

BFG Guidance Notes for School Governors

The Strategic Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body:

- is united around a common vision arrived at with head and staff and decides what they want the school to achieve, and make plans to get there.
- helps to set and keep under review the policies that provide a broad framework within which the head teacher and staff should run the school.
- ensures that **all** those who have an interest in the success of the school contribute when the values and aims are being agreed.
- is actively involved in the creation of the school development/improvement plan (SDP/SIP).
- focuses on raising standards of achievement.
- establishes high expectations and promotes effective teaching and learning, so that pupils achieve to their potential.
- sets specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related (SMART) targets for pupil achievement.
- agrees indicators by which it will measure aspects of the school's effectiveness.
- ensures that there are systems in place to check that progress is being made towards targets and that evidence is gathered; use that evidence to review overall progress against targets, to see whether policies and practice are effective, and to check on their school's achievements and progress over time and in comparison with similar schools.
- ensures that the budget plan addresses the priorities identified.
- explores and defines the respective roles and responsibilities of the governing body and the headteacher. Takes advice from the headteacher before making decisions.
- agrees and implements terms of reference and working procedures for all committees and working groups. Reviews these terms of reference annually.
- actively supports the Clerk to the governing body and the nominated clerks to committees, to ensure that they are able to produce and distribute appropriate paperwork seven days in advance of meetings. Supports the Clerk during meetings to ensure that decisions and action items are correctly recorded.
- has clearly focused meetings which, through effective chairing, make effective use of time and enable all to contribute to discussions and decision making.
- has meetings which are informed by succinct and relevant reports from the headteacher and staff.

In addition, all members of the governing body should be aware of legislation relating to school governance (refer to the Guide to the Law for School Governors), keep up to date with new developments relating to school governance, and attend training and development sessions where relevant.