

# Role description

For chairs of governors

## Role purpose

To provide leadership to the governing body, ensuring that it fulfils its functions well, and to work closely with the headteacher to support, advise and help shape proposals to be discussed at board meetings, ensuring its focus is strategic.

## Leading governance

- Ensure the board and headteacher have a shared vision and sense of purpose.
- Ensure the board sets a clear vision and strategy for the school.
- Lead the board in monitoring the implementation of the strategy.
- Set the culture of the board, balancing and valuing the support and challenge responsibility
- Ensure the board acts as a team.
- Where required, represent the governing body in its dealings with external partners and be an advocate for the school.
- Attend school and trust functions as appropriate and encourage other governors to do so.
- Attend the trust's chairs of governors group.
- Establish a relationship with the school's link trustee, and work together to act as a link between the governing body and the trust board.

## Leading and developing the team

- Work with the trust's governance manager to ensure that the board has the required skills and commitment to govern well, and that identified skills gaps are filled.
- Ensure a diverse team that reflects the communities served with a mix of new and experienced governors and a variety of backgrounds.
- Ensure all governors have a thorough understanding of their roles and responsibilities and receive appropriate induction and training as required.
- Encourage the board and individual governors to conduct an annual self-evaluation.
- Ensure that all governors are involved and feel valued.
- Carry out a performance review of each governor (or delegate this to the vice-chair)
- Encourage the development of governors.
- Model and reinforce the board's agreed code of conduct.
- Develop a good working relationship with the vice-chair, ensuring they are kept fully informed and delegating tasks as appropriate.
- Ensure that there is a plan for succession for the chair, vice-chair and committee chairs.

## Working with the headteacher

- Build a professional relationship with the headteacher that allows for honest conversations, acting as a sounding board and ensuring there are no surprises at meetings.
- Meet regularly (normally monthly) with the headteacher.
- Ensure appropriate governor involvement in the recruitment of the headteacher and other executive leaders.

- Ensure all governors concentrate on their strategic role and hold the headteacher to account.
- Ensure that school leaders provide information that allows the board to fulfill its function.
- Participate in the headteacher's appraisal ensuring that appropriate continuing professional development is provided (the headteacher will be line-managed by the chief executive officer of the trust, but the chair should still be involved in the appraisal process).
- Ensure the workload and wellbeing of executive leaders is considered.
- Ensure the headteacher provides staff with an understanding of the role of the governing body and acts as a link between the two.
- Play a lead role in any decision to suspend the headteacher (alongside the chief executive officer of the trust).

### **Leading improvement**

- Ensure the board is involved at a strategic level in the school's self-evaluation process and that this feeds into its key priorities.
- Ensure the board's business is focused on the school's strategic priorities.
- Ensure the board has the information it needs to monitor the progress of pupils and consider appropriate actions to improve outcomes.
- Ensure the board has good knowledge of the school.
- Ensure there are mechanisms in place to listen to the views of parents, pupils and staff.

### **Leading governing board business**

- Collaborate with the trust's governance manager to establish effective working procedures and, where relevant, sound committee structures.
- Work with the trust's governance manager and the headteacher to plan board meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the board's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and avoid unnecessary paperwork.
- Chair meetings effectively, promoting an open culture that allows ideas and discussions to thrive while ensuring clear decisions are reached as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that decisions taken at meetings of the governing body are implemented.