

Team Health Check



Does your Governing Body share these characteristics of an effective team?	Yes	Could be better	No
Purpose and Direction			
The team has a clear mission/purpose, known by all team members			
The team has a vision and success criteria which are challenging, meaningful and exciting to the team			
The team understands how the work of the team fits into the whole school perspective			
Team Leadership (by Chairs and Vice Chairs)			
Leaders balance appropriate direction with support and openness			
Leaders discuss key issues with the team			
Leaders delegate responsibility and leadership to individuals in their area of expertise			
Understanding Differences			
Team members understand what their roles are, and where they overlap with other team members			
Team members are clear about what is expected of them individually by the rest of the team			
Team members are clear about what individual strengths each member of the team brings			
Processes			
Team meetings are effective			
The team has found and implemented effective ways of working			
The team has an effective process to solve problems and take decisions			
The team has sufficient resources (people and time) to do its work			
Communication			
Everyone feels their ideas and input are listened to by the rest of the team			
Differences and conflicts are resolved openly and constructively			
Members' interaction is open and honest			
Relationships			
The team's different experiences and skills are accepted and used			
There is trust and openness between team members			
New members feel valued and quickly become productive members of the team			
The team takes responsibility for its successes and failures, and avoids blaming other people or groups			



Reviewing the structure of the Governing Body

Our Committees	Their Remits

When was the structure of the Governing Body last reviewed?

How did you decide on the number and remit of committees?

What is the value of these committees to the Governing Body?

How do the committees report back to the Governing Body and do your methods work well?

Any other comments or queries about committee structures

How many members are there on your Governing Body?

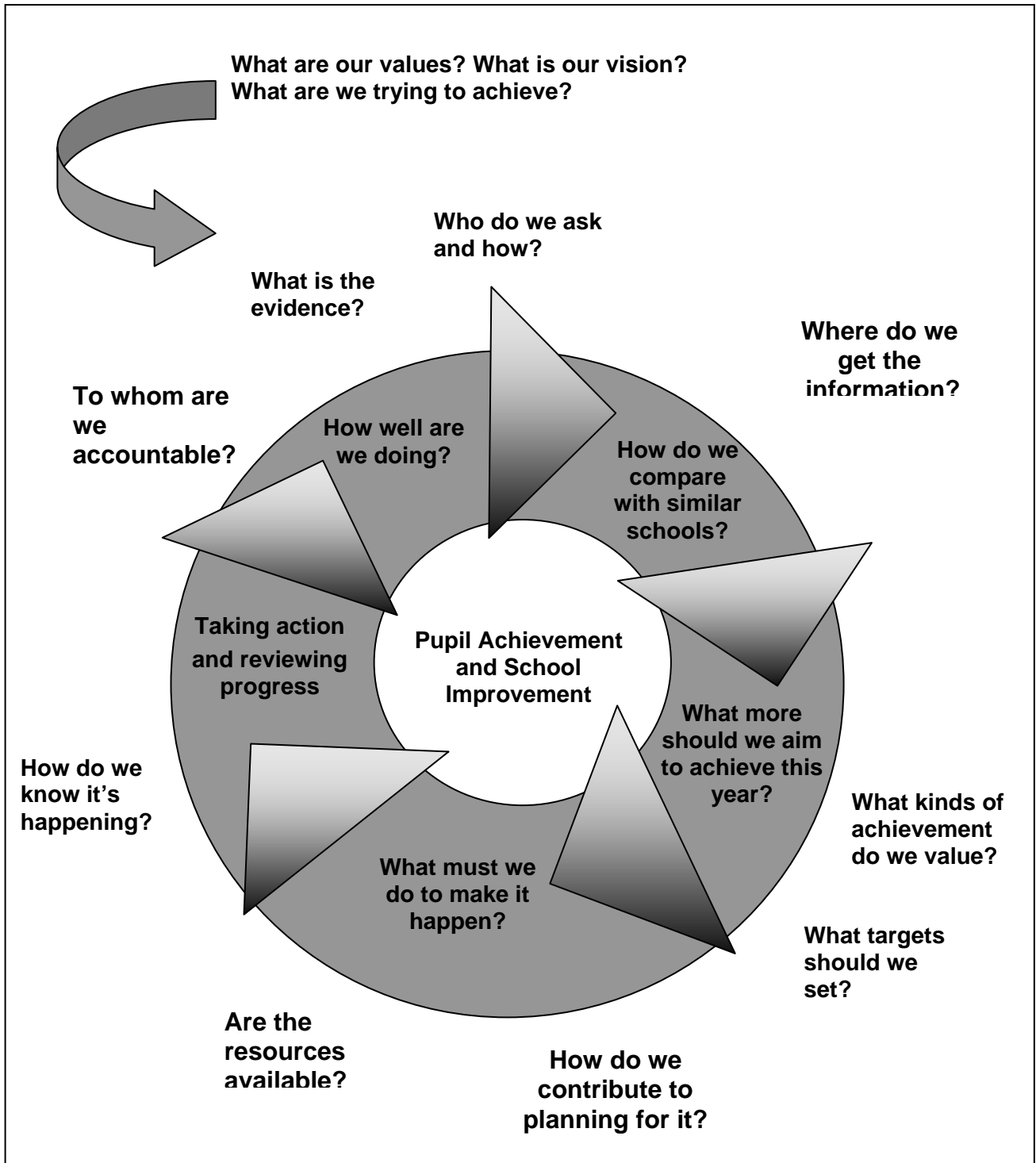
Evaluating strategic effectiveness

Acting Strategically		Score: 1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = could improve
Areas of strategic activity	Score	Evidence we can produce Actions we need to take
1. Our work is clearly focused on school improvement.		
2. We have a shared vision for the school's future.		
3. We regularly review the aims and objectives that will help us achieve our vision.		
4. We know our school's strengths and weaknesses.		
5. We are actively involved in setting the priorities of the School Improvement Plan.		
6. We check that the school's budget supports the Improvement Plan.		

Areas of strategic activity	Score	Evidence we can produce Actions we need to take
7. We are confident that the school is effectively led and managed.		
8. We ensure that we have a staffing structure and personnel policies that create the professional team to meet our school's needs.		
9. We ensure that our performance management process supports the Improvement Plan.		
10. We are involved in setting targets and checking evidence that milestones are being reached.		
11. We ensure that policies are reviewed regularly to check that they are current and support the school's values and aims.		
12. We have a programme in place for evaluating the impact of our strategic decisions.		
13. We have a strategic view of how our Governing Body will develop.		

The School Improvement Cycle

The Governing Body's Role



Consider each of the five stages and think about how it works in your school.

Stage 1: How well are we doing?

To start the process, Headteachers and Governing Bodies need evidence to establish how well the school is doing in the context of the school's values and vision, and what it is trying to achieve. Looking objectively at current performance is an essential first step towards improvement. A key focus of the review is pupil achievement, which is why it is at the centre of the cycle. However there are many other factors which influence a school's overall performance, for example pupil self-esteem, staff morale, partnership with parents, and the quality of the learning environment. It is important to identify those that are most relevant to your school.

Stage 2: How do we compare with similar schools?

By comparing current and previous levels of pupil attainment with those of similar schools, and considering overall trends, Governing Bodies and Headteachers can judge the school's performance and understand where its strengths and weaknesses lie.

Stage 3: What more should we aim to achieve this year?

Once it has sound information on which to base its decisions, the Governing Body can set realistic and challenging targets for improvement.

Stage 4: What must we do to make it happen?

A school needs strategies to ensure that its overarching aims and specific targets will be achieved. These are usually set out in the School Improvement (or Development) Plan

Stage 5: Taking action and reviewing progress

Once the plan is in place, all concerned must take determined action to implement it. Actions must then be monitored and evaluated in terms of the impact on pupil performance.



Questions to consider:

Do you understand how the improvement cycle works in your school?

Does the Governing Body plan its work to fit in with the improvement cycle?

Have you talked to your Headteacher about how the Governing Body plans its work and whether the school leadership team finds it helpful?



The Governing Body's Role in School Improvement

The following checklist outlines ways in which the Governing Body should be involved in school improvement.

Are there any areas where you think the involvement of your Governing Body could be improved that you could discuss with the Headteacher and fellow governors?

What actions do you need to take as Chair?

- Developing and sharing the values and vision
- Taking the views of stakeholders into account
- Evaluating evidence on how well the school is doing
- Seeking information from a variety of sources
- Agreeing targets for improvement
- Planning to achieve improvement
- Ensuring that deployment of staffing and resources match the school's priorities
- Reviewing progress and evaluating outcomes
- Demonstrating accountability to stakeholders for their decisions

Turning values into reality

Suggested evidence

Values	Evidence
There are high expectations of all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School vision and aims displayed • School targets displayed • School rules are in evidence • Pupils are set work which challenges them • Staff follow up students not adhering to the school's standards, for example of uniform and behaviour • Staff handbook describes standards for performance/behaviour
Mutual respect is evident in the way that staff and pupils relate to each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils work without disturbing others • Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively on group tasks • Pupils are courteous and do not interrupt each other or staff • Staff are courteous and do not interrupt each other or pupils • Pupils do not intimidate or belittle each other • Teachers maintain control without the use of threats or humiliation • Staff have appropriate accommodation/facilities for work and rest • Governors make every effort to understand and complement the professional role of the Headteacher and staff
The school promotes positive attitudes to ethnic and cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school uses the skills and knowledge of people from ethnic minority communities • Staff and pupils recognise and respect social, ethnic and cultural differences and similarities • Signs and home-school communications are multilingual • Positive images of people from ethnic groups are displayed • Festivals of different cultures and religious beliefs are celebrated • There is ethnic and cultural diversity in the staff and the Governing Body • Curriculum and resources reflect ethnic and cultural diversity
Pupils have rights as well as responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are associate members of Governing Body Committees • Pupils are exercising leadership skills • School council information is displayed • Pupils act as mentors/buddies/counsellors for their peers • The Headteacher and staff refer to pupils by name • Routine management does not interrupt teaching and learning • Visible 'charter' of pupils' rights • Pupils are aware of their rights and responsibilities • High quality teaching and resources support learning • Pupils help to determine the rules and sanctions
Pupils' achievements are celebrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of pupils of all abilities is displayed • Displays are up to date and in good condition • Displays cover a wide range of achievements • Press cuttings books in reception area • Positive and public appreciation of effort as well as success

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers show pride in pupils' work • Pupils show pride in each other's work • Prefects chosen for their personal qualities regardless of their academic achievements • Regular home-school communication about pupils' efforts and successes
The school environment is looked after by all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils and staff show respect for people, living things, property and the environment • All areas of the school are clean and litter free • Interactive wall displays are used, not damaged • Equipment all in good working order
Teaching and learning are enjoyable for adults and pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is clearly enjoyable • A variety of teaching styles are employed to maintain the interest of all pupils • Pupils are encouraged to explore, to enquire and to become confident, independent learners • Low rates of absenteeism – pupils and staff • Some staff turnover due to promotion • Pupils keen to display and talk about their work • High involvement in extra curricular activities • Governors welcome the opportunity to develop their skills and increase their knowledge and understanding • Governors evaluate training before making recommendations to colleagues
The school environment is a 'safe' place – emotional and physical security are prioritised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical security is effective but not oppressive • All visitors wear badges • There are no voices raised in anger • Pupils and staff move around the site in an orderly manner • Pupils are given opportunities to understand feelings and emotions and how they impact on others • Anti-bullying policy well publicised to staff, pupils and parents. • Named person to go to if there is a worry • Pupils feel safe offering their opinions • Everyone is 'Health and Safety' conscious • The Governing Body plays an effective part in monitoring and evaluating policies on behaviour, anti-bullying, child protection, health and safety
The role of parents as partners in the learning process is recognised and valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting around the school is effective • When parents visit by appointment they are seen promptly • Home school agreements are treated seriously by all partners • Newsletters and notice boards are informative and well set out. • The views of parents on the school's performance are actively sought. • Parents assist in classes • Parent workshops and training e.g. ICT • Parent are invited to assemblies • The Governing Body's annual report to parents is interesting and informative

Monitoring and evaluating progress

Sources of evidence: Primary

- Headteacher's and Co-ordinator's reports
- Planning and evaluation of in-service training
- Displays and examples of pupils' work
- Annual national test results
- Other test and examination results
- English Link Governor's report
- External reviews of English e.g. LEA adviser monitoring reports
- Participation in local and national initiatives for promoting attainment in English
- Headteacher's annual report on implementation of Performance Management policy
- Finance report on expenditure on new materials and books
- Feedback from pupils and teachers about the new resources

Possible Governing Body structures to support monitoring and evaluation: Primary

- Annual plan of work for the Governing Body
- Governing Body involvement in planning and setting priorities with Headteacher and staff
- Meetings between Headteacher and Chair/Chairs of committees
- Headteacher and Co-ordinator reports to Finance/Curriculum/Standards/Pupil committees
- Co-ordinator presentation to Governing Body or relevant committee
- Finance Committee meetings and minutes
- English Link Governor monitoring visits
- Governor Visits
- Governing Body self-evaluation

Sources of evidence: Secondary

- Co-ordinators Report on Audit of English and Literacy
- Headteacher /Co-ordinator/Heads of Department report on observation and feedback schedule
- Heads of Department/Co-ordinator Evaluation Report on the impact of teaching and learning in English and Literacy
- Planning and Evaluation of one Inset day
- Displays/examples of students' work
- Annual SATs/ GCSE test results
- Other test/examination results
- English and Literacy Link Governor report
- External reviews of English and Literacy e.g. LEA annual monitoring report
- Participation in local/ national initiatives e.g. Young writers, poetry writing etc.
- Assistant/ Deputy Headteacher's annual report to the Personnel committee on implementation of Performance Management policy
- Finance report on costs/expenditure on new resources and books
- Feedback from students and teachers about the new resources

Possible Governing Body structures to support monitoring and evaluation: Secondary

- Meetings between Headteacher and Chair/chairs of committees
- Governing Body fully involved in planning and setting priorities with headteacher and staff.
- Headteacher reports to Governing Body meetings
- Headteacher/Co-ordinator/Heads of Department reports to Finance/Curriculum/Standards/Pupil committees
- Co-ordinator presentation to Governing Body/Committee
- English and Literacy Link Governor monitoring visits
- Other governors' visits to all departments throughout the School
- Finance Committee meetings and minutes

Sample questions for the Curriculum Committee

- How do we know we are meeting National Curriculum requirements?
- How does the timetable ensure each pupil is receiving a broad and balanced curriculum?
- What do we do about special needs?
- Do all boys and girls experience the full range of the curriculum in accordance with our equal opportunities policy?
- How do our teachers assess and record pupils' achievements?
- How often does the school review the progress of individual pupils?
- Do we use similar reading/maths schemes to neighbouring schools?
- Do we allocate funds differently to other similar sized schools?
- Do we need to review our spending decisions in the light of this?
- How do our results compare nationally and locally?
- What are the reasons for these differences?
- Do we do better in some areas of the curriculum than others? Why?
- Do some groups of pupils do better than others? Why?
- Are the targets we have set ourselves realistic? Challenging enough?

Does your Governing Body demonstrate its accountability to stakeholders in any of the following ways?

- Listening to the view of pupils, perhaps through a School Council, or by using a pupil survey such as the Ofsted pupil survey
- Making pupils associate members of the Governing Body, where the Governing Body has been reconstituted
- Knowing the views of staff – through regular meetings with the Headteacher and teachers, staff governors, surveys (including exit surveys) and through links with subject leaders
- Ensuring that the performance management cycle for staff is being implemented through the Headteacher's reports to the Governing Body
- Talking to parents, listening to their views and being prepared to discuss weaknesses as well as strengths
- Consulting with other stakeholders and valuing and respecting their ideas
- Being innovative in establishing communication with stakeholders
- Recognising that the school's neighbours are stakeholders
- Ensuring that the Governing Body addresses complaints fairly, quickly and appropriately
- Encouraging all members of the Governing Body to contribute to writing the Annual Report to parents and take ownership of it
- Seeking to empower parents at the Annual Parents' Meeting, if held
- Delivering an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and progress against key issues to the Ofsted Inspector

Evidence of accountability

What evidence could you produce to show that the Governing Body helps to shape the vision and direction for the school?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
When was the last time the Governing Body discussed and developed the school's values and vision? What was the outcome? Who else was involved?		
How does the School Improvement Plan relate to the values and vision?		
What part does the Governing Body play in the production of the School Improvement Plan?		
What links are there between the priorities in the School Improvement Plan and the agendas of Governing Body meetings?		
What links are there between priorities in the School Improvement Plan and governors' visits to the school?		
To what extent does the Governing Body reflect on performance, promote change and capitalise on links with the local community?		

What *evidence* could you produce to show that the Governing Body ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
When establishing policies, what links does the Governing Body make with the school's values and vision?		
What part does the Governing Body, or its committees, play in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of policies?		
How much of form S3 could you complete?		
What evidence would underpin your views?		
What is the impact of the policy for Special Needs Provision?		
What is the impact of the policy for Race Equality?		
What is the impact of the policy for Disability Provision?		
What is the impact of the policy for Sex and relationships education?		

What *evidence* could you produce to show that the Governing Body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
<p>What data do the Governing Body, or its committees, study to identify strengths and weaknesses? Think widely – not just the tangibles such as attainment and progress.</p>		
<p>What are the key issues that it has identified? Where and how are they recorded?</p>		
<p>Who do you consult when trying to identify strengths and weaknesses?</p>		
<p>How do you use forms S3 and S4?</p>		
<p>If governors are able to spend time in the school, how do they gather information that would inform the whole Governing Body? What do they do with it?</p>		

What evidence could you produce to show that the Governing Body challenges and supports the Senior Leadership Team?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
How effective is the implementation of the performance management policy?		
How many members of staff give reports to the Governing Body, or its committees, on an annual basis?		
What structured links exist between the Governing Body and departments/curriculum areas etc?		
What evidence could you produce of open and frank discussion between the Governing Body and the Senior Leadership Team?		



Managing an effective meeting

Circle the number which most applies:

1 = Always, 2 = Often or usually, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Never

1	Before a meeting I make sure that I know how a formal meeting should be run	1	2	3	4
2	I make sure I am well prepared for the meeting	1	2	3	4
3	I begin the meeting at its scheduled start time	1	2	3	4
4	I make sure governors understand the minutes of the previous meeting	1	2	3	4
5	I explain the purpose of the meeting clearly to all the participants especially new governors	1	2	3	4
6	I follow the agenda for the meeting	1	2	3	4
7	I make sure that governors always speak through the Chair even if informally	1	2	3	4
8	I know what each governor's motives and hidden agenda are	1	2	3	4
9	I make sure all governors are fully involved in the meeting	1	2	3	4
10	I allow all points of view to have a fair hearing	1	2	3	4
11	I encourage respect for the professional views of the Headteacher and staff	1	2	3	4
12	I make sure those attending don't ramble or adopt aggressive attitudes during discussions	1	2	3	4
13	I don't express my own views until the end of a discussion	1	2	3	4
14	I enable the Clerk to take accurate minutes of the meeting	1	2	3	4
15	I make sure all governors know what action to take before the next meeting	1	2	3	4
16	I make sure the date, time and place of the next meeting is known to all	1	2	3	4
Total score:					

What does your total score suggest?

16-41 Your meetings are effective and probably enjoyable!

42-47 You run quite effective meetings

48-54 You could run more effective meetings

55-64 You are finding this difficult and need more support

Do you need to plan any action?



Governing Body Minutes Audit

Do your Governing Body minutes provide evidence of its support for school improvement?

Evidence	Comment
The agenda and discussion make clear links to priorities in the School's Improvement Plan	
There is evidence of an explicit focus on pupil achievement	
The PANDA and other sources of data are used by the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate performance.	
Governors are aware of the progress made by different groups of children.	
Governors are aware of performance within key stages and within curriculum areas	
The governing body is fully involved in formulating, promoting, monitoring and evaluating policies	
Discussions about the budget are referenced to the school's strategic priorities	
Governors challenge the senior leadership team in a constructive manner	
Governors acknowledge and celebrate success	
Reports are presented to the Governing Body by various members of the Leadership Group	
The Governing Body demonstrates a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.	
The meeting was clearly focused, action points were agreed and recorded	

The strategic use of resources for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- Does the school's performance management policy play an effective part in identifying the development needs of individual staff?
- Do we have procedures for identifying the development needs of support staff and are they fair?
- What discussions about remodelling have taken place in our school?
- Do we know how our school plans to approach the remodelling tasks?
- What happens to the information gathered? Does it translate into an effective plan to meet the CPD needs of all staff?
- What is the relationship between the CPD co-ordinator and the senior leadership team and the Governing Body?
- Does the Governing Body have access to the information it needs to set a strategic budget?
- How well does the Governing Body plan for its own development?
- Is an annual evaluation of the impact on pupil achievement of expenditure on professional development presented to governors so that they can judge value for money? Are we getting value for money from expenditure on CPD?