

Guidance Notes to support the Governing Body Self-Evaluation process

The following Guidance notes and exemplar material have been designed to assist you with the completion of your governing body action plan. They are not by any means definitive. We will be building on the exemplar material provided in conjunction with Local Authorities / Regional Consortia and those involved in the Self-Evaluation process; this is very much work in progress.

The Guidance notes focus on the Key Questions, Quality Indicators and Aspects of Estyn's Common Inspection Framework. Further information is available at:

<http://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/Common%20Inspection%20Framework.pdf>.

Sections B, C and D are closely aligned to the Common Inspection Framework which will help to form judgements for the school self-evaluation.

These sections are to assist governing bodies in developing their support, challenge and accountability roles, working closely and in partnership with school leaders to achieve an honest and accurate self-evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement.

The governing body needs to evidence that discussion and, where necessary, decisions have been made that have been successful in ensuring that the criteria in the template are being met.

PART D:

Question 3 - How good are leadership and management?

Leadership is concerned with:

- building and co-ordinating a team whose members have a common purpose;
- encouraging individuals to contribute to the common purpose; and
- developing a capacity to reflect critically on what is being done and how it can be improved.

The governing body will be able to show that it has made decisions / allocated resources / taken actions that have been successful in ensuring that the effectiveness of their governance has been improved, e.g. the governing body's plans focus on the impact of strategic partnerships, resource management and quality improvement in all aspects of provision. The governing body will be able to link their development plans to improved outcomes for the school, pupils, staff or community.

3.1 How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our leadership?

When thinking about strategic direction, we need to consider the extent to which we have clear aims, strategic objectives, plans and policies that are focused on meeting pupils' needs. Good plans are appropriately focused, implemented and monitored in a timely way.

3.1.1 How good is our strategic direction and what is the impact of our leadership?

Minutes of discussion with regard to the governors' long-term ambitions for the school. Documents outlining the governors strategic objectives.

School Development Plan (SDP) meets statutory requirements and provides clear direction for the school staff.

All the SDP objectives are specific, measurable, agreed (with the person who is to deliver the objective), realistic and time constrained (SMART).

Staff and pupils have had appropriate input into the construction of the SDP.

Governing body review of committee structure and terms of reference. Governing body committee structure monitors and evaluates progress towards priorities identified in the SDP.

Committees have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and terms of reference.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of school performance.

Self-Evaluation Report of governing body performance, e.g. meeting attendance, training, completion of agreed actions etc.

All staff, parents/carers, pupils, neighbouring schools, community and other stakeholders are aware of the vision for the school. Governors and staff understand that it will be delivered through the SDP. This is tested through survey feedback: staff, parents/carers and pupils. Values and behaviours are part of the vision, mission and school ethos defined in the SDP. Part of governing body self-evaluation tests values and behaviours of governors.

Headteacher and staff performance management meet statutory guidance and are firmly embedded as part of the governance of the school.

Governors can demonstrate that performance management is systematic, robust and has led to improvement teaching and learning as well as improved pupil outcomes.

Governing Body and Committee minutes reference LA and Welsh Government initiatives and priorities. Governors can evidence discussions, actions and outcomes that respond to these initiatives and priorities.

Governors can evidence working with the local Governors' Association and neighbouring schools to address issues of local and national importance. Governors can demonstrate examples of sharing their good practice with (and learning from) other governing bodies.

3.1.2 How good is the work of our governors?

All new governors have completed the national mandatory training sessions for 'understanding data'. All new governors have completed the mandatory 'induction' training. All chairs have completed the mandatory 'chairs' training.

All new governors have had an effective school induction.

All new governors were mentored to ensure they knew their role and who to turn to if they were unsure of anything.

Governors can provide evidence of asking questions critical to the improvement of standards.

Governors can evidence discussions on school performance data which resulted in actions for further improvement.

The Complaints Policy is published for all staff, parents/carers, pupils and others to easily access. The school website and Prospectus gives clear direction as to how to access the Complaints Policy. Data reviewed: number of complaints. Feedback from parents/carers, pupils, staff and others on the level of satisfaction with complaints handling.

3.2 How do we improve the quality of what we do?

When self-evaluation becomes a reflective professional process, it helps schools get to know themselves well, identify their agenda for improvement and promote sector-leading practice. Our leadership and management are unlikely to be good if self-evaluation procedures are not effective.

3.2.1 How well do we carry out self-evaluation, including listening to pupils and others?

Headteacher's Report – staff performance reviews. Reports on classroom observation and quality of teaching and learning.

School Self-Evaluation Report. Governors' self-review/action plan.

Evidence that governors have acted upon recommendations from external reports, e.g. Estyn, Diocesan Section 50 report, IIP, Quality Mark Bronze Award.

Governing Body Self-Evaluation – evidence that governors have reviewed the effectiveness of their own performance and have acted upon the outcomes.

3.2.2 How do we plan and secure improvement?

The governing body can provide evidence that it has improved its own effectiveness as a result of feedback from surveys, external inspections, governing body self-evaluation, school self-evaluation and other inputs.

The governing body has a balanced set of performance measures and targets against which it can determine its effectiveness, e.g. attendance at meetings, attendance at training and development events, attendance at school events (such as formal or informal parent meetings), attendance at conferences (national, consortium or local), number of meetings with other governors or governing bodies, number of joint initiatives or projects with other governing bodies, number of complaints or grievances (against the GB), number of link governor meetings, completion of annual skills matrix, completion of self-evaluation questionnaire etc.

3.3 How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our partnership working?

Governors recognise the need to work in partnership to improve provision, standards and wellbeing. To be effective at working with others, schools need to:

- be relevant to the local community and to the lives of children and young people outside school and school hours;
- engage with families and the broader community, including businesses, external agencies and the voluntary sector; and
- work in a joined-up way with other providers and agencies to improve the standards and wellbeing of individual pupils.

3.3.1 How strategically do we work with our partners to improve pupils' standards and wellbeing?

Governors have identified key stakeholders (those with an interest in the success of the school).

Governors can explain the strategies in place to engage with families, the community, other schools and other stakeholders.

Governors monitor a broad range of measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies.

Governors monitor the effectiveness of the school's strategic partnerships that are designed to improve standards and pupil wellbeing.

Headteacher's Report.

School Development Plan.

School Self-Evaluation Report.

Link governor reports.

Annual Report to parents/carers.

Chair and governing body communications with the community and other stakeholders.

3.3.2 How well do we collaborate with partners to deliver coherent programmes and choices?

Governors can explain how the school works with others, such as partner schools, to improve the quality of provision.

Governors can explain how they work with governors in partner schools to improve the management and sharing of resources.

Governors can explain the strategies in place to engage with employers, FE Colleges, other schools and Higher Education Institutions.

Governors monitor the effectiveness of strategies and evaluate outcomes in terms of achievement, attainment and pupil destinations.

Governors can explain shortfalls and the learning and any subsequent action when targets are missed.

3.4 How do we evaluate resource management?

Leadership requires that resources, including staff, time and finances, are used effectively to improve provision, standards and wellbeing. When evaluating the management of resources, we should look at the quality of our plans and strategies to ensure that we deliver value for money.

3.4.1 How well do we manage our staff and resources?

Governing Body, Curriculum, Finance, Pay and Staffing Committee minutes. Appropriate staffing structures implemented.

Governors can show that the work-life balance of Headteacher and staff is managed effectively.

Staff CPD policies.

Headteacher performance review.

Staff performance review.

Records of training and development.

Governing Body and Committee minutes detailing decisions on investment leading to improved outcomes.

Governors can show how they have supported Headteacher and staff training and development, such as:

- Involvement in Professional Learning Communities
- Attendance at events and conferences
- School to school support
- Within school sharing of best practice.

Governing Body, Curriculum, Finance, Pay and Staffing, Premises Committee minutes.

School Development Plan.

Clear delegation of budget responsibilities.

Balanced budget or clear strategies and plans to return to a balanced budget when over-spend is planned or anticipated.

Evidence of effective risk management.

3.4.2 Do we provide value for money?

Governors can demonstrate how value for money has been achieved. Spending decisions are made based on desired outcomes and subsequent evaluation is made on actual outcomes.

For acronyms and useful educational terms please refer to the Jargon Buster:

<http://www.governors.wales/publications/2006/10/01/jargon/>