

Governors: Key Questions for meetings

Key Questions for the Full Governing Body Meeting		
Vision & Values		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a clear vision for the school? Is it shared with everyone and understood by all? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have a culture of high expectations and achievement? Does the vision set the agenda for improvement? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of staff do we want working at this school? What kind of students/students do we want to move on from this school? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have an effective marketing strategy? Do we ensure that parents and others are aware of how the school is doing? 		
Governance Structures		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we ALL operate according to the Nolan Principles of Public Life? Do we understand the differences between the role of the Headteacher and the role of the Governing Body? Do we have an effective Scheme of Delegation in place so that those acting on our behalf are aware of their responsibilities and accountability? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective are our Governance Structures? Do they make the best use of our time? Are our meetings planned at least a year in advance and conducted in an effective and efficient manner? Do we receive all meeting information seven days in advance? Do all governors read their papers and come prepared to ask questions at meetings? Do we have a trained clerk to give guidance? Are we all encouraged to take part in discussions and treated as equal partners in decision making? Do all our discussions consider the impact any decision will have on our students/students? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we share out all the jobs to be done? Are they done? Who ensures this? • Are we aware of the skills each governor has to offer? Are these appreciated and used? • Do we fill governor vacancies efficiently? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we informed by the views of pupils, parents and staff to have a deep, accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness? • What do we do in response to suggestions/criticism? • What do Ofsted, the LA and external partners say about us? • How effectively do we work with other agencies / schools? How do we know? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When & how was the last review of effectiveness of the GB carried out and what strengths and areas for development were identified then? • How do we ensure that Governors' training needs are effectively identified and appropriate development programmes put into place? • What are the strengths and areas for development for the governing body? 		
Accountability		
What do I need to know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you know how well the school is doing? • How do you know that the GB is having impact? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the school's strengths and are they sustainable? • What are the school's weaknesses and are they being addressed? • What are the main priorities for improvement in this school? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you ensure that the schools self-evaluation is rigorous & accurate; and leads to planning that secures continual improvement? • What reasons are there for the choice of the priorities in the School Development Plan? • How do you monitor the progress of the School Development Plan (SDP)? • When was the last review of effectiveness (self-evaluation) conducted? What strengths and areas for development were identified then and what action has been taken? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do governors proactively challenge the school? • How does the school use performance management to improve the quality of teaching/ drive up standards • Does the governing body address underachievement, and hold the 		

<p>Headteacher to account?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the governing body review the Headteacher's performance management throughout the year? 		
Information Management		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Headteacher's report provide the quality, range and quantity of information governors require? Does it tell governors what is happening in the school? Does it raise issues for governors? • How do you know what is actually happening within the school? • Do governors' committee and visit reports provide good monitoring and evaluation information? 		

Key Questions for the LAW Committee

Student Outcomes		
What do I need to Know?	What are the answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does our school have a culture of high expectations and achievement? Are our school's targets 'stretching' enough for all students and are we meeting or exceeding these targets? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do our results compare locally, nationally and with similar schools? What do we know about RAISEonline/ FFT data/OFSTED Data Dashboard? Are there particular subjects in which pupils achieve better or worse than the national averages at KS4? What are the strengths and weaknesses in relation to pupil attainment? What are the reasons for these strengths and weaknesses? What are the strengths and weaknesses in relation to pupil progress? What are the reasons for these strengths and weaknesses? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the attainment profile of different groups of students? What proportions of students make the expected/better than expected amount of progress? How many students are reaching age-related expectations and above at the end of the year compared with the starting point at the beginning? How has the school dealt with changes to GCSEs? Has there been a dip in attainment as a result of the changes to early entries for GCSEs? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that there are no national exams or tests at the end of KS3, how do you check on the achievement of pupils in this key stage? Are our systems to monitor students' achievements effective at all levels? What do our past students achieve/go on to do with their lives? 		
Disadvantaged Students		
What do I need to Know?	What are the answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are the attainment gaps in our school? How does the school identify its vulnerable groups and students and what is being done to help accelerate progress? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are we planning and targeting our interventions for disadvantaged students? Have we accessed the evidence of what works to accelerate disadvantaged student progress? How is the pupil premium funding being spent? How effective is this? What impact is the spending having on the achievement and personal development of disadvantaged pupils? How do you know? 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main challenges in the use of the PP funding, and how is the school working to overcome them? 		
Attendance		
What do I need to Know?	What are the answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current & historical attendance level of the school across Year groups / student groups? • What is the level of Persistent Absence (PA)? • What are the school's agreed attendance targets? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies/interventions does the school use to improve attendance? • How is the impact of these interventions measured and how often are they reviewed? • What are the areas for development? 		
Teaching & Learning		
What do I need to Know?	What are the answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know about the quality of teaching and how do you know this? • How is good teaching rewarded and underperformance tackled? • Where is the best teaching? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know all our learners are successful learners? • What evidence is there to show that students' work is well matched to their needs? • How rigorous/accurate is assessment? Is it moderated in any way? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective are the CPD opportunities that exist for all staff across the school? • Is this sufficiently focused on developing Quality T&L across the school? • Can the impact of CPD on Quality of Teaching and Learning be clearly demonstrated? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do staff feel valued and supported by governors? • Why do staff leave the school? • How much teaching is by non-specialists? • What is the level of staff absence? • How well are supply/agency staff supported? 		
Succession Planning		
What do I need to Know?	What are the answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we know the strengths of staff in our school? • What do governors do to identify talent and potential within the school? • Are we comfortable that we have an effective programme for succession planning in place? • Do we ensure that leadership opportunities and experiences are provided for motivated, talented teachers? 		

Key Questions for the FPP Committee

Financial Assurance		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have we completed our Financial Management and Governance Self-Assessment (FMGS)? What development actions arose as a result of this? • Do we comply with the Academies Financial Handbook? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have we got a clearly defined Scheme of Financial Delegation in place, which is regularly reviewed and are we confident it is adhered to. • Is there a clearly documented system of Financial Controls and how do we know they are being implemented consistently? • Are we happy that appropriate staff in the school have received good quality Financial Training 		
Financial Planning & Monitoring		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems are in place for effective budget planning and monitoring? • What is our current annual budget and do we have an accurate forward budget forecast? • Does the planned budget match the school's development priorities? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What proportion of the total budget is spent on staffing costs? (It is recommended to be around 80%). • How much money has been allocated to the school for specific purposes e.g. AEN, SEN, LAC, Pupil Premium? How is this funding being used in school? • What capital funds are available and what are the plans to spend them? • What are our long term plans to utilise any surplus? 		
Best value		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems are in place to ensure that we are getting Value for Money on our expenditure? • How does our expenditure compare with similar schools / academies? • How effective are we at managing tender processes and large scale procurement matters. • How much collaborative procurement do we undertake? 		
Performance Management		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have an effective Performance Management process to include teaching and non-teaching staff? • How do we know if the Performance Management process has a direct impact on 		

standards? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Governing Body made difficult decisions with regard to performance management – such as not awarding a pay rise? • How does the school identify and tackle poor performance? 		
Facilities		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the school comply with all Health and Safety legislation? • What processes and policies are in place to ensure compliance? • How do we monitor as Governors that we are compliant? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we happy that fire and evacuation procedures are robust? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the school clean and fit for purpose? • Is the school environment conducive to supporting students learning? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What medium term provision is in place to ensure that the school facilities are well maintained? • Do we have a long-term plan for the development and maintenance of the school site and facilities? 		
Recruitment		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have we, received training in recruitment processes and made efforts to keep up to date with personnel developments? • Have we explored the range of services for recruitment advice available from the local authority and private providers? 		
Community Development		
What do I need to Know?	Answers?	Where is the evidence?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we know about our community? • Are governors aware of anything that might change in the medium term e.g. population change, increasing/reducing employment opportunities, skills shortages? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the school's key priorities in terms of the community development agenda? • How can these user groups be better included/involved in our school and the skills they offer more effectively utilised, to support our extended school developments and school priorities? 		