



Becoming a Chair

UMSGI Conference workshop 2019

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1. Reflections on my experience
2. Problems encountered
3. Some solutions – work in progress
4. General discussion



My Experience (so far)

- Chair for 2 years. Vice chair for 4 months beforehand then sudden change over – beware succession planning !
- OFSTED just after I took over. Requs Improvement result- Pupil Premium, Maths, T&L inconsistency problems. (had been Good previous 2 inspections).
- Governors aware of problems (P8, exp GCSE results) but challenge had been too little too late.
- Chair of T & L committee in Primary school (3 years)- easier job, good new Head, better management.



Problems and Burdens !

- Workload: the step up from Governor duties is considerable- 1-2 days a week may be needed- but depends on your school
- Chairing Meetings: may be a new skill set, managing equitable participation, summarising, effective decisions and follow up actions.
- Relationship with Headteacher- vital for effective governance, takes time to develop
- External duties as school representative – LA, MAT, NGA, local community.... networking takes time.



Some solutions

- Delegation ! Choose a vice chair who is willing to share your burden, and complements your skill set. Use Link Governors for detail in specific areas: Pupil premium, SEN, etc.
- Delegate to your clerk, e.g. Governor records, agenda management, document chasing, etc., but depends on your local service- LA or buy in, cost/benefit trade off
- Use Meeting Management IT, discussion boards, etc. We use GVO Governors Virtual Office, ok but could be better,
- Plan your (and the GB's workload). Prioritise issues on the agenda. Avoid crowding agendas with too many items.



Discussion- some other issues but you set the agenda

- Relationships- with the Head, Parents, teachers, other Governors, the community
- Effective communication- FTF, Meetings, email, social media ??
- The Exec- Non Exec horizon- where does the strategic become tactical, when is oversight 'nit picking' ?
- Priorities- Finance ? T&L ? Behaviour ? Staff wellbeing.....