

Practical ways of helping your governing body to prepare for Ofsted inspection

General efficient and effective practice

1. Ensure that the committee and meeting structure is well organised and fit-for-purpose.
2. Keep Standing Orders and Terms of Reference up-to-date and ensure easy access.
3. Encourage governors to look at the membership of their Governing Body and recruit governors with professional knowledge and expertise, to add to the effectiveness of strategic decision making and accountability.
4. Keep a policy review schedule up to date, ensuring policy review inclusion on relevant agendas.
5. Ensure all statutory policies are up-to-date and easily accessible (paper or electronic).
6. Encourage governors to undertake as much training as possible in order to increase their knowledge and confidence to ask informed questions, particularly in key areas including safeguarding, finance, and other statutory responsibilities,
7. Ensure a governor training record is maintained and easily accessible.
8. Ensure Governor Visit Reports are completed, filed and easily accessible.
9. Advise on agenda setting, ensuring all statutory items are included, and that the focus is on school improvement.
10. Advise on efficient running of meetings: length of meetings, use of AOB.
11. Ensure timetable of meetings (including committees) throughout the year is set.
12. Make sure that supporting papers are sent out with the agenda at least seven days in advance of the meeting, so that governors can familiarise themselves with reports and ask relevant questions.
13. Keep abreast of governance regulations and guidance available, to inform your governing body.
14. Encourage governors to challenge their own practice, by undertaking self-evaluation on a regular basis.
15. Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is reviewed and adopted on an annual basis and that other policies that relate to safeguarding are kept up to date and reviewed regularly.
16. Ensure that new governors complete self-declaration forms and other relevant security checks.
17. Ensure good lines of communication are available between governors.

Minutes

18. Ensure minutes are clear, reflect the business conducted and provide continuity across meetings.
19. Be sure to record the following evidence (if it happens of course!):
 - that the head keeps governors informed about key school improvement issues:
 - pupil progress and attainment
 - progress on priorities from the last Ofsted inspection
 - progress against School Development Plan objectives
 - performance management of staff
 - that more than one stream of information is presented
 - that governors are questioning and challenging the headteacher and holding him/her to account, especially for standards and achievement and the quality of teaching
 - that where there are challenging issues, e.g. teacher performance/ capability/ senior staff recruitment, governors take appropriate action
 - that governors are taking responsibility for actions, not just the Chair or HT
 - that governors have followed up on actions, and the *impact* of these actions
 - that governors are demonstrating their undertaking of their key roles of:
 - strategic governance
 - being the critical friend
 - holding the school to account

... AND WHAT IMPACT THEY ARE MAKING!

- that governors are undertaking and feeding back on monitoring visits, and the outcomes of these
- that there is some reference to Child Protection/Safeguarding even if there is nothing to report
- that data presentation and analysis includes information about the teaching and progress of SEN pupils and vulnerable groups.

In short....

Keep abreast of your own development:
attend briefings and training events to enable you
to provide the best possible service to your governing body!