

School governor role description.

School governors enable their school to run effectively and provide excellent education for children. They have 3 core responsibilities:

- Planning the strategic direction of the school
- Overseeing financial performance of the school and ensuring money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher or school leadership to account

The governor role is strategic rather than operational. Governors don't get involved with the day to day running of a school, instead supporting and challenging the school's leadership team to drive school improvement.

Being a school governor is a commitment and a responsibility, but offers you the chance to see first-hand the impact you can make in improving education for children in your community.

Schools rely on governors to bring their professional insight and experience to the board. A strong governing board made up of people from diverse backgrounds with different skillsets is key to a school's success.

Governing boards

Governing board meetings

- Full governing board meetings are normally held once a term. While there are many important aspects of the role, the most important is the business that takes place at these meetings.

School visits

- Governing boards are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of a school and its curriculum. School visits will help governors to understand more about their school and the reality of school life. Governor visits to classrooms aren't an inspection – instead, it's an opportunity to see the school's strategic planning in action.

Setting the strategic direction

- Governing boards are the key strategic decision makers in every school. Along with the headteacher, it's the governing board's job to set the school's aims and objectives around how the school will develop and improve. They set policies, formulate plans and agree targets to help the school achieve these objectives, as well as regularly reviewing their strategic framework in light of that progress.

Creating robust accountability

- The governing board is there to support and challenge the school's senior leadership team. They play a crucial role in holding the headteacher to account for securing the best possible outcomes for pupils. By challenging key decisions and asking questions about the school's performance data, governors aim to guarantee high standards in education.

Ensuring financial probity

- Governing boards have a strategic role in the financial management of schools. Their key responsibilities include setting financial priorities through the school development plan, 3 year financial plan and the annual budget. They also decide on how the school's delegated budget should be spent in accordance with the school improvement plan and statutory curriculum requirement.



Why become a school governor?

Volunteering in the role gives you the chance to experience board-level decision making and leadership. You'll develop your existing skills and gain experience outside of your job description.

Volunteers need to be dedicated people who care about improving education, but you don't need to be a parent, have experience working in education, or have prior board experience. Volunteering in the role provides the opportunity give back to the community, expand networks, and improve education for children.



The commitment involved

Term of office

- Governor appointments are for a term of four years.

Travel

- Usually, volunteers join a school board near their home or work, but the distance you're prepared to travel is up to you.

Liability

- Governors are not individually liable. Liability is collective and held by the governing board as a whole.

Time per month

- In most cases, governors attend three full governing board meetings per year plus committee meetings. Our impact survey found that our volunteers spend on average 6.7 hours per month on governor duties, mainly in the evenings.
- While not compulsory, governors should visit the school to gain an understanding of the culture and ethos and to get the most out of the role. It's also an opportunity to meet children, parents, and teachers, and see the impact of the board's work first-hand.

