouraged to contribute
- Ensure all decisions taken at meetings are understood and minuted and that the necessary action is taken
- Ensure, supported by the Clerk, that the Governing Boards meetings and affairs are conducted in accordance with the law
- Ensure, with the Clerk, that governors receive relevant information and materials well in advance of meetings
- Emphasise that all governors must accept collective responsibility for decisions taken at governors' meetings
- Use committees and smaller groups to meet statutory requirements, develop new ideas and agree plans of action

Other

- Encourage commitment, loyalty and high standards of behaviour by governors through personal example and the development of clear, written expectations in a Code of Conduct
- Take the lead in managing the Governing Boards accountability to parents
- Act on behalf of the Governing Board in emergencies and report any urgent action taken on behalf of the Governing Board, ensuring it is fully explained and supported
- Co-ordinate the Governing Boards response to new legislation and emerging priorities

Planning

- Work with the Governing Board to provide strategic direction: implement, plan and monitor progress

- Co-ordinate the formulation of an annual Governing Board development plan in sympathy with the school development plan and the Local Authorities development plan, and ensure that all governors have an opportunity to contribute to school development and target setting
- Work with the Headteacher and governors on effective school policies
- Take the lead in co-ordinating the work of the governing body in relation to Ofsted inspection
- Ensure that the processes of governor recruitment, induction and development are effective

Supporting

- Be seen regularly in the school and attend school functions
- Develop and maintain effective teamwork by the Governing Board
- Be accessible to governors, staff and parents and keep in touch with governors between meetings
- Develop working relationships with all governors, including particularly the Vice Chair and chairs of committees, and ensure that individual governors' strengths are known and used and their efforts recognised
- Ensure that the efforts of staff are recognised by the Governing Board
- Develop an honest, open and supportive partnership with the Headteacher, making time to listen to concerns and give constructive advice
- Develop working relationships with the Local Authority and other key partners
- Work in close partnership with the Clerk to manage the work of the Governing Board effectively
- Create opportunities for informal gatherings of governors and staff
- Meet governors of other local schools from time to time

Vice Chair

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

- Deputise during the absence of the Chair of Governors
- Support the Chair in the conduct of meetings
- Work closely with the Chair and take responsibility for agreed areas of work
- Support the effective operation of committees
- Check, with the Chair, that decisions taken by the Governing Board are enacted
- Co-ordinate the induction of new governors
- Co-ordinate training of individual governors and the governing body

Head Teacher Governor

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

General

- Support the Governing Board in identifying its role in school development and improvement
- Meet regularly with the Chair to plan, monitor and review meetings and the work of the Governing Board
- Provide information to the Governing Board and its committees, including regular reports on the progress of the school development plan and academic standards
- Co-ordinate a programme of governor visits to the school
- Promote partnership between staff and governors
- Demonstrate respect for and value the contribution of the Governing Board and individual governors
- Help governors with the challenge aspect of critical friendship by encouraging relevant questions and providing clear and accurate explanations

Staff Governor

Teaching and support staff paid to work at the school are eligible to stand as staff governors. At least one staff governor in addition to the Headteacher must be a teacher, but if no teacher stands a member of the support staff can be elected. Staff governors are elected by the staff at the school and cannot be removed from office. If staff governors leave the school they cannot remain on the GB.

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

General

- Have the wellbeing of the school as your prime consideration
- Ensure you enjoy the equal treatment to which you are entitled, but be aware of the possible sensitivity of involvement in some staff - or pupil - related matters
- Avoid involvement in discussions or decisions where you have a personal interest in the outcome
- Develop strategies, in consultation with the Headteacher, that enable you to represent staff opinions as well as your personal views at governors' meetings
- Vote on issues according to your knowledge, experience and conscience
- Visit the school as a governor on occasion

Relationships

- Share decisions with staff according to protocols on reporting and confidentiality established by the Governing Board in consultation with teacher and staff governors and the Headteacher
- Ensure that delicate issues are discussed with the Headteacher before meetings

Parent Governor

Parent governors are elected by parents or carers of registered pupils attending the school at the time of the election. They do not have to stand down if their child leaves the school but may do so if they wish. They may not be removed from office.

If insufficient parents stand for election, the Governing Board can appoint parent governors and may remove an appointed parent governor from office. You may not be a parent governor if you are an elected member of the Local Authority or if you work at the school for more than 500 hours a year at the time of appointment.

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

- Have the wellbeing of the school as your prime consideration
- Act as representatives, not delegates, of the school's parent body
- Develop strategies, in consultation with the Headteacher, that enable you to gain the views of parents and report back to them
- Take a particular interest in ensuring effective communication between the Governing Board and parents and also the school and parents
- Ensure the Governing Board manages its accountability to parents effectively
- Ensure that matters of individual or collective parental concern are handled according to policy by staff, the Headteacher, the Chair or the Governing Board

Local Authority Governor

LA governors are appointed by the LA following publicity through schools and contacts with existing LA governors who may want to stand for re-election. The final decision on appointments is made by

the Local Authority. The DfE urges LAs to appoint people irrespective of whether or not they have a particular political preference. The LA can remove these governors with reasonable cause.

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

- Have the wellbeing of the school as your prime consideration
- Act as a representative, not a delegate, of the LA
- Seek to know and understand the LA's education policies and have views about their impact on the school
- In consultation with the Governing Board, make sure the LA is aware of matters relating to its policies as they affect local schools
- In consultation with the Governing Board, consider wider issues of education in the area
- Take a particular interest on behalf of the Governing Board in the services provided by or made available to the school by the LA and relate this to considerations of Best Value
- Contribute to effective links between the LA and the school

Co-opted Governor

Co-opted governors are chosen by the Governing Board to represent community interests.

They can be people who live or work locally or others who are committed to 'the good government and success of the school'. They can be removed by the Governing Board.

Employees at the school are not eligible to stand.

Role and responsibilities in addition to those expected of all governors

- Have the wellbeing of the school as your prime consideration
- Use your knowledge of the wider community to inform the decisions of the Governing Board
- Promote the school in the wider community
- Use your knowledge, skills and interests for the school's benefit

Associate Member

Governing Boards can benefit from being able to draw on expertise and experience from outside their formal governor membership. The Governing Board can appoint associate members to serve on one or more of the Governing Board committees and attend full Governing Board meetings. Associate members are not governors but people interested in contributing to the work of the School.

The definition of associate member is wide and can include pupils, school staff and people with a particular area of expertise. Associate members are appointed for between one and four years and can be reappointed. They can be removed by the Governing Board at any time. Provided they are 18 they can have bestowed voting rights within a committee, but not on any resolution concerning admissions, pupil discipline, election or appointment of governors, or the budget and financial commitments of the Governing Board.

The role of the associate member will vary according to the reason for the appointment, but the list of responsibilities for all governors should be observed.

Committee Chair

Role and responsibilities

- Ensure that the terms of reference and delegated powers of the committee are
- known and understood by all governors
- Ensure that the committee fulfils relevant legal obligations on behalf of the Governing Board

Relationships

- Work with the Chair of Governors, other committee chairs and the Headteacher to ensure coherence in the management of the Governing Board and the school
- Promote effective teamwork and good working relationships within the committee

Development

- Formulate a committee development plan at the beginning of each academic year, consistent with the priorities of the school and the Governing Board
- Ensure that members' strengths and interests are recognised and used in achieving the committee's objectives
- Encourage the continued development of committee members' knowledge and understanding, including through training

Meetings

- Ensure effective clerking arrangements for the committee
- Plan an annual meetings programme to fit in with the Governing Board and other committees
- Ensure that meetings are effectively planned and chaired, and that follow-up activity is completed
- Ensure that minutes are accurate and published promptly
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained

Appraisal Appointed Governor

*The Governing Board appoints governors for the Headteacher's performance management. These governors **MUST, LEGALLY**, work with an external adviser.*

Responsibilities

Preparation

- Undertake training to understand the responsibilities of the appointed governors
- Be aware of any relevant changes in legislation affecting the role
- Ensure that the Governing Board has appointed a lead appointed governor
- Prepare, with the Headteacher, for the review meeting by ensuring monitoring arrangements for current objectives have been effected as planned and that objectives for the new year are considered and discussed
- Ensure you have a good understanding of pupil performance data, current priorities in the school development plan and emerging priorities to inform suitable and possible objectives for the Headteacher
- Consider any issues arising from the current objectives and the monitoring of those objectives, to inform discussion

Working with the External Adviser

- Work with the Headteacher to secure an external adviser
- Agree with the Headteacher and the external adviser the timing of the review meeting
- Agree with the external adviser and the Headteacher the agenda for the meeting, chairing arrangements, minutes and decisions on current and new objectives

- Decide, advised by the Headteacher and the external adviser, the data, information and forms that the external adviser needs and ensure this is sent out in good time
- Consider, with the Headteacher, the external adviser's suggestions for the Headteacher's objectives, based on an analysis of the information received
- Gather evidence of the monitoring of current year objectives in preparation for the informal and formal meetings with the external adviser.
- Use the informal meeting with the external adviser to learn and inform about the PM process for the Headteacher, including the review and setting of objectives

The meeting and outcomes

- Ensure that a fair decision is reached, based on evidence, about the satisfactory achievement of the Headteacher's current year objectives
- Seek agreement with the Headteacher on the new objectives, ensuring that at least one objective relates to pupil progress, at least one to leadership and management and that an objective for the head's professional development is considered, taking any advice offered by the EA into consideration
- Ensure that the objectives are relevant and realistic, unambiguously stated and measurable, indicating milestones and monitoring procedures
- Formalise in writing the decision on the achievement of current objectives, with copies to the appointed governors and the Headteacher
- Ensure the programme of monitoring new objectives is implemented as planned
- Contribute to the annual review of the Governing Board's performance management policy