

What makes a good Governing Body

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Manchester Made Me

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Socialisation
- Aspiration
- Self esteem
- Friendship groups



“What exactly do we want from governors? We want them to work with the leaders of their schools to be both strategic and pragmatic in delivering good outcomes for all children and young people. We want them to strengthen schools’ professional leadership by appointing the right people to the right jobs. And we want them to hold school leaders to account for the progress and outcomes they achieve in their schools.

Michael Wilshaw to the National Governors Association.

Why do we do it?

- To give something back
- To use our skills
- To help the local community
- We are interested in education
- To acquire skills and experiences that are transferrable to our profession
- To develop ourselves
- We believe in investing in the future
- To Make A Difference
- We are passionate and have a strong moral purpose to help schools succeed

Building an effective team

- Regular attendance
- Energetic commitment
- Using individual talents
- Sharing the workload
- Listening to individuals
- Respecting others' views
- Displaying loyalty to final decisions
- Being part of a team

“What are the few things critical to success that only we can do; and if we don’t do it, won’t get done?”

- *How to Change 5000 Schools*, Ben Levin

Why University of Manchester governors?

The core functions of a Board of Governors are:

1. Set vision and strategic direction for the school
2. Hold the Head to account for the educational performance of the school
3. Ensure that financial resources are well spent

Skills required

- Finance and knowledge of robust financial systems
- Personnel and HR matters
- Strategic planning
- Change/ project management
- IT
- Communications and Marketing Strategies
- Data Analysis – the ability to understand how to request and to interrogate relevant data, and communicate the findings clearly.
- The ability to provide effective scrutiny

Benefits of University of Manchester governors

- Hard skills – e.g. interpreting and analysing data
- Succinct report writing
- Curriculum knowledge
- Fresh eyes on the school
- Age profile
- University of Manchester's flexibility
- Ability to network
- External contacts
- Professionalism brought to OFSTED inspection

Becoming effective quickly

- Thorough induction process
- Prioritising meetings
- First impressions count
- Training and CPD
- Be self –aware

Managing expectations

What are your expectations when you join the Board of Governors?

- That I will make a difference
- I can share knowledge and expertise
- I expect the Board to be run professionally
- I hope that people will listen to my views
- I want to be part of a team or community

About my expectations

I need governors to:

- Undertake a fair share of the work
- Display a dedication to acting openly, honestly, diligently and with integrity
- To be ambassadors for the school
- To know the school
- To attend meetings and be prepared
- To show determination to get results for the pupils , using their wisdom and mature judgement

“We are volunteers, but we are not amateurs”

- Lord Nash

Learning from Reviews of Governance

‘Good governance is crucial to tackling underperformance and supporting improvement. Governance that is weak does not challenge the school about its performance or press the school to increase its aspirations.’ ‘In the best schools, strong leaders and governors routinely challenge low expectations and mediocre teaching’.

Sir Michael Wilshaw

Learning from Reviews of Governance

Not all Boards of Governors are working well

- How do we deal with difficulties?
- How do we move things along?

And finally

In successful schools:

School Leaders and governors behave with integrity and are mutually supportive. School Leaders recognise that governors provide them with a different perspective and the questions they ask challenge assumptions and support effective decision making. This recognition of the value of governors makes a particular contribution to strengthening school leadership.

Learning from the Best – The Ofsted survey of School Governance 2011