

Governor Role Description



The role of a school 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 by:

- ▲ ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- ▲ holding senior leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its students, and the performance management of staff
- ▲ overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

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
- ▲ clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school
- ▲ that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- ▲ the school's budget, including the expenditure of the pupil premium allocation
- ▲ the school's staffing structure and key staffing policies
- ▲ the principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies

2. Hold senior leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance; this includes:

- ▲ agreeing the outcomes from the school's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the school development plan
- ▲ considering all relevant data and feedback provided on request by school leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance
- ▲ asking challenging questions of school 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 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 priority
- ▲ listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders: students, parents, staff, and the wider community, including local employers

3. Ensure the school 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 Principal and other senior leaders
- ▲ appraise the Principal
- ▲ set the Principal's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
- ▲ hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- ▲ hear appeals about student exclusions

The role of a governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A governor does NOT:

1. write school policies
2. undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health and safety - even if the governor has the relevant professional experience
3. spend much time with the students of the school – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other voluntary valuable roles within the school
4. fundraise. The governing board should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks
5. undertake classroom observations to make judgements 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
6. do the job of the school staff; if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the governing board need to consider and rectify this

As governors become more experienced, there are other roles they can volunteer for which would increase the degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g. 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 in agreement with the Principal, 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, if applicable, committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting
- ▲ act in the best interests of all the students 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 to governor training, but not loss of earnings.

Governor Roles at The Spires College

Lead Governor for Safeguarding – this is perhaps the most time consuming of the lead governor roles. It involves a significant amount of training (a 2 day course as a minimum) and regular visits with the College's DSL. It involves becoming familiar with all our safeguarding practices and learning about how we work with other agencies. It also involves looking at our staff recruitment practice. It would suit a governor who is keen to have a role they can become quite specialist in, and who is willing to spend the time to do so. Governors need to know the college is keeping children safe and this role is an important part of that QA.

Lead Governor for Pupil Premium – this role is linked to both finance and outcomes. The College receives a significant amount of money via the Pupil Premium Grant. Governors need to know how this is spent, why, and what impact it is having. The member of SLT designated as the Pupil Premium lead will work with this governor to help them understand the role.

Lead Governor for SEND – this role is also linked to both finance and outcomes, as well as the statutory code. The lead governor will need to learn about the SEN code of practice and explore whether the college's SEN spending represents good value for money. There is a member of SLT who oversees this area but there is a lot of external guidance available, too.

Lead Governor for Children Looked After (CLA) – This governor will become familiar with the work of the virtual school and how our Designated Teacher works. It does tie in with the Pupil Premium role, because these students are allocated a specific pot of money and governors need to be assured that we get best value and genuine impact from this.