

Getting the best out of your Governing Board

Improving working relationships with Governors / Trustees

The Good

- Communication is ongoing and open / honest.
- Governors have skills that compliment their role on the Board.
- Governors meet with staff in school to further understand their area / subject /phase.
- Governors ask challenging questions and enhance the strategic leadership vision and values.
- Governors understand they are not operational managers and that they delegate this responsibility.

The Bad

- Governors are only seen at meetings
- Governors do not read the 'pack' before meetings
- Head Teacher / Principal / CEO reads information out in the meeting
- Meetings last too long and are not productive, no strategic vision
- Governors ask challenging questions in an attempt to catch you out not to support the strategic leadership

The Ugly

- Governors are ex-staff members who cannot let go of 'how it used to be'
- Governors attend meetings for a chance to catch up – drink coffee – have a buffet
- Conversations and questions are unpredictable – hard for you to plan for
- Governors have their own agenda i.e. parents complaining about parking
- Governors interfere in the operational running of the school

What to share - SBL

- Financial updates
- Financial forecasts
- Staffing updates
- Premises updates
- Attendance information
- Admissions information
- Known factors affecting the budget – pay increases, HNF, PPG etc

Top Tips

- Communication
- Provide information 2 weeks prior to meeting
- Invite Governors to meet staff regularly and ask Governors to share a written report on their visit
- Understand the school priorities and provide more information about these areas
- Be confident
- Don't over share

How to prepare for meetings

- You have met your link Governor before the meeting, so they are not a scary stranger
- You have made notes on your financial forecasting info as reminders for you in case you are asked questions
- You have shared information about any large variances – Favourable and Adverse
- You are ready! If any questions are asked and you are not sure, say that, don't guess! – Find out the answer and get back to them outside the meeting.

Preparation continued..

- Take a notepad for any additional questions and look back on these before the next meeting so you are not caught out twice.
- If anything happens in the meeting that makes you feel uncomfortable, speak to the Governor or your line manager about how you felt and how you could prevent this happening again.
- Ask governors to submit their questions prior to the meeting so you have time to prepare your answers and you don't feel spooked during the meeting.