

Introduction to School Governance



Welcome

Welcome to your new role as a school governor. This pack has been prepared by the Central South Consortium's Governor Development Team and is aimed at introducing you to your new role. We, along with your Local Authority team, work closely together to provide a strong link between governing bodies, schools and the Local Authority. We recognise the importance of an effective Governing Body and the need for advice and guidance to be on hand.

There are approximately 23,000 school Governors in Wales and we are aware of and grateful for the considerable amount of time and effort that they devote to raising the standards of education for our children in what are, generally, very busy lives already. Being a governor is a challenge but, as such, the rewards to be gained can be very visible and very fulfilling. With the guidance of your fellow governors and Governor Support Team, as well as your commitment to attending governor training events you will find being a governor a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

This pack is an introduction to school governance and outlines some of your key roles and responsibilities as a school governor. We stress that if you have any questions about your role then you should speak to the chair, headteacher or your Governor Support Team.

Why have Governing Bodies?

To help schools provide the best possible education for their pupils by:

- setting the school's vision and strategic aims, agreeing plans and policies, and making effective use of resources
- monitoring and evaluating performance, acting as a critical friend to the headteacher to support and challenge him/her in managing the school
- ensuring the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, to those who fund and maintain it, as well as to the staff employed

The composition of the Governing Body is recorded on a document called an Instrument of Government. An Instrument of Government is a legal document which sets out the exact size and composition of the Governing Body. This document is held at the school and is available for Governors to view.

Categories of Schools

There are three categories of LA maintained schools – Community, Foundation and Voluntary. There are many similarities between the responsibilities of the governing body in different categories of school. For example, all are eligible to receive a delegated budget. The main differences are set out below.

Community Schools

Funded and maintained entirely by LA's. Staff are employed by the LA, although the governing body have responsibility for some employment functions such as appointment, suspension, dismissal/discipline etc.

Foundation Schools

The Governing body is both the employer and admissions authority. At foundation special schools,

the premises are held on trust by a foundation (which also often gives the school a religious character), or a specially constituted “foundation body” or are held on trust by the governing body. There are no foundation special schools in Wales.

Voluntary Controlled Schools

Most schools in this category will have a religious character, but some will not. The school premises are held on trust by a foundation, and the LA employs the staff on the same basis as community schools.

Voluntary Aided Schools

The governing body is both the employer and admissions authority. The premises are held on trust by a foundation, usually a church and the governing body.

Being a Governor

Who are Governors?

A governor is someone who:

- is a volunteer
- cares about teaching, learning and children
- represents those people with a key interest in the school, including parents, staff, the local community and the LA
- is part of a team which accepts responsibility for everything a school does
- has time to commit to meetings and other occasions when needed
- is willing to learn
- is able to act as a critical friend who supports the school but also challenges and asks questions about how the school works and the standards it achieves
- acts as a link between parents, the local community, the LA and the school

What Governors do:

- promote the values and ethos of the school
- manage the budget
- raise standards of academic achievement
- support and encourage staff and pupils
- keep up to date with developments in education

They have collective responsibility for:

- school development plan
- providing the National Curriculum
- premises

- reporting annually to parents
- action planning following inspection

How do they achieve this?

- attend meetings
- serve on sub-committees
- follow agreed procedures
- visit the school
- work in partnership with the headteacher, other governors and the LA
- maintain confidentiality
- contribute opinions and listen to the views of others
- undertake training
- act as a member of a team
- accept that individual governors have no power to make decisions or take action
- demonstrate an interest in education and commitment to the school

What qualities do they need?

- enthusiasm and commitment
- a willingness to undertake hard work
- have the best interests of pupils at heart
- a commitment to provide the best possible education for pupils
- ability to stand by collective decisions even if s/he holds a different point of view
- to be able to ask questions in a constructive rather than in a confrontational manner

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness: Holder of Public Office should take decisions solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves; their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial influence or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business; including making public appointments; awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits; holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of Public Office should be as open as possible about all decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The different types of Governors

There are a number of types of governors. Most governors are appointed or elected to serve for a four-year term.

Local Authority: The LA will appoint a representative to act as a Governor on your board.

Foundation: Appointed by the people or organization named in the Schools instrument of Government

Community: Represents the local community. Can be from businesses, local charities or institutions.

Minor Authority: A community Councillor

Parent: Parent elected by the parents to represent the school's pupils and their parents.

Headteacher: Sits on the board as a Governor but may choose not to.

Teacher: Elected from the teaching staff they act as their representative.

Staff: Elected from the non-teaching staff they act as their representative.

How a Governing Body works

A governing body:

- works closely with the headteacher
- makes decisions collectively as a team
- often delegates decision making to committees, individual governors or to the headteacher
- conducts much of its business through meetings

It must also be remembered that:

- authority rests with the whole governing body
- collective responsibility should be taken for the outcomes
- how individual governor's vote is confidential
- the chair can act in an emergency, but must inform the whole governing body at the earliest opportunity.

Meetings

Frequency: a governing body is legally required to meet at least once a term, but many find themselves meeting twice. Most meetings in most schools, are held during the evening.

Apologies: an apology should be offered to either the chair or clerk if you are unable to attend any meeting of the governing body or its committees. Your apologies must be accepted at the governing body meeting. If your apologies are not accepted or you fail to attend meetings for 6 months without offering your apologies you may be removed from the governing body.

Disqualification: not only can governors be disqualified from the governing body for their non-attendance but they can also be disqualified, for a number of other reasons.

Full guidance on disqualification can be found in The Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005.

Quorum: the quorum for a meeting of the governing body and for any vote on any matter at such a meeting is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the governing body excluding any vacancies and any governors suspended from that meeting.

Decisions: are always made by majority vote. If there is an equal vote, then the chair has the casting vote.

Interest: if governors are involved in a decision where his or her personal interests may conflict with those of the governing body it may be necessary for them to withdraw.

Any governor who has an interest, either directly or indirectly, in a matter for discussion by the Governing Body that is greater than the generality of interest of other governors or staff, must declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting and not vote on the matter.

Register of Business Interest: A Register of Governors' Business Interests is kept on file at the school and is updated annually at the start of the academic year.

Confidentiality: copies of the agenda, approved draft minutes, signed minutes and any reports, documents or other papers considered at a meeting must be made available at the school for anyone to read. Confidential minutes and papers are kept in a separate file and by their nature that they have been deemed confidential they are not available to anyone other than the Governing Body. Governors should not talk about discussions which have taken place in the governing body. The minutes are the record of the meeting.

Requests: any three governors may request the Clerk to arrange a meeting, again allowing five working days' notice.

Clerks: A Clerk will be present at all Ordinary Meetings. The Clerk will take the minutes of the meeting and undertake any follow-up action, which is required. All minutes should then be collated and confirmed and signed at the next Ordinary Meeting.

Chair and vice chair: The chair and vice-chair normally hold office until the first full governing body meeting of the Autumn term. At that meeting, the governing body must elect a new chair and vice-chair, or re-elect the existing officers. Governors who are employed to work at the school are not eligible to stand for election.

Committees

It is considered good practice for governing bodies to set up committees and working parties to carry out much of their detailed work. This can:

- enable the main governing body meetings to concentrate on strategy
- help to use precious governor time effectively
- bring in extra expertise to work on particular issues

The governing body's committee structure must be established/reviewed at the first meeting of the governing body in the academic year.

Statutory Committees

Governing bodies must have the following statutory committees:

- staff disciplinary and dismissal committee
- staff disciplinary and dismissal appeals committee
- pupil discipline and exclusions committee

Governing bodies must have procedures and membership in place for the following:

- complaints
- headteacher performance management appraisers and appeal appraiser(s)
- pay review and pay review appeals
- grievance and Grievance appeals
- capability and capability appeals
- headteacher and deputy head selection panel

Other committees can be established to discuss the detail of other matters such as:

- finance
- curriculum
- premises, health and safety
- staffing

Link Governors

One of the key roles and responsibilities for the governing body is to monitor the progress and performance of the school. Many governors will hold positions with specific responsibilities in the governing body, these are usually referred to as "link governors". Governing bodies use link governors to share the workload more effectively. The link governor can play a significant role in developing the effectiveness of the governing body and in raising school standards. Reports from the link governor will not only help the governing body understand what happens in schools but also helps the governor to fulfil their strategic role.

Some examples of areas that the governing body can designate a link governor to be responsible for are noted below:

- training and development
- literacy

- numeracy
- pupil attendance
- health and safety
- curriculum areas, e.g. mathematics, PE, drama, etc.
- phases e.g. Foundation Phase, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 etc.

Link governor visits to schools

Visits to school enable link governors to:

- see the school at work
- observe the range of attitudes, behaviour and achievements of pupils
- get to know the staff and work in partnership with the staff
- demonstrate their commitment to the school
- give active support to the staff and activities in the school
- be aware of the effect of change and different approaches to teaching and learning
- evaluate resources and discuss with staff any further requirements
- gain first-hand information to assist with policy making and decision taking

Remember, the link governor visit is not about:

- inspection and governors should not behave as an inspector
- making judgements about the professional expertise of the teacher
- checking on your own children, or
- pursuing a personal agenda

Knowing where the boundaries lie

In almost all of their responsibilities, governors work closely with the Headteacher. It is vitally important therefore to be aware of their differing responsibilities. Simply put, governing bodies are responsible for overseeing the long-term development of the school.

Governors' responsibilities are encompassed in three broad roles:

1. The Strategic Role

Governors...work with the headteacher to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- agree policies, targets and priorities for achieving these objectives
- monitor and evaluate the aims and objectives and whether the policies, targets and priorities are being met, always with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

The Strategic role, along with the Critical friend and accountable role, contributes to raising the standards achieved by both the school and its learners. Governors carry out their strategic role by providing a framework for what they decide the school should achieve.

2. The Critical Friend Role

Governors provide support and constructive advice to the headteacher and act as a forum for discussing ideas and initiatives. Governors also seek clarification, ask challenging questions and request information in order to arrive at the best decisions for all concerned.

3. The Accountable Role

The headteacher and professional staff are accountable to the governing body for the school's performance. The governing body must be prepared to explain its decisions and actions to anyone who has a legitimate interest. This may include staff, pupils, parents and the press, as well as the LA, the school's foundation or Welsh Government.

The principles of accountability underlie everything that you do as governors. There are many interested parties in a school: pupils and parents obviously, but amongst others, groups such as the local community, the LA, and in Church schools, the Diocese. Some of these groups are represented on your governing body, and so can easily be consulted, but it is important to give full consideration to all groups who might be affected by your decisions, for it is to these groups that you are accountable.

Governing Bodies' core responsibilities

It is important to remember that the reason that we become governors is to improve the education of children. As governors, you should give full consideration to the effects of all of your decisions on the pupils.

Remember, you are not elected or chosen for the benefit of your child or yourself. You are elected as a member of the public, and you are expected to act with their interests in mind at all times.

Governing bodies' responsibilities are too many and varied to list here, but it will help to give you an idea of your areas of responsibilities. You will find full details of these in The School Governors Guide to the Law.

Whenever new regulations come into force schools will receive a summary and guidance notes.

1. Curriculum

Governors must ensure that the curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and physical development of the pupils, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The curriculum consists of the National Curriculum, Religious Education and Personal and Social Education and the governing body must publish its curricular aims in the school prospectus. In drawing up their curricular aims, the governors must have regard to the LA's curriculum policy.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that pupils are entered for appropriate public examinations and they must ensure that there is no promotion of partisan political views in the school.

2. Special Education Needs (SEN)

In relation to SEN, the governing body must:

- identify a named governor
- use its best endeavours to ensure that the necessary SEN provision is made for a registered pupil

with special educational needs;

- ensure that the special educational needs of pupils are made known to those who teach them;
- ensure that teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for pupils with special educational needs;
- ensure that as far as possible a pupil with special education needs is able to join in the normal activities of the school;
- report annually to parents on their policy for pupils with special educational needs.

3. Staffing

The LA is the employer in community and voluntary controlled schools while, in voluntary aided and foundation schools, the governing body is the employer. In all schools, however, the governing body determines the staffing level, prepares the school pay policy and undertakes an annual review of staff pay.

Governing bodies are responsible for making appointments, although these can be delegated to the headteacher, and should, in any case, always be made in consultation with the headteacher.

Governing bodies are responsible for appointing the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and the leaving headteacher may not be involved in any way. All new headteachers appointed after 1st September, 2005 must hold the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers.

The governing body are responsible for setting out disciplinary rules and procedures for staff. They must also include rules and procedures for dealing with lack of capability on the part of any member of staff.

Governors would not normally get involved until the matter has failed to be resolved by internal procedures including an appeal to the head.

4. Finance

To sum up responsibilities relating to finance, the governing body:

- receives a delegated budget
- determines expenditure and financial priorities
- determines the level of delegation to the headteacher of the power to spend or transfer monies between budgets
- carries forward any underspend or overspend
- must operate its budget subject to the conditions of the Authority's Scheme of Delegation
- receives an annual financial statement from the LA
- must make a copy of the financial statement available for inspection at the school
- has responsibility for unofficial funds.

Areas funded from a school's delegated budget include the following:

- staffing
- educational supplies
- administration costs

- premises costs
- miscellaneous costs
- school Support Services

5. Health and Safety

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that school buildings, and the activities that take place in them, are safe for all concerned. The governing body and the headteacher must comply with any direction issued to them by the Authority concerning health and safety at community and voluntary controlled schools. They are advised to prepare their own Health and Safety Policy that is similar to the Authority's Health and Safety Policy.

6. Standards and Targets

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the school promotes high standards of educational achievement, attendance and behaviour. This includes the rigorous review of published performance data. The Governing Body is also responsible for setting targets by which progress for pupil achievement and outcomes can be measured.

7. Determining the aims, policies and priorities of the school

The Governing Body are responsible for School Self Evaluation, renewal and approval of statutory policies and documents.

8. Performance Data

The Governing Body plays a key role in improving standards within schools. They have a duty to promote the highest standards of educational achievement and must establish the strategic framework for the school and regularly review the progress made. In order to do this effectively, school governing bodies need to be well informed and must demonstrate a rigorous analysis of school performance data. It is important that the governing body monitors and evaluates progress. To undertake this successfully they need to act as the headteacher's critical friend.

The Governing body will need to review the performance of the school with the headteacher in an open and honest discussion. Governing bodies should ask challenging, searching questions and they should consider answers given and facts provided impartially. With support from the local authority, the headteacher and governing body should reach an agreed interpretation of the data to use in setting targets for improvement.

9. School Development/Improvement Plan (SIP)

The Governing Body must prepare a school development plan in accordance with the Education (School Development Plans) (Wales) Regulations 2014. The governing body has a major role to play in drawing up the school's development or improvement plan, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff. It will determine the priorities for what the school aims to achieve in the next few years. The Governing body, having approved the plan, is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the SDP/SIP.

10. Providing Parents with information regarding the school

The Governing Body must provide information to parents regarding the school via annual reports to parents and statutorily required meetings with parents.

11. Wellbeing and Safeguarding of Learners

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners, this includes the promotion of healthy eating within the school.

The Role of the Chair

- providing a clear lead in organising the governing body's work
- ensuring all governors are fully informed and involved in meetings
- ensuring that the governing body works as a team
- making good use of the skills and expertise of members
- managing meetings effectively
- maintaining an effective relationship with the headteacher
- providing strategic challenge and support to the headteacher
- acting as a spokesperson on behalf of the governing body

The Role of the Clerk

Duties and powers:

- convening governing body meetings
- distributing papers
- taking and distributing governing body meeting minutes
- maintaining membership and attendance registers
- offering procedural advice and guidance during and between meetings
- ensuring any follow up action has been taken

The clerk's relationship with the governing body:

- accountable to the governing body
- working closely with the Chair the headteacher and other governors on identified tasks

Governing Bodies and Estyn

It is possible that during your time as a Governor, your school will be visited by Estyn. Whilst the school is the main focus of the inspection, they will also be looking at the following aspects of the Governing Body;

- how well governors understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities

- how well governors know the school's strengths and areas for development and the degree to which they have participated in setting the school's strategic priorities
- whether there is an appropriate balance between support and challenge in the way the governing body discharges its role in holding the senior leadership to account on behalf of the local community, i.e. its role as a 'critical friend'
- how well the governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and takes full account of relevant legislation and guidance, including in relation to how it manages complaints and appeals from parents

Whilst it is unlikely Inspectors will ask to speak with new Governors, all governors will be asked to fill out a questionnaire.

Comprehensive information regarding the Inspection Framework is available on Estyn's website.

School Visits

School visits are often undertaken to enhance the governing body's understanding of an aspect of the school's work. Governing bodies will often have agreed a schedule for governors' visits and this should reflect the priorities in the school development plan and the specific interests and responsibilities of governors.

Governors are often invited to join the school at Christmas Concerts, Assemblies, Sports Days etc.

Remember you do not have an automatic right to visit as an individual governor. Try to accept some invitations but remember, you must let the headteacher manage on a day-to-day basis.

Before;

- Clarify the purpose of the visit. Is it linked to the School Development Plan?
- Discuss an agenda with the Headteacher in advance of the visit. Check that the date chosen is suitable for the purpose
- Discuss the agenda with any staff involved.
- How do they want governors to integrate into the lesson?

During;

- Decide with the teacher how you will be introduced and what your role in the classroom will be
- Look relaxed. Blend in. Avoid being conspicuous. Get involved if the teacher has agreed that this would be appropriate
- Remember it is a visit not an inspection
- Observe discreetly. Remember that note taking can be disconcerting
- Be courteous, not critical

After;

- Discuss what you have observed with the teacher. Use the opportunity to clarify any issues you are unclear about
- Thank the teacher for supporting you in your role as a governor

- Make notes as soon as possible after your observation while it is still fresh in your mind.
- Agree with the headteacher, who and when you will report on your visit to the governing body
- Write up your report and circulate a draft to the head and any staff involved. Be prepared to amend it. Aim to achieve a report that is agreed by those involved.

Governor Support & Training

The role of the Governor Support Team is to provide a comprehensive service to governing bodies by providing:

- a cohesive training programme
- up to date information to governing bodies through a range of media including newsletter and a dedicated website.
- advice and assistance to Clerks of Governing Bodies
- policies and guidance materials

Governor Training is provided throughout the academic year and details can be found in the School Governors Training Calendar and Year Planner which you will receive at the start of the Autumn term. Mandatory training will be provided by the Governor Support team at the Central South Consortium whilst additional training will be provided by your Local Authority.

Governors Wales' Top Tips to be an effective school Governor

1. A good place to start is to try and get an overview of where the school is at the moment. Have a look at the last inspection report. You could also read up on the last few full governing body meetings minutes, headteacher's report, school development plan etc, to get an idea of the current projects, issues etc.
2. Ask if another governor can act as your mentor. Your mentor can talk you through the development areas and how they are being tackled, point towards data in the headteacher's report etc.
3. Attend governing body meetings regularly. This ensures that you get to know the school and the members of the governing body better.
4. Be organised with the paperwork for meetings. Read the papers prior to the meeting, and prepare any questions you may want to ask relating to those papers etc. This shows that you are acting as a "critical friend".
5. Don't be afraid to ask other governors to explain what they're talking about if you don't understand.
6. If you are a new governor, don't expect to be an expert straight away. Ask questions to make sure you understand everything.
7. The kind of discussion that you are involved in as a governor is strategic, not day to day e.g., you will be monitoring data and looking at policies etc. Respect the responsibility of the headteacher for the day-to-day decisions in the management of the school.
8. Looking at the data - how are the pupils performing - compare this with previous years. Are things improving? If not, why? Ask the questions.
9. If discussions and agenda items are deemed confidential, make sure this information is not shared with anyone else outside of the governing body.
10. All governors are equal so take care to respect others' views and behave accordingly in dealings with governor colleagues.
11. If you have a personal interest in a topic being discussed at meetings, where you may not be impartial, declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting.
12. Governing bodies are corporate bodies, so when making a decision, bring your own view, but stand by the corporate decision made by the governing body.
13. Governing body meetings are not the correct place to bring up concerns about your own children who may be attending the school.

14. Make yourself familiar with the terms of reference for the committees, where you are a member.
15. Attend the mandatory training, and any other training that you think may be relevant to your role.
16. Has the governing body carried out a skills audit and identified gaps in their skills / experience. Is there something that you can offer here? Make an impact! Apply your skills and experience for the benefit of the school.
17. Visit the school as a link governor, observing the pupils in classes and the playground etc, looking at activities e.g. observing classes, talking to staff / pupils, looking at resources etc, what did you learn as a result of your visit? What was the biggest impression the visit made - noting positive comments about the focus etc.
18. If someone approaches you with a concern regarding the school, ensure you direct them back to the school and / or the headteacher. There are ways for them to raise their concerns at the school, and approaching an individual governor is not one of them.
19. Remember you are volunteers with a vital role and enjoy it.

Governors Wales' Principles of Conduct for Governors of Schools in Wales

In order for governors to discharge their responsibilities and duties effectively and efficiently it is important to have a set of guiding principles, governors should:

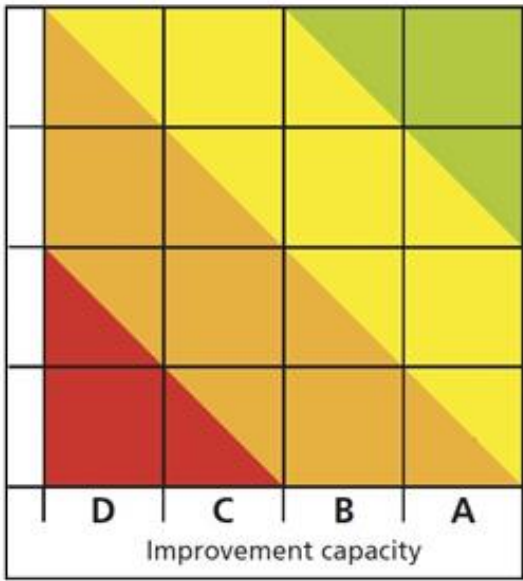
- Ensure that their actions reflect the considered, best interests of the school and its pupils;
- Attend governing body meetings regularly;
- On appointment / election attend induction training, data training and chair training (for chairs only) provided by the Local Authority, if the criteria set out in The Government of Maintained Schools (Training Requirements for Governors) (Wales) Regulations 2013¹ applies;
- On appointment / election, familiarise themselves with work of the school and keep this knowledge up to date;
- Maintain their knowledge of current education policy, regulations and guidance and extend their skills by participating in training programmes including whole governing body training and other events;
- Demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity and reflect this in developing and applying the policies the school is required to have in respect of sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability or age (as defined in the Equality Act 2010);
- Act as a critical friend towards those with professional responsibilities in the school, bearing in mind the governing body's own responsibility to promote high standards of educational achievement;
- Be conscious of, and act within, the limits of the responsibilities of the governing body and when necessary, seek and give due consideration to professional information, advice and guidance;
- Respect the responsibility of the headteacher for the day-to-day decisions in the management of the school;
- Observe collective responsibility by supporting, once determined by democratic means, the decisions of the governing body;
- Respect the governing body's right to deem certain matters to be confidential, restricting discussion of such matters, whether inside or outside governing body meetings, solely to governor colleagues and in appropriate cases solely to discussion within governing body committees;

- Develop with colleagues on the governing body, a clear vision for the school;
- Focus their contribution to governing body decisions upon what is in the best interests of pupils, and be conscious that the welfare of pupils should always come first in terms of child protection, health and safety and helping each child to develop their full potential;
- Encourage and participate in systems which provide for open and effective communication, helping to establish a clear vision of the school's development;
- Be aware that all governors are equal and respect others' views and behave accordingly in dealings with governor colleagues;
- Be aware of their accountability to parents and others in the local community and seek to devise effective dialogue with all those interested in the conduct and standards of the school;
- Observe all protocols and procedures agreed by the governing body;
- Be open, honest, objective, fair and impartial and prepared to confront the personal prejudices that may hinder informed decision-making including conflicts of interest.
- With the rise in popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, governors should remember that they are a representative of the governing body and part of a corporate body. It is therefore sensible for governors to maintain a certain level of separation on social networking sites, as this may create a conflict / difficult situation in the future.

National School Categorisation System

The National School Categorisation System aims to provide a clear structure to review how well a school is performing for all its learners, taking into consideration how effectively it is led and managed, the quality of teaching and learning, and the level of support and challenge it needs to do even better.

The system helps identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve. It also identifies those that are doing well but could be doing better and those that are highly effective and can help and support others to do better.



Each primary and secondary school is placed into one of four colour-coded support categories which trigger a tailored support package.

National School Categorisation is not about labelling schools or creating league tables. It is about helping schools identify what factors contribute to their progress and achievement and what areas to focus on to achieve further development.

Challenge advisers are employed by the regional education consortia for school improvement. These challenge advisers are responsible for helping schools to improve their outcomes for learners and will support and challenge school leaders to develop their strategies for leadership, teaching and learning. The support for each school is tailored to meet the school's needs.

A wide range of information is used based on the school's performance over a three-year period. For primary schools we use four groups of data based on teacher assessment and attendance. For secondary schools we use four groups of data, based on examination results and attendance.

More information about School Categorisation can be found in the National School Categorisation System section of the Welsh Government Website.

Induction for New Governors: BASIC Checklist

<u>TASK</u>	✓
<u>The Governing Body</u>	
Have you seen the Governing Bodies Instrument of Governance	
Have you had details of the membership of the governing body	
Have you received current and previous minutes of meetings	
Have you been given access to key Governing Body policy documents	
Do you know the process of governors' visits to the school	
Have you received the dates of forthcoming meetings and other significant school events	
Have you received information about the various GB committees	
Have you received details of training opportunities and how to book a place	
Have you completed the Register of Business Interest form	
Have you read the Principles of Conduct for the Governing Body	
Are you up to date on current issues and concerns within the governing body.	
Do you know how a meeting works, the format what you can/cannot do etc	
Have you received an up to date calendar of Governing Body Meetings	
<u>The School</u>	
Have you visited the school and meet the staff and pupils	
Have you received a general history & information about the school	
Do you know how classes are organised and how the curriculum is delivered	
Do you have a list of staff with their responsibilities	
Do you know where to find the School Profile	
Do you know where to find the school prospectus	
Do you know where to find the latest ESTYN report	
Do you have a copy of the School Development Plan	
Do you have details of the school's budget	
Do you have a copy of the Calendar of School Terms & Events	

Further Sources of Information

Bridgend County Borough Council	01656 642 650 sarah-jayne.james@bridgend.gov.uk www.bridgend.gov.uk
Cardiff Council	02920 872 912 governor.services@cardiff.gov.uk www.cardiff.gov.uk
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	01685 725 000 hayley.craze@merthyr.gov.uk www.merthyr.gov.uk
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	01443 744 060 governor.support@rctcbc.gov.uk www.rctcbc.gov.uk
Vale of Glamorgan Council	01446 709 107 governors@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Central South Consortium Joint Education Service	01443 827 527 CSCGovernor@cscjes.gov.uk www.cscjes.org.uk/
Estyn	02920 446 446 www.estyn.gov.uk
Governors Wales	08456 020 100 www.governorswales.org.uk
Welsh Government: Education & Skills	www.gov.wales/topics/educationandskills
My Local School	www.myllocalschool.wales.gov.uk
Learning Wales	www.learning.gov.wales