

GOVERNING BODY SEPTEMBER 2014

The Role of the Governing Body

Why does the school have a Governing Body?

The school has a Governing Body to ensure that it has the capacity to improve and raise overall standards.

Ofsted considers the governing body to be part of the leadership and management of the school. However governors do not manage the school. That is the job of the head teacher and management team. Governors are there to be "a critical friend" to the head teacher and the school, but they do oversee the development of the school - their main aim being to assist the head teacher and senior leaders to always provide a high standard of education for all pupils, of all abilities.

Governors have considerable responsibilities. However, governors don't exercise them as individuals but work as part of a governing body - a corporate team.

The governing body has three main roles:-

Strategic

The governing body helps to set the general direction of the school, looking, with the head and other leaders at how it should best develop. This is done by reviewing and agreeing policies, targets and priorities and monitoring and reviewing aims and objectives. Strategic thinking is about understanding the processes the school uses to develop and ensuring that these are explored fully at *Governors' Meetings* or during governor visits to school.

It does this by:

- Contributing to the school self-evaluation process
- Establishing where the school's strengths and weaknesses are
- Deciding with the head teacher the priorities for improvement
- Discussing, questioning and approving the school's targets and timescales
- Ensuring that the school has a School Improvement Plan (SIP) that sets out all the actions to be taken
- Finance - assisting to determine how to spend the budget allocated to the school to the best effect
- Staffing - supporting decisions on staffing numbers and ratios, the pay policy and making decisions on staff pay

- Appointments - appointing the head and deputy head teacher and other staff

The Governing Body of Shaw Wood Academy understand and support current developments in school.

Critical Friend

A governing body should work with the head teacher and have a clear understanding of the challenges faced in managing a school and in particular in managing their own school in its own context and circumstances. The governing body should feel able to question and challenge. In a good working relationship this will be accepted and seen to be positive. In a poor relationship it will be the cause of conflict. Real critical friendship is only achieved where there is trust and mutual respect. It achieves this by:

- Performance management - carrying out the performance management process for the head teacher and overseeing and understanding the Appraisal arrangements for other staff

The Governing Body of Shaw Wood Academy always seek explanation, reasoning and understanding of developments and planned developments in school.

Accountability

A school is a business and its stakeholders are the learners. The governing body must have a professional attitude and use its collective skills to benefit the learners. It must gather views, ask questions and decide what is best for the school. The governing body is answerable to the Local Authority, all stakeholders and also to the wider community in assuring themselves that the school provides value for money and is doing its best for all stakeholders.

It does this by:

- Receiving information about the school's performance and comparing it with past performance, national averages and 'similar schools';
- Monitoring the implementation of the SIP, largely by receiving reports from the head teacher
- Evaluating progress and achievements
- Targets - setting appropriate targets for pupil achievement at Key Stage 2
- Standards - helping to secure high standards of educational achievement

- Curriculum - ensuring breadth and balance, and delivery of the National Curriculum and understanding the breadth of the school's own curriculum outside the National Curriculum.
- Special Educational Needs - ensuring the governing body's responsibilities are carried out and continuing to ensure the school's excellent record on Inclusion.
- Inspection - agreeing and monitoring the school's Self-Evaluation Form

The governing body has general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. This gives rise to a wide range of specific responsibilities which in turn require the governing body to establish a range of procedures.

Area of responsibility include:-

- *Committee formation, delegation and operation*
- *Complaints - review*
- *Discipline*
- *Finance*
- *Meetings of the Governing Body and its Committees*
- *Performance Management*
- *Policies*
- *Self Evaluation*
- *SEN*
- *Staffing*
- *Standards*
- *Targets*
- *Terms of Reference*

The link below will take you to a Government document on the roles and responsibilities of School Governors - 'The Governors' handbook' -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governors-handbook--2>