

Governors of Framwellgate School Durham 2017

Knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours

Level of knowledge or skills/behaviour, rate on scale of:
No → → → Yes

1 2 3 4 5

1. Strategic leadership

I am committed to improving education and welfare for all pupils.	5				
I understand current national education policy and the local education context.	3				
I have experience of charity law and governance.	2				
I have previous experience of being a governor/trustee in another school or being a board member in another sector	3				
I have experience of chairing a board/governing board or committee.	3				
I have experience of strategic planning and applying this to set and preserve the culture of the organisation.	3				
I am committed to the organisation's vision and ethos.	4				
I am able to question and challenge, working as part of a team to identify viable options through collective decision making.	4				
I am able to work in a professional manner, avoiding conflicts, acting with transparency and integrity.	5				
I am confident I can identify when to seek independent/professional advice.	4				
I have experience of stakeholder management and engagement including communicating with and taking account of the views of parents and pupils.	3				
I have experience of promoting community cohesion.	3				
I am proficient in prioritising, assessing and mitigating risk.	3				
I have experience of school sector risk management, including managing conflicts of interest/loyalty.	2				

2. Accountability

I understand the importance of collecting high quality data and have expertise using data to interpret/evaluate performance and identify trends to target improvement.	4				
I have expertise in curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment.	3				
I have experience of working with leaders to establish expectations for improvement and outcomes.	4				
I have experience of agreeing the range and format of information and data needed in order to hold leaders to account.	3				
I have experience of providing challenge to leaders on strategies for monitoring and improving behaviour and safety.	3				
I have an understanding of the board's duties in relation to safeguarding including Prevent.	3				
I have an understanding of special education needs and disabilities (SEND).	3				
I have financial management expertise, with experience of funding allocation/budget monitoring and contributing to financial self-evaluation and efficiency drives.	2				
I have experience of basing funding decisions on organisational priorities and the ability to interpret financial data and question financial performance against strategic priorities.	3				

I have experience of procurement/purchasing.	3				
I have experience of property and estate-management.	1				
I have experience of HR policy and processes, including employment legislation, recruitment, performance management and pay.	3				
I have experience of school sector HR policy and processes.	2				
I have experience of change management (overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure).	3				
I have experience of preparing for and responding to external oversight.	3				
I have experience of inspection and oversight in the school sector.	3				
3. People					
I am willing to devote time, enthusiasm and effort to the duties of and responsibilities of a governor/trustee.	5				
I am a strong communicator and committed to building strong collaborative relationships.	5				
I am able to discuss sensitive issues with experience of conflict resolution and influencing consensus.	4				
I am able to demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviour and values, honesty, independence of thought and sound judgement.	5				
I am committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.	5				
I am willing to reflect, listen and learn from a diversity of views, to receive and provide feedback and accept impartial advice.	5				
4. Structures					
I am familiar with the strategic nature of the board's functions and how this differs from and works with others including senior leaders.	3				
I have experience of reviewing governance structures.	2				
5. Compliance					
I have experience of complying with legal, regulatory and financial frameworks and statutory guidance.	3				
I understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities of a governor/trustee.	3				
Governing boards are responsible for ensuring schools comply with a whole range of legal responsibilities. I have experience ensuring legal compliance in this way and a commitment to understanding the full range of legal responsibilities.	3				
I understand the importance of adhering to organisation policies e.g. on parental complaints or staff-discipline issues.	4				
I have the confidence and ability to speak up when concerned about non-compliance.	4				
6. Evaluation					
I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses and committed to personal development.	4				
I have experience of evaluating board decisions and am willing to contribute to board self-review.	4				

Commentary on the Skills Audit 2017

The audit demonstrated a strong set of skills, knowledge and experience as you would expect from a well-educated group working in a range of professional roles.

The strongest section

Section 3 - People, scoring all 5 and one 4. Again this reflects the professional lives of governors. All governors are in roles in which they are working with people, building relationships, used to a diversity of views and having a commitment to ethical behaviour and independence of thought. All governors scored 5 on "commitment to improving education and welfare for all pupils".

Sections of the audit relevant to the Trust Board rather than the governing body are:-

- Risk Management
- Financial management including budget allocation and financial self-evaluation.
- Procurement/purchasing
- Property and estate management
- HR policy and processes inc. employment legislation, recruitment and performance management.
- Organisational re-structure
- Governance structures

Areas for development following the audit

The scores indicate that the areas for development are focused on educational issues where governors currently have limited knowledge or would like to know more. These areas are:-

- Current national education policy and the local education context.
- Curriculum development, school assessment and progress/attainment
- Safeguarding duties including Prevent
- An understanding of Special Educational Needs and disabilities
- Preparing for external oversight (Ofsted inspection)

In addition the scores indicated that further work is needed on:-

- Stakeholder management and engagement including communicating with and taking account of the views of parents and pupils.
- Promoting community cohesion.
- Ensuring governors have information and data needed to hold leaders to account.
- Challenging leaders on strategies for monitoring behaviour and safety.
- Clarity on the school's vision and ethos

Responses to the Audit 2017-18

Governor Training

Increasing governors' knowledge in specific areas can be done through governor training offered by the local authority. All governors have signed up to a range of LA courses for 2017-18. These will ensure that the governing board as a whole is better informed of a range of educational issues by the end of 2018.

Local Governing Body meetings

Local Governing Body meetings will be used to develop more effective challenge and support to the Headteacher. Each meeting will have a school specific training element which seeks to improve governor skills and knowledge. A range of topics to be covered in 2017-18, identified by governors in their self review workshop, include curriculum changes, DFE competencies, the new RAISE document, performance data, community engagement, enrichment activities, school staffing structure.

Working groups

Working groups will continue to focus on areas identified in the audit e.g. the Community and business operations committee will focus on improving engagement with parents, the Achievement & Standards committee will ensure governors have information and data needed to hold leaders to account.

Link Governors

Link Governors will develop a deeper understanding (compared to other governors) of their named link area and report back to the appropriate committee as appropriate. This will deepen and enhance the knowledge and skills of the governing board as a whole.

The Skills Audit will be completed annually. It will be amended in 2018. Those areas which are the responsibility of the Trust Board will be removed, thus enabling the Local Governing Board to focus on its core purpose to oversee the strategic direction and policies of the school, to monitor standards and to be held accountable for its performance.

AD July 2017