

Role of a governor

To contribute to the work of the governing board in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school and children's centre by:

- setting the school and children's centre vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the pupils in the school and children's centre
- overseeing the financial performance of the school and children's centre, making sure its money is well spent

Activities

As part of the governing board team, a governor is expected to:

1. Contribute to the strategic discussions at governing board meetings which determine:
 - the vision and ethos of the school and children's centre
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school and children's centre
 - that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
 - the school and children's centre budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation
 - the school and children's centre staffing structure and key staffing policies
 - the principles to be used by school and children's centre leaders to set other school and children's centre policies
2. Hold the senior leaders to account by monitoring the school and children's centre performance including:
 - agreeing the outcomes from the school and children's centre self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school and centre development plan
 - considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school and centre leaders and external sources on all aspects of school and children's centre performance
 - asking challenging questions of school and centre leaders
 - ensuring senior leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits
 - ensuring senior leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school and children's centre is operating effectively according to those policies
 - acting as a link governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the governing board on the progress on the relevant school or children's centre priority
 - listening to and reporting to the school and children's centre stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, and the wider community including local employers.

3. Ensure the staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (continuing professional development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
4. When required, serve on panels of governors to:
 - appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
 - appraise the headteacher
 - set the headteacher's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
 - hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters
 - hear appeals about pupil exclusions
 - hear complaints
5. The role of a governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does not:

- write school or children's centre policies
 - undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health and safety – even if the governor has the relevant professional experience
 - spend much time with the pupils of the school or children's centre – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other valuable voluntary roles within the school
 - fundraise – this is the role of the PTA, the governing board should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks
 - undertake classroom observations to make judgments on the quality of teaching – the governing board monitors the quality of teaching in the school by requiring data from the senior staff and from external sources
 - do the job of the staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing board needs to consider and rectify this
6. As you become more experienced as a governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (eg as a chair of a committee). This role description does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice chair and chairs of committees.

In order to perform this role well, a governor is expected to:

- get to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours and gaining a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events
- attend meetings (full governing board meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting
- act in the best interests of all the pupils of the school

- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the governing board's code of conduct, including acting in strict confidence

Expenses: Governors may receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor and NGA recommends that a governing board should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and childcare, but not loss of earnings.