

What does a Governor do?

Role of a School Governor

To contribute to the work of the Governing Body in ensuring high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by:

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Activities

As part of the Governing Body team, a Governor is expected to:

1. Ensure that FHS has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction that will enable the school to fulfil its charitable objects and is focused on achieving these. Governors are expected to contribute to the strategic discussions at Governing Body meetings which determine:
 - the vision and ethos of the school
 - clear and ambitious strategic priorities and targets for the school
 - that all children, including those with special educational needs, have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
 - the school's budget, including the expenditure of the Pupil Premium allocation
 - the school's staffing structure and key staffing policies
 - the principles to be used by school leaders to set other school policies.
2. Hold the Senior Leaders to account by monitoring the school's performance; this includes:
 - agreeing the outcomes from the school's self-evaluation and ensuring they are used to inform the priorities in the School Improvement and Development Plan
 - measuring the impact and progress towards its strategic objectives and to regularly consider reports on performance
 - considering all relevant data and feedback provided by Senior Leaders and external sources on all aspects of school performance
 - asking challenging questions of Senior Leaders
 - ensuring Senior Leaders have arranged for the required audits to be carried out and receiving the results of those audits
 - ensuring Senior Leaders have developed the required policies and procedures and the school is operating effectively according to those policies
 - acting as a Link Governor on a specific issue, making relevant enquiries of the relevant staff, and reporting to the Governing Body on the progress of the link area
 - listening to and reporting to the school's stakeholders.
3. Ensure the school staff have the resources and support they require to do their jobs well, including the necessary expertise on business management, external advice where necessary, effective appraisal and CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and suitable premises, and that the way in which those resources are used has impact.
4. Be a steward of the school's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking care over their security and how they are used; this includes:
 - ensuring that the school's financial obligations are met and that there are adequate financial controls in place to ensure all money due is received and properly applied, and that all assets and liabilities are recorded
 - acting reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to, and always in the interests of, the school
 - ensuring that Governors take professional advice when needed, and record the advice received

- being accountable for the solvency of the school
 - ensuring that the school acts in accordance with employment law and exercises a duty of care to its employees
 - ensuring that intangible assets such as organisational knowledge and expertise, intellectual property, Formby High School's good name and reputation are recognised, used and safeguarded
 - to review the condition and use of the assets owned by the school
 - to ensure that the major risks to the school are regularly identified and reviewed and that systems are in place to mitigate or minimise these risks
5. Ensure the school complies with all legal and regulatory requirements; this includes:
- ensuring, with professional advice as appropriate, that it complies with all constitutional, legal, regulatory and statutory requirements
 - understanding and complying with the constitution and rules as outlined in the Funding Agreement, Articles of Association and Academies Financial Handbook.
6. When required, serve on panels of Governors to:
- appoint the Headteacher and other Senior Leaders
 - appraise the Headteacher
 - set the Headteacher's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
 - hear the second stage of staff grievances and disciplinary matters
 - hear appeals about student exclusions.

The role of Governor is largely a thinking and questioning role, not a doing role.

A Governor does NOT:

- Write school policies
- Undertake audits of any sort – whether financial or health & safety – even if the governor has the relevant professional experience
- Spend much time with the students of the school – if you want to work directly with children, there are many other valuable voluntary roles within the school
- Fundraise as this is the role of the PTA – the Governing Body should consider income streams and the potential for income generation, but not carry out fundraising tasks
- Undertake classroom observations to make judgements on the quality of teaching – the Governing Body monitors the quality of teaching in the school by requiring data from the Senior Leaders and from external sources
- Do the job of the school staff – if there is not enough capacity within the paid staff team to carry out the necessary tasks, the Governing Body need to consider and rectify this.

As you become more experienced as a Governor, there are other roles you could volunteer for which would increase your degree of involvement and level of responsibility (e.g. as a chair of a committee). This document does not cover the additional roles taken on by the chair, vice-chair and chairs of committees.

In order to perform this role well, a Governor is expected to:

- get to know the school, including by visiting the school occasionally during school hours, and gain a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- attend induction training and regular relevant training and development events
- attend meetings (full Governing Body meetings and committee meetings) and read all the papers before the meeting
- act in the best interest of all the students of the school
- behave in a professional manner, as set down in the Governing Body's code of conduct, including acting in strict confidence.