National Leaders of Governance
East of England and NE London

Holding School Leaders to Account

Diocese of Brentwood Governance Conference
Friday 2nd July 2021
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The purpose of governance

The purpose of governance is to provide **confident**, **strategic leadership** and to create **robust accountability**, **oversight** and **assurance for educational and financial performance**.

The board should set and safeguard an **ethos of high expectations** of everyone in the school community.

The Governance handbook

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Slide 3

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What does this mean?

All Boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern have three core functions:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

→ 1. We set and safeguard the values of our school and use these with our knowledge of our school to set strategic direction so that our school continues to improve

2. **Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and for the performance management of staff**

→ 2. We ensure adults in our school are held to account to deliver the best possible education and care for our children

3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

→ 3. We ensure we maximise the impact of the funding available to us

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What are we holding to account for?

- Standards of education and care provided to our pupils
- What else?
  - Annual Performance Targets
  - Doing the job: Headteachers standards/contractual requirements
    - Leading the school
    - Leading the staff
    - Leading school improvement
    - Leading relationships with parents etc

New Headteacher standards were published 14th October 2020.
Details can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-of-excellence-for-headteachers

CULTURE & ETHOS
- School Culture
- Behaviour
- Professional Development

CURRICULUM & TEACHING
- Teaching
- Curriculum & Assessment
- Additional & Special Educational Needs

ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
- Organisational Management
- School Improvement
- Partnerships

Governance & Accountability

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When do we do it?

Monitoring and meetings

- Governors and trustees do <u>not</u> hold school leaders to account individually
- It is a board responsibility and must happen at board meetings
- Meeting minutes should note challenges, holding to account discussions and agreed actions

Performance Management

- School Leader Performance Management Committee
  - Review progress against targets
  - Review performance against expectations of the role/Headteachers standards
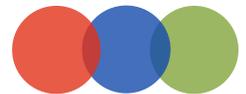- Monitor effectiveness of staff performance management when approving pay awards

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Step 1 - Set standards

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When do we set standards?

4. HOW ARE WE DOING?

1. WHERE ARE WE?

3. WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

2. WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

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Risks

Ethos

Views of stake-holders

Vision and 3-year plan

Reviews

Ofsted Report

Prior Perform-ance

School Self-Evaluation (SEF)

School Development Plan

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Characteristics of a strong improvement plan

- Concise – ideally a one page summary
- Collaborative – created with input from key stakeholders/the board
- Clear – rational for each objective
- SMART
  - **Specific** – Meaningful targets that relate to KPIs/ impact on pupils
  - **Measurable** – clear success criteria that can be evidenced
  - **Achievable** – Sensible number of objectives with realistic targets, taking into account implementation considerations, context and cost
  - **Relevant** – addressed areas for improvement identified through self-evaluation
  - **Time-bound** – specify when results will be achieved, ideally termly milestones

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Key Performance Indicators(KPIs)

Quality of Education	Leadership and Management
Attainment	Staffing ratios
Progress	Staff turnover
Pupil Premium	Staff development and workload
SEND	Parental and staff satisfaction
Quality of teaching	Parental engagement
Accuracy of assessment	Financial indicators
Breadth/depth of curriculum	Safeguarding
Behaviours and Attitudes	**Personal Development**
Attendance and punctuality	Physical and mental health
Behaviour – exclusions, bullying	Extra curriculum activities
Pupil perceptions	Destinations and readiness for next phase
Attitudes to learning	Aspirations

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ACTIVITY: Reflection

❑ As a board are we setting/agreeing standards for our school?

❑ Are these standards/targets formally documented in the SDP or similar?

❑ Are the targets SMART?

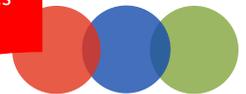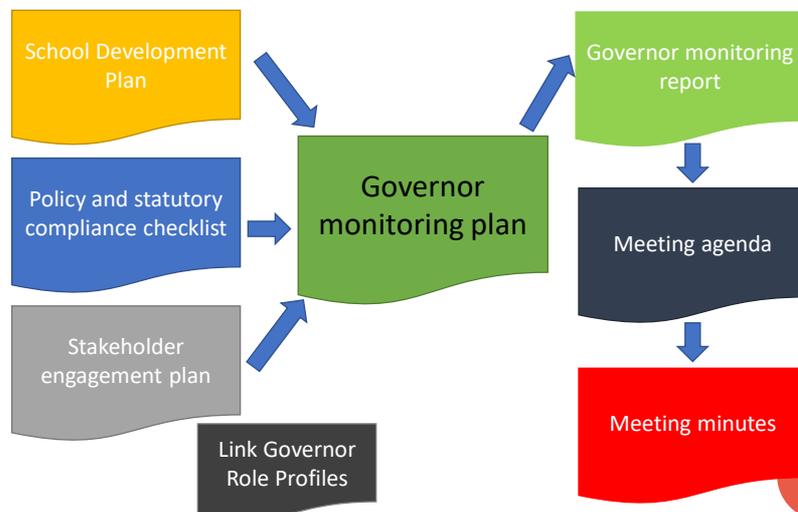❑ Do the standards/targets show high expectations/ambition?

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Step 2: Gather evidence

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Monitoring and holding to account

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SDP target/KPI (clear success criteria)

Governor Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity (Plan; Do; Review)

Report

Discuss and action (at board meeting)

Follow-up

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Monitoring – evidence and audit trail

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School Development Plan

Policy and statutory compliance checklist

Stakeholder engagement plan

Link Governor Role Profiles

Governor monitoring plan

Governor monitoring report

Meeting agenda

Meeting minutes

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Purpose of monitoring

- To gather <u>evidence</u> of how the school is doing against key success criteria/KPI
- To ensure that information is not solely from school leaders
- To triangulate evidence
- To be able to hold to account
- To ensure the school is performing at the desired level and delivering quality education and care for all pupils

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Triangulate to Hold to Account

What the data tells us

Evidence

What we've seen ourselves

What the school tells us

Are we where we want to be?
Are we meeting the success criteria/KPI targets?

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Organisation of monitoring

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- Best practice is to have a monitoring plan that covers all monitoring related to:
  - The School Development Plan objectives/KPIs
  - Statutory compliance
  - Ethos/Policies
  - Stakeholder listening
- Consider monitoring days or monitoring periods organised around data drops and meetings
- Be clear on the objectives and questions you want answers to as a result of monitoring activities

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Template monitoring plan

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① Monitoring Focus	② Governor role to lead monitoring	High Level LGB monitoring activity ③ Monitoring Objective(s)		
		Autumn term	Spring	Summer
School Development Plan Targets				
Quality of Education				
Standards				
Pupil Premium				
SEND				
Quality of teaching				
Curriculum				
Assessment				
Behaviours and Attitudes				
Personal Development				
Leadership and Management				

Non-SDP Monitoring

- **Finance**
- **Risk**
- **Human Resources including performance management, staff wellbeing, turnover, absence**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Health and safety/site**
- **Community/stakeholder engagement**
- **Website**
- **Governor training and development**

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When to monitor

SCHOOL
CALENDAR

Assessment

⬇

Data available

⬇

Monitor

⬇

Meeting

Meetings allow you to triangulate and hold to account collectively

❑ Consider in the plan: when, what, where, who, how
❑ Ensure data and other evidence is bought together for a holistic view
❑ Evidence monitoring through monitoring/visit reports
❑ Include reports/summaries of monitoring in papers for minutes
❑ Discuss findings, hold to account and any follow-up actions needed

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Governor Monitoring Report

1. Name of governor and role	
2. Date and time of monitoring	
3. Focus of monitoring (tick)	4. Type of monitoring (tick)

Plan

3. Focus of monitoring (tick)
o School Improvement Plan objective
o Statutory compliance
o Policy in action
o Seeing the vision or ethos in practice
o Ongoing (business as usual)
o Other
Description:
(from column 1 of the Governor Monitoring Plan)

4. Type of monitoring (tick)
o Meeting with staff
o Learning walk
o Book look
o Gathering views of stakeholders
o Review of data
o Other
Description:

5. Monitoring objectives (from column 3 of the Governor Monitoring Plan)

6. Key questions to be answered by the monitoring (share with school ahead if visiting)
i)
ii)
iii)
iv)
v)

Do

7a. Answers to key questions	7b. Evidence
i)	
ii)	
iii)	
iv)	
v)	

8. Assess the evidence – what did it tell you? Are we on track/where we want to be? Yes/No? Explain your answer

Review

9. Are there any points that need to be shared at the next meeting of the board? Or any further questions that need to be asked?

10. Follow-up monitoring required?

Next steps:
Share this with the headteacher for factual accuracy and then share with clerk/chair to add to meeting papers

Monitoring reports

Purpose:
To evidence findings of monitoring and share them with the rest of the board

Key features:
1. Links to monitoring objectives from monitoring plan
2. Lists key questions (shared ahead with school)
3. Captures answers to questions and the evidence
4. Assess the evidence – are we on track/where we want to be?
5. Any concerns?
6. Report back to board – discuss and hold to account as required

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Ensure you get the data you need to hold to account

- Headteachers report
- RAG-rated SDP
- School On A Page (SOAP)
- Assessment data

- It is up to the board to request the data they need to fulfil their responsibilities
- The headteacher is required to provide you the information you need to do this

Reflection: Does the information you receive make sense, and can you draw conclusions from it?

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Step 3. Report and discuss

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ACTIVITY: Reflection

How many hours per year does your full board meet?
- ❑ 6-8 hours
- ❑ 9-12 hours
- ❑ 12-18 hours
- ❑ Over 18 hours

What are the things that a board can only do at meetings?

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Effective Board Meetings

EXAMPLE AGENDA		TIME	LEAD	PAPERS	ACTION
Committee Members:					
In Attendance:					
1.	**Apologies for Absence** Apologies to be sent to the Chair and Clerk in advance of the meeting	1m	Chair	None	Note
2.	**Declaration of Business/Financial Interests/Conflict of interest** (Governors are required to complete the Register of Business Interest form and return to the Clerk)	1m	Chair	None	Note
3.	**Notification of Any Other Urgent Business** (Items to be raised under "any other business" must be notified to the Chairperson and Clerk to the Governors In advance of the meeting)	1m	Chair	None	Note
STRATEGIC					
4.	**Spring term achievement review** Progress against the SDP targets for the Spring term, reviewing a RAG-rated version of the SDP, latest pupil assessment data and the SOAP report and relevant governor monitoring reports	60 mins	Head	RAG-rated SDP SOAP Pupil data sheets Governor monitoring reports	Review and agree any actions
5.	**Pupil Premium review** Governor report on impact of Pupil Premium grant to date this year Update on Sports Premium impact	10 mins	Governor	Governor report on Pupil Premium Sports Premium visit report	Review and agree any actions
6.	**Attendance review** Governor report on pupil attendance	5 mins	Governor	Governor visit report on attendance	Review and agree any actions
NON STRATEGIC					
10	**Policies** To REVIEW the policy schedule and ratify the following policies:	5 mins	Head	Policies schedule	Review changes and ratify/adopt
11	**Correspondence and Chairs Action** To RECEIVE a list of Chairs Action or Correspondence	2 mins	Chair	Verbal	Note
12	**Minutes of the Last Governing Body Meeting** To APPROVE the minutes of the last Governing Body Meeting and discuss matters arising	6 min	Chair	Minutes	Approve and agree further actions
13.	Any Other Urgent Business				

Progress against standards/targets is discussed

- Achievements praised
- Concerns discussed and actions agreed
- Minutes capture the challenge and the agreed actions

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Slide 25 — Develop a meeting calendar for boards

Governance Calendar Example

When	Type of meeting	Agenda/Purpose
Autumn term		
Sept	GB planning meeting	Receive drafts of plans – SDP, Pupil Premium and Sports Premium for planning purposes; Agree GB monitoring plan for the year; GB Self-review and training plan
October	Standards focused meeting	Review SEF; Discuss SDP; Discuss Communication plan; Discuss Pupil Premium Plan; Discuss Sports Premium Plan; Review baseline data; Review intake numbers. Housekeeping: Code of conduct; Business Interest declaration; eSafety forms; LGB terms of reference; Nominate chair and vice chair; Refresh governance policies; School trips and refresh Educational Visits Policy; Inset days; Admissions Policy
Half term break		
November	GOVERNOR MONITORING THIS WEEK	
December	Business focused meeting	Budget review; Accounts review to date; Report on teacher Pay awards and PMR process; Asset Mgmt Plan; Headteacher PMR report; Communication plan for the year; Risk Mgmt Plan; Feedback from governor monitoring; Review external comparison data
Spring term		
January	GOVERNOR MONITORING THIS WEEK	Review assessment data against term 1 targets
February	Standards focused meeting	Review term 1 targets – head's report; Safeguarding annual report; Feedback from termly monitoring; SEND report

Develop a meeting calendar for boards

- Prompt boards on topics to be covered from a statutory perspective
- Prompt boards on key activities such as signing off plans, reviewing progress against the SDP
- Alternate between Resource/business focused and Standards/curriculum focused meetings
- Ensure the Terms of Reference are absolutely clear on what they need to discuss and what they don't.
- Ensures consistency of practices in MATs at LGB meetings and supports the development of KPIs

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Slide 26 — Standards data

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Standards data

- In-year data
  - Progress
  - Attainment
  - Prior attainment
  - National Averages
  - Targets
  - Consider termly milestones and RAG rating

Year 3		Reading				Writing				Maths				Combined		
		KS1 (Nat)	On Track	Target	National	KS1 (Nat)	On Track	Target	National	KS1 (Nat)	On Track	Target	National	On Track	Target	National
Cohort 20 pupils	Exp +	70 (76)	59	75	75	67 (68)	55	72	78	71 (75)	41	76	76	36	67	64
	GD	35 (25)	18	35	28	29 (16)	18	29	20	19 (21)	9	24	24	5	19	
PPG 2 pupils	Exp+	50 (63)	50 50	33		50 (54)	50 0	33		50(62)	50 0	33		0	50	
	GD	0(14)	0 0	0		0(8)	0 0	0		0(11)	0 0	0		0	0	

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ACTIVITY: Reflection

❑ Do you have an annual meeting plan and a monitoring plan?

❑ Are your meeting agendas giving sufficient time to discuss current performance i.e. actuals v targets

❑ Are monitoring findings discussed at meetings?

❑ Are holding to account discussions happening at board meetings and captured in minutes with corresponding actions?

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Performance Management

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School Leader Performance Management

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- Work with an educational expect
- Ensure targets are well defined with clear success criteria
- Consider targets that relate to school standards and improvement, as well as to meeting the expectations of the role
- Remember to discuss wellbeing, workload, aspirations, career development etc
- Ensure discussions are minuted/captured

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Holding executive leaders to account for the performance management of staff

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- Does everyone know who their line manager is?
- Does everyone know who will be completing their performance management? Is there an org chart?
- Are those leading performance management trained to do so?
- Is there adequate planning and preparation time given to those giving the review?
- How are review meetings organised?
- What types of targets are set?
- How is evidence gathered?
- How do they check for consistency?
- How is under-performance addressed?
- Is there discussion about professional development and support?
- How do staff feel about the process?

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Conclusion

To hold to account follow these simple steps:

1. Be clear on the standards you expect/set – ensure they are SMART and the success criteria is well defined
2. Gather evidence
3. Report evidence at meetings, discuss, and hold to account – agree actions – ensure this is captured in meeting minutes

Take the time to ensure all adults feel valued and well managed and held to account in your school

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Thank you and happy governing!

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