



governance, leadership and management

...achieving excellence in schools

# Governor Mark for School and Academy Governance

Welcome to Governor Mark. This information is available free of charge to all schools/organisations whose governing boards want to know how they are performing and how to improve.

# Introduction to Governor Mark, the Quality Mark for School and Academy Governance

For governing boards of maintained schools/ federations/free schools/academy trusts/ local governing boards and independent schools

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## What is Governor Mark?

**Governor Mark** was developed to recognise the **difference** governing boards make to school and academy leadership and management. It is a mechanism to achieve accreditation against an agreed quality standard. There are many evaluation tools available which focus on process and actions, but **Governor Mark** is the only quality assessment process that clearly identifies the **IMPACT** of the governing board **ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND OUTCOMES** for children and young people.

The underlying principles behind this model for self-review emphasise that governing boards must have in place quality processes if they are to make *a significant impact* upon the achievements of schools and academies. Intrinsic to this approach is a belief that if governing boards have adopted such quality processes, the extent of their contribution and influence can make a real difference to the leadership and management of the school or academy organisation.

Such quality processes, however, are not the same thing as effective governance. They provide the platform on which effective governance can work. Effective governance must be evident in outcomes for pupils and the school community. By this we mean operating in accordance with the Nolan Principles<sup>1</sup>, effectively bringing support and challenge to the school or organisation and ensuring accountability through implementing the three core functions of governance:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

These roles and functions can be seen through raising standards, improving the school or organisation, focused strategic agendas, safeguarding, good management of budgets, and rigour in fulfilling statutory functions. Governing boards can use this Quality Mark to assess their impact in a systematic way. It is a non-prescriptive model which measures the working practices of the governing board and its impact on school performance.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex

The Governor Mark framework was developed by governance professionals with established track records in developing and improving school governance, to provide clear criteria to assess effective governance linked to Ofsted Frameworks. Governor Mark was created to enable governing boards to evaluate themselves against a quality framework which addresses the question 'What does good look like'.

## Why Governor Mark? The Benefits:

- Governor Mark provides a unique opportunity to evaluate the *impact* of the work you do **on outcomes for children**
- It is an opportunity to celebrate what you achieve in supporting your school(s) and academy(ies) through effective governance
- It supports ongoing board evaluation and continuous improvement and provides an opportunity to demonstrate how you strive for excellence
- Governor Mark will challenge your board to ensure that it conducts its business efficiently and effectively
- Working towards Governor Mark will help to develop and strengthen strategic leadership in your school or organisation
- Governor Mark provides evidence of your impact, effectiveness and compliance with statutory responsibilities to support the leadership and management judgement in Ofsted inspections
- Achievement of Governor Mark will support recruitment of high quality and skilled governors who want to be associated with high performing schools and academies; it underpins effective succession planning
- Governor Mark will provide you with confidence that you are doing the right things
- Governor Mark is a collaborative process; it provides opportunities for team building, knowledge sharing, and personal development, ensuring that more governors will feel competent
- Based on principles and knowledge of effective governance developed over many years, there is a natural alignment with the six features of effective governance that underpin the Department for Education's Competency Framework for Governance.

## What governing boards have said:

“Governor Mark is a national award which provides external evaluation of the quality of governance in a school. The Governing Body was able to demonstrate that it follows good procedures and fulfils its statutory duties. We also provided evidence of impact—the difference the Governing Body makes to the school. We have been working towards meeting the standards required to achieve this award for the last three years. This process has helped us to sharpen our practice and provide evidence of how we support and challenge the school.”

“Thank you for feedback report and letter. These will go to the next board meeting so that governors can reflect on what actions are needed to address the suggested improvements. On behalf of the governors I would like to thank you for the rigorous and professional way that the whole process was conducted and the detailed feedback which will help shape our future planning.”

“Everybody at and associated with the school was excited to hear that we were successful with our application. For myself as Chairman, I was particularly pleased to receive it as it provided me with some reassurance that everything we had and continue to put in place is moving the school forward and giving the students and children of our school, the best opportunity they can have in their development at this stage.”

## Principles

- Governor Mark is a mechanism to achieve accreditation against an agreed quality standard
- Governor Mark focuses on the impact of governance, making a measurable difference on outcomes for children and young people
- Governor Mark recognises there are many approaches to achieving sustainable excellence in school and academy governance within the leadership and management structure of the school or organisation, it focuses on leadership and unity of purpose
- Governor Mark has at its core the work and the expectations of Ofsted towards governing boards of schools in England, but the values espoused have a generic quality that can apply to any school in the United Kingdom, including academies, free schools and independent schools
- In whatever ways schools or academies, including leadership and governance, are judged, there is considerable emphasis on schools' own self-evaluation processes. It is vital that governing boards can evidence their own process of self-evaluation and assess their impact upon school improvement
- Governor Mark recognises the government's performance management principles and is intended to support schools through a moderated self-review of the governing board's contribution to leadership and management; governing boards should be able to demonstrate the use of data to inform decision-making
- Governor Mark provides a focus on continuous learning, people development, innovation and improvement and recognises this is underpinned through collaboration with internal and external partnerships
- Effective use of resources and a focus on value for money are essential
- There is a fundamental recognition of governing board's public responsibility to the community and the Nolan Principles for standards in public life
- Governor Mark will remain active for a period of three years, after which a re-accreditation will be required
- Governing boards will be able to **access free-of-charge** the quality standards criteria and may use them as a gap analysis / self-evaluation tool. Any training or support identified is a matter for each individual school or organisation
- Assessment against the criteria will be externally verified.

## Using Governor Mark

- Governing boards can utilise the model to improve their own functioning and team working, using the framework in a light touch way as a health check
- Governing boards can enter into the accreditation process to assess their current processes and contribution to gain recognition and accreditation for meeting the Governor Mark quality standard.
- Governing boards can share the results of self-review with partner schools in cluster working/or within MATs and use that collaboration to improve the performance of a number of schools/academies through sharing good practice.

To be successful in achieving Governor Mark, please ensure that you read the documents 'Governor Mark: Guidance for Schools and Academies' and 'How to Succeed', before attempting to complete the Evidence Grids and Impact Statements.

## Who can apply?

Governor Mark quality standards can be applied in governance for any type of school educational setting. We welcome applications from maintained schools/academy trusts (MATs and single)/free schools/federations/PRU's sixth form colleges and independent schools that can demonstrate how they meet the quality standards.

We would expect any local governing body (LGB) in a MAT that wishes to apply for the Governor Mark accreditation to have delegated responsibility for setting the local vision, contributing to performance management and for holding the school leadership to account.

A MAT can apply for Governor Mark in one or more of its academies. To be successful a MAT must be able to demonstrate the impact of the strategic work of the trust board in impact statements for each academy that applies. If there is local governance, the MAT must provide evidence of how it has worked collaboratively with the local governing board with shared responsibility for improving outcomes. See 'How to Succeed' for more information.

## Language and terminology

The terms school/academy/organisation are used interchangeably throughout the Governor Mark documentation and can be related to the relevant setting being governed.

The term board is used throughout and means the accountable body for the school/organisation/academy. For ease, it also means the LGB in this context, where the LGB or local committee has the relevant delegated responsibilities under a scheme of delegation.

It is recognised that senior executive leaders in a setting may be Headteachers, CEO's, Executive Heads, Principals, Heads of School etc.

The term governor is used throughout and also means director/trustee in academy trusts.



The Governor Mark Quality Mark is supported by the DfE.



## Framework for measuring the quality of Governance

Ethos and working practice Self-assessed	The Assessment Framework
<p><b>1. Organisation and Teamwork</b></p> <p><b>2. Recruitment and Retention</b></p>	<p><b>3. Strategic Leadership and Statutory Responsibilities</b></p> <p><b>4. Strengths and Weaknesses/ Self-review and Change</b></p> <p><b>5. Support and Challenge</b></p>

6. Impact
<p><b>School Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Pupil Safety and Wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Partnership and Community Engagement</b></p>

## Framework Criteria

### Ethos and working practices

The ground rules and standards for behaviour and organisation which underpin good governance:

#### Criterion 1: Organisation and teamwork

<b>Overview – Areas for consideration</b>	How the governing board is organised in order for it to effectively carry out its responsibilities
	How clear the governing board is about its distinctive role and how the responsibilities linked to that role are delegated in order to maximise efficiency and impact
	How the governing board works as a team and shares responsibilities and tasks and how the governing board can demonstrate that it is well organised and has sufficient capacity and skills

#### Sub-criteria:

##### 1a. The governing board is organised in order for it to effectively carry out its responsibilities:

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
i) There are delegation arrangements in place which make optimum use of time and facilitate effective decision making. In a MAT, the board has agreed and published a scheme of delegation which is communicated to all levels of governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Records show that the business of governance is clearly aligned to the scheme of delegation.</li> <li>Governors have set a calendar of governing board meetings and an agreed procedure for setting agendas.</li> <li>Ground rules have been set for the working arrangements between the headteacher and the governing board, using an agreed framework for delegating responsibilities.</li> <li>A record of how the chair develops their skills and keeps up to date, for example, attending chair's training and briefings.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board has a good working relationship with the headteacher*which facilitates effective leadership and management in the school which demonstrates openness, honesty and trust.	
iii) The governing board has an effective chair, who works well with the headteacher/CEO. The chair sets effective organisational practices for the governing board.	

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
iv) The governing board is independently and professionally clerked, facilitating the provision of information and effective decision-making and agenda items focus upon the priorities for the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board has appointed a clerk and agreed a job description.</li> <li>• The clerk attends regular training and briefing meetings. The clerk is trained in accordance with the DfE competency framework.</li> <li>• There is a record of all governors engaging in development and training.</li> </ul>

*\*Headteacher may also be: Executive HT, Head of School, Chief Executive*

**1b. The governing board is clear about its distinctive role and linked responsibilities are effectively delegated to maximise efficiency and impact:**

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board has considered the scope of its strategic role and responsibilities and those of the headteacher; it has a clear understanding of the governing board structures through which they can be fulfilled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and responsibilities are understood at all levels of governance.</li> <li>• The chair, or other designated governor or clerk, keeps up to date with the changes in the guidance and regulation.</li> <li>• Committee terms of reference comply with regulations (including Funding Agreements and the Academies Financial Handbook where applicable) and relate to practice, assisting the governing board to manage its business.</li> <li>• Governors who have specific monitoring responsibilities linked to school improvement priorities or statutory responsibilities, have a record of role familiarisation and appropriate training and are clear about what the governing board expects of them.</li> <li>• Governors have an agreed plan and procedures for monitoring school improvement activities which enables them to develop an evidence base for self-evaluation. This should include school/academy visits.</li> </ul>
ii) Where committees are in place, they have explicit terms of reference and membership, which are reviewed annually and committee members are clear about their delegated responsibilities.	
iii) Governors who have specific monitoring responsibilities understand the scope of their role and carry them out effectively.	

**1c. The governing board works as a team, sharing responsibilities and tasks:**

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence	
i) The chair and committee chairs promote a team culture and develop team working actively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board has undertaken skills audit and needs analyses amongst the team of governors in order to recruit appropriate governors.</li> <li>• The governing board has a plan to develop its ability as a team.</li> <li>• A register is kept of governor attendance at meetings and that this is published.</li> <li>• There are clear ground rules for governors in working together, with explicit expectations set out in an agreed Code of Conduct that is reviewed annually.</li> <li>• All governors have agreed to undertake their role in accordance with the Nolan principles.</li> <li>• Committee and working group papers demonstrate that the workload of the governing board is delegated effectively, in accordance with agreed schemes of delegation.</li> </ul>	
ii) Governing board meetings are well attended.		
iii) All governors are valued and encouraged to contribute to discussions and decision-making.		
iv) The members of the governing board share responsibilities and tasks to lighten workload; the burden does not fall on a minority of governors.		
v) The governing board has sufficient capacity to impact on school improvement.		

## Criterion 2: Recruitment and Retention

<b>Overview – Areas for consideration</b>	How the governing board plans its recruitment activities and strategies to manage vacancies
	How new governors are prepared for their role
	How the governing board develops its skills and knowledge
	How the governing board plans to retain its members

### Sub-criteria

#### 2a. The governing board has clear plans for recruitment activities and strategies to manage vacancies:

<b>Good practice standard</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>
i) Governors are clear about the constitutional basis of governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The composition of the governing board is compliant with the Instrument of Government / Articles of Association. Awareness of the current composition helps the governing board to effectively manage vacancies.</li> <li>Election and appointments to the governing board are expedited in accordance with national and local, and (where appropriate) Trust guidance. The governing board uses national and local recruitment campaigns to seek to fill vacancies (including Governors for Schools (SGOSS), Inspiring Governance and Academy Ambassadors).</li> <li>The governing board deploys strategies to manage and keep vacancies to a minimum, including its own succession planning.</li> <li>The board advertises vacancies widely to ensure a good field of potential candidates is considered.</li> <li>In a MAT, records and appointment processes, show that the distinct roles of members/ trustees and local governors are understood by all.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board ensures the timely implementation of election and appointments based on relevant skills.	
iii) Skills, knowledge and experience match the needs of the organisation.	
iv) A selection process is conducted to ensure best candidate is appointed.	
v) The governing board has a strategy in place for robust succession planning.	

## 2b. New governors receive a clear induction programme to enable them to play a full role

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
i) The chair provides a warm welcome and deploys the organisation's induction programme to ensure that newly appointed governors know the school/academy well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New governors are invited to visit the school and meet the headteacher.</li> <li>• A procedure for school/ Trust based induction and support is agreed and a member of the governing board has delegated responsibility for implementing it.</li> <li>• Key documents are identified in the organisation's governor induction procedure.</li> <li>• All new governors complete an Induction programme, face to face or by distance learning.</li> <li>• Procedures include a mechanism to support, mentor or coach new governors.</li> </ul>
ii) The clerk provides new governors with key documentation to assist understanding of the distinctive nature of the school and the work of the governing board.	
iii) New governors are expected to attend an induction training programme.	
iv) New governors are supported to enable participation in discussion at an early stage.	

## 2c. The governing board has a strong commitment to the development of its members' skills and knowledge

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board has a commitment to develop its capacity to engage in organisation self-evaluation and undertakes a skills audit and development and training needs analysis, as part of self-review activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board is aware of the training programmes which are offered and the need to tailor development to its own requirements</li> <li>• Governor development appears in the school improvement plan.</li> <li>• The governing board has adopted and implemented a self-evaluation regime to assess its performance.</li> <li>• The governing board contributes to the judgements agreed in the school self-evaluation processes.</li> <li>• The chair and committee chairs have considered appropriate leadership programmes.</li> <li>• The chair delegates the responsibility for accessing training and development and ensures a training and development record is kept.</li> </ul>
ii) Governors who have individual monitoring responsibilities take the opportunity to access appropriate training.	

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
iii) The chair and committee chairs have a commitment to the development of school leaders at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The training and development record supports the standards achieved.</li> </ul>

**2d. The governing board has a commitment to retaining good governors and managing poor conduct**

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence
i) Governors are valued and encouraged to participate fully in the work of the governing board and their views and contribution to the work of the school are respected, as part of an inclusive culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School induction procedures include ground rules to ensure that the work of the governing board is participative, inclusive and the views of all governors are valued.</li> </ul>
ii) Data and information required to undertake governor responsibilities is in a form which is easily understood and concise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational budget information is presented in an acceptable manner, and in sufficient detail for governors to monitor progress and make effective decisions.</li> </ul>
iii) The work of the governing board is positively promoted in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The headteacher/CEO is committed to sharing and explaining school data, so that governors can use it effectively.</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board operates in accordance with the Nolan principles and take appropriate action to ensure the behaviour of all governors is acceptable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The chair ensures that meetings are purposeful and rewarding to attend; active dialogue and input from all participants is encouraged.</li> <li>• The work of the governing board is outward facing and is seen and understood by the local community.</li> <li>• The organisation has planned mechanisms for recognising the work of governors.</li> <li>• The governing board understands and complies with the requirements of the School Information</li> </ul>



<b>Good practice standard</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>
v) The organisation complies with the statutory requirements to publish information about governance on its website	Regulations/Funding Agreement or AFH to publish information about governance and registers of interest on the organisation's website.

## The Assessment Framework - Aspects of Good Governance

### Criterion 3: Strategic Leadership

<b>Overview – Area for consideration</b>	The governing board sets the strategic direction of the school and has a central role in the leadership and management of the school
	The governing board ensures that the school complies with its statutory responsibilities and requirements for the curriculum, equalities and SEND

#### Sub-criteria:

#### 3a. The governing board is at the heart of strategic planning

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board in consultation with the headteacher/CEO and senior leadership team determines the strategic priorities for school/organisation improvement based on rigorous school self-evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the governing board’s influence through minutes, decisions made, etc.</li> <li>• Evidence the governing board is actively involved in the development and approval of school self-evaluation and improvement plans.</li> <li>• Evidence that the governing board sets a clear direction which has led to improvement and the promotion of high quality care and education.</li> <li>• Examples of leadership in specific activities by the governing board or individual governors.</li> <li>• Evidence of how the governing board is re-shaping the staffing of the school to enhance teaching and learning and build a whole school team working collaboratively.</li> <li>• In preparation for succession planning the governing board has considered a range of leadership models.</li> <li>• Record that governors are trained in headteacher recruitment and commission external support when necessary. Examples of policies which promote equality</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board has a high level of strategic influence, brought to bear in decision-making and makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school.	
iii) The governing board contributes to school improvement by successfully tackling key concerns.	
iv) The governing board in consultation with the headteacher and senior leadership team reviews and determines: a) The staffing complement and structure when appropriate e.g. when vacancies arise and b) the leadership structure. Reviews include consideration of alternative structures.	
v) The governing board can effectively apply the procedures for the appointment of a new headteacher.	

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
vi) The governing board operates staff recruitment and selection procedures that meet the recommendations in the Secretary of State's guidance on Safer Recruitment, including the latest versions of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children.	<p>of opportunity and tackle discrimination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance management policy.</li> <li>• Recruitment and selection procedures, particularly to ensure the adequacy and suitability of staff for the protection of learners.</li> <li>• Evidence that vetting procedures for all adults who work with learners are robust and comply with regulation.</li> <li>• The board can demonstrate compliance with the law with regard to recruitment and selection and has effective policies with regard to staff grievances, disciplinary and appeals procedures.</li> <li>• There is a record of existing school policies, showing the date of ratification and review.</li> </ul>
vii) The governing board ensures that statutory policies are in place and that policy making complies with school governance regulations and that policies reflect the distinctive nature of the school.	

### 3b. The governing board is active in setting challenging school improvement targets

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board is focused on raising standards of attainment and progress and promoting the personal development and well-being of all learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of mechanisms for governors to influence target setting.</li> <li>• Governors can demonstrate engagement with external advice to support school improvement. (e.g. Teaching School Alliance / LA officer / Trust adviser / Independent consultant).</li> <li>• Evidence of mechanisms for the promotion of high standards.</li> <li>• Evidence of target setting and the promotion of individualised learning and wellbeing.</li> <li>• The governing board receives reports from school improvement professionals and acts upon them.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board sets challenging targets and includes these in the school improvement plan.	

### 3c. The governing board deploys resources effectively in support of the school improvement cycle

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board has robust systems in place to ensure sound financial management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking is used effectively to inform financial decision making and ensure value for money is achieved.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board has a clear timetable for school improvement planning and organises meetings to fit in with the improvement cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of meeting the SFV Standard / or the requirements of the Academy Financial Handbook.</li> <li>• Evidence of a calendar of governing board meetings.</li> </ul>
iii) The governing board sets the school/organisation budget to reflect the priorities in the school's development/improvement plan and is active in monitoring and amending financial decisions throughout the cycle to keep within the budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that school self-evaluation is at the core of the governing board's contribution to the development cycle.</li> <li>• The governing board has mechanisms to keep itself up to date with national policy that will impact on funding and budget decisions.</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board effectively and efficiently deploys resources to achieve value for money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board reviews and responds to recommendations in audit reports and management letters.</li> </ul>
v) The governing board is adept at longer term budget planning, including capital spending and asset management priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of specific priority projects budgeted for and implemented Evidence of 3-year budget planning.</li> </ul>
vi) The governing board promotes the best use of school to school support which demonstrates a positive impact on pupil outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of effective asset management and use of capital funds.</li> <li>• The school is actively participating in clusters of schools – Teaching School Alliances, Consortia, Multi Academy Trusts, Federations etc.</li> </ul>

### 3d. Appraisal, performance management and pay

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
<p>i) The governing board has an appraisal policy and ensures that all teachers, including the headteacher, and staff are appraised in accordance with statutory requirements and receives reports on the effectiveness of the appraisal policy for all staff, and ensures it is fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the practice in performance management meets the policy.</li> <li>• Evidence, where appropriate, of the agreement of a plan for awarding teaching and learning responsibilities.</li> <li>• Evidence of governing board procedures for agreeing staff pay and progression.</li> <li>• Relevant governors have had training or bring appropriate professional experience to carry out the performance management of the headteacher/CEO.</li> </ul>
<p>ii) The governing board appoints performance management governors for headteacher appraisal. They work effectively with the external advisor in the review of headteacher performance and setting of objectives consistent with school improvement priorities. *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors receive a report on staff CPD that demonstrates how CPD links with improvement priorities and the impact of CPD activities.</li> <li>• Evidence of involvement of external adviser in relation to HT Performance Management.</li> </ul>
<p>iii) The governing board is clear about its responsibilities with regard to staff pay and how decisions are made in relation to the salary progression of staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the governing board's involvement in selecting the external advisor. (In Academies sharing of HT Appraisal with the Trust Board representatives.)</li> <li>• There is a clear link between self-evaluation, school improvement plan and appraisal.</li> <li>• Evidence that the governing board ensures that progression and reward is only made when performance clearly indicates that it is appropriate. The governing board does not reward underperformance.</li> </ul>

\*In Academies the performance management process will be undertaken in line with Trust requirements.

### 3e. The governing board ensures that the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board ensures that every learner receives a broad and balanced curriculum which does not discriminate against any groups of pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board monitors the effectiveness of Social Moral Spiritual education across the curriculum. Governor visit reports and minutes of meetings.</li> <li>• The governing board has ensured there are procedures in place and published for dealing with curriculum complaints.</li> <li>• Evidence of a systematic review of the effective delivery of all statutory requirements.</li> <li>• Ofsted inspection judgements of the breadth and balance of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Ofsted inspection judgements concerning collective worship and religious education.</li> <li>• Evidence of benchmarking and use of Gatsby Benchmarks to inform decision making and records that governors have ensured that pupils have appropriate opportunity to develop employability skills.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board ensures that the school provides teaching of religious education for all learners in accordance with the agreed syllabus or otherwise and has told parents of the right to withdraw their children.	
iii) The governing board ensures that the school provides a daily act of collective worship for all learners and has told parents of their right to withdraw their children.	
iv) The governing board has ensured that the school meets its statutory responsibilities relating to sex and relationships education.	
v) In schools with secondary age children, the governing board ensures the organisation complies with statutory guidance on careers and has developed a careers strategy.	

### 3f. The governing board ensures that the school complies with the statutory requirements to promote Equality

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board ensures that it is compliant with the requirements in the Equalities Act to have due regard to eliminate discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of equality objectives to advance equality of opportunity for all.</li> <li>• Evidence of activity and policy that recognises various cultures and develops shared values.</li> </ul>
ii) The inclusion of all learners is central to the vision of the governing board and it is successful in pursuing this and removing barriers to learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the governing board commitment to inclusion.</li> <li>• Examples of other governor activity to promote inclusion within the school e.g. Looked After and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller children.</li> </ul>
iii) The governing board has arrangements to monitor its compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and all aspects of discrimination law, ensuring that the principles of fairness and equality underpin everything the organisation does, assessing its impact on staff, learners and parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the board has ensured the appointment of a designated teacher for Looked After Children.</li> <li>• Evidence that equality of opportunity is promoted in all aspects of provision and discrimination is tackled, so that all learners achieve as well as they can.</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board monitors and accounts for the spending of Pupil Premium funding to support vulnerable pupils and understands and reports upon the use and impact of this expenditure on vulnerable pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors can demonstrate that they are monitoring any racist or other discriminatory incidents.</li> <li>• Promoting social mobility in everything the school does, evidenced by data demonstrating progress of disadvantaged/vulnerable groups. Publication of pupil Premium Strategy and its impact.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of the impact of pupil premium on closing the performance gap and diminishing any differences.</li> <li>• The governing board is aware of the gap/s both within the school and in comparison with national data.</li> <li>• Evidence that the governing board are aware of the impact of the funded PP interventions / support. That the outcomes demonstrate good value for money. Monitoring and ensuring rapid progress for more able disadvantaged groups.</li> </ul>

**3g. The governing board ensures that the school complies with the statutory requirements relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board ensures that the school has regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when meeting learner’s difficulties and/or disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that a committee or individual on the board has responsibility for oversight of SEND.</li> <li>• Clear evidence of monitoring e.g. visit reports by the governor/s of special education needs and disability for all children and young people’s special needs requirements, including those with a EHCP and without EHCP.</li> <li>• Ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO and record in minutes that the board has sought reassurance that the SENCO has sufficient time and resource to carry out the role.</li> <li>• Evidence through minutes that governors are aware of the application of the school’s policy for special educational needs and ensure that children get the support they need and are able to engage in the activities of school alongside those who do not have special needs.</li> <li>• Relevant information and SEND report is published on website –and includes Local Offer.</li> <li>• Examples of regular review of provision by the governing board.</li> <li>• Evidence that governors monitor and review the impact of policies to support pupils at school with medical conditions.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board ensures that the school meets the requirements of relevant Special Educational Needs and Disability legislation.	
iii) The governing board ensures that the school has told parents about its policy and arrangements and reports annually on the success of its SEND policy and the progress made in improving accessibility.	
iv) The governing board monitors and accounts for the spending of SEND funding to support vulnerable pupils and understands and reports upon the use and impact of this expenditure on vulnerable pupils.	



### 3h The governing board ensures that the school complies with the statutory requirements relating to health, safety and well-being of staff and pupils

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board has robust procedures for ensuring that the school meets all relevant health and safety legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate business continuity arrangements are in place.</li> <li>• Examples of risk assessments are in place and acted upon.</li> <li>• Minutes that demonstrate governors monitor health and safety audits and policies and ensure resources are allocated to ensure compliance.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board seeks to eliminate anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and all forms of harassment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board ensures allocation of resources to ensure that all pupils attend school.</li> </ul>
iii) The governing board ensures that the school has robust procedures for safeguarding, including processes for dealing with peer to peer abuse and online safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records show governors understand their legal responsibilities regarding exclusions and have undertaken training.</li> <li>• The governing board has established behaviour principles that inform behaviour management policies</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board ensures that the school protects pupils from involvement in all forms of extremism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes of the appropriate governor committee/s that demonstrates good practice. Governors receive reports from the headteacher highlighting any incidents of anti-social behaviour, exclusions and H&amp;S incidents. Minutes evidence governors challenging and acting on any negative trends.</li> <li>• Records show the board having regard to the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. Staff workload is reviewed and any necessary action implemented</li> <li>• Examples of governor support for the Healthy Schools and Mentally Healthy Schools initiatives.</li> </ul>

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
<p>v) The governing board ensures that the school website is compliant with relevant legislation and regularly reviews its content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of the board's decisions to improve wellbeing.</li> <li>• There are recruitment policies and procedures in place, particularly to ensure the adequacy and suitability of staff for the protection of learners.</li> <li>• Evidence that governors undertake training to support their safeguarding role and regularly visit the school to audit procedures and practice, including independent checks of the single central record</li> <li>• Evidence that vetting procedures for all adults who work with learners are robust and comply with regulation.</li> <li>• Evidence of training in relation to radical extremism, PREVENT.</li> </ul>

### 3i The governing board plays a key role in setting and managing risk appetite and tolerance

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
<p>i) The governing board ensures that risks are aligned with strategic priorities and improvement plans and intervention strategies provide a robust framework for risk management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board has agreed a framework for identifying and managing risk and this framework influences policy decisions.</li> <li>• Records (e.g. agendas and minutes) show that the board actively consider the risks associated with their strategic priorities and improvement plans. It advises on how risks should be managed or mitigated to reduce the likelihood of the impact of the risk and how to achieve the right balance of risk.</li> <li>• The board ensures that governors and school leaders have the skills and knowledge to understand and implement risk management and to know how and when risks should be escalated through the organisation for action.</li> </ul>

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
<p>ii) The governing board maintains and publishes up-to-date registers of interest for all board members, senior staff and local governors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records show that the organisation has procedures to ensure that governors and senior managers complete registers of pecuniary and business interests and actively avoid conflicts of interest or otherwise declare and manage them. These are actively reviewed on an annual basis.</li> </ul>
<p>iii) The governing board ensures that risk management and internal control systems are monitored and reviewed and appropriate actions are taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board has approved a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements. This is reviewed at least annually.</li> <li>• Investment decisions are only taken in accordance with policy.</li> <li>• The board has implemented a risk management strategy which includes the regular review of its risk register by an appropriate committee of the board.</li> <li>• There are adequate arrangements in place to guard against fraud and theft.</li> <li>• The board has ensured that the organisation has obtained adequate insurance cover.</li> </ul>

**3j. The governing board ensures that the school/academy communicates effectively with parents/guardians and takes account of their views**

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board ensures that all statutory assessments are conducted and results are forwarded to parents/guardians and appropriate boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of governor decisions to enhance reporting to parents on pupil progress.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board ensures that every year a report on each pupil's educational achievements is forwarded to their parents/guardians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of consultation with pupils and, where appropriate, that their recommendations are acted upon?</li> </ul>
iii) The governing board ensures that the school keeps parents and prospective parents informed by publishing information required in The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations or through Academy Funding Agreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of governor activity in the sharing and communication of information on the school website, including information about the curriculum and performance.</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board has a policy and effective practices for meeting the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and the GDPR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of the governors ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information legislation and ensuring the requirements of the GDPR are met.</li> </ul>
v) The governing board has procedures in place for the systematic collection of parental views including parental complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the use of parent/carer questionnaires/surveys and that the feedback is acted upon.</li> <li>• Parent View analysis.</li> <li>• Examples of actions taken to address concerns raised by parents.</li> </ul>

## Criterion 4: Strengths and Weaknesses / Self-review, Innovation and Change

<b>Overview – Area for consideration</b>	The governing board has a good understanding of the quality of provision and has had an impact on school improvement and the outcome for pupils within their school and how its performance compares locally and nationally
	How the governing board undertakes a self-review of both its performance and contribution to school self-evaluation
	How the governing board uses opportunities for innovation in order to improve performance through change

### Sub-criteria

#### 4a. The governing board has a planned and robust approach to monitoring and evaluation

<b>Good practice standards</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>
i) The governing board (and committees of the governing board) has agreed how it will effectively monitor the quality of provision within the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed procedures for monitoring.</li> <li>• A schedule of governors with specific delegated monitoring responsibilities.</li> <li>• Governors' understanding and monitoring of the application of the school's approach to pupil assessment and progress.</li> <li>• Governors' understanding of the application of the individual pupil tracking system.</li> <li>• Governors' understanding of the application of internal and externally provided performance data including FFT, Analyse School Performance Reports, including Inspection Data Summary Report.</li> </ul>
ii) Governors know how and when the school is compared nationally and with similar schools.	
iii) Governors know how staff evaluate pupil standards and track pupil progress.	

#### 4b. The governing board uses performance data as a basis for evaluating the school

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board collects and analyses the views of learners, parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board procedures for actively engaging with school self-evaluation.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board understands and takes account of pupil progress and attainment data and the data in relation to specific groups (Vulnerable learners / Pupil Premium / Boys & Girls etc.) and in different subjects and year groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of how pupils', parents' and staff' views are analysed by the governing board and acted upon.</li> <li>• Evidence of how information such as ASP/FFT reports are used and acted upon.</li> </ul>
iii) The governing board collects and analyses performance data on achievement and standards (e.g. ASP data, etc) including data relating to attendance and behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of governor monitoring of attendance issues and any action taken.</li> </ul>
iv) The governing board is aware of the quality of teaching learning and assessment and how this relates to pupil progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of evaluative measures used and methods of application.</li> <li>• Evidence of action to monitor and support the achievement of vulnerable children and specific groups identified by the governing board.</li> </ul>

#### 4c. The governing board gathers information from the headteacher and other professionals, allowing them to evaluate the school

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) Reports from the headteacher have a clear purpose and contain relevant information, meeting the needs of the governing board and assisting in monitoring, evaluation and decision-making including information about the quality of teaching and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of how the headteacher's reports and other reports have assisted decision-making by the governing board and led to school improvement.</li> <li>• Evidence of governors informing themselves about the quality of teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board receives information about how well learners are supported and guided in their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of information that have assisted the governing board to validate judgements made in school self-evaluation.</li> </ul>

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
iii) The governing board receives a wide range of information from within and outside the school that corroborates information.	All governors have access to reports from external professionals such as the local authority officer, Trust Adviser, LLE's, NLE's, Teaching Schools etc.

#### 4d. The governing board has a structured and purposeful approach to school visits

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) The governing board has an agreed policy and code of practice for visits to the school/organisation, and how such visits are recorded and reported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits policy and code of practice.</li> <li>• There is evidence that visits from a number of governors take place.</li> <li>• Examples of governor visit reports are reported to colleague governors and their impact considered.</li> <li>• Evidence is gathered during school visits and shared.</li> <li>• Evidence of governor attendance at school events, prize giving, drama productions, concerts, social functions, etc.</li> <li>• Examples of governor engagement with pupils and parents.</li> <li>• Evidence that governors' visits have an impact on decisions or confirm progress.</li> </ul>
ii) Such monitoring visits are related to school improvement priorities and statutory responsibilities, and information gained from school visits is shared with the governing board in a structured way.	
iii) School visits contribute to the evidence base for decision-making by the governing board.	

**4e. The governing board undertakes a self-review of its performance and contributes to school self-evaluation**

<b>Good practices standard</b>	<b>Examples of evidence</b>
<p>i) The governing board has a strong commitment to self-review, as part of the drive for continuous improvement including self-review of its own performance which includes a plan for improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is the evidence for the use of specific self-review tools and a resulting action plan.</li> <li>• There is evidence that the governing board can make sharp judgements and provide factual outcomes to support them.</li> <li>• There is evidence that the results of self-evaluation have been followed up.</li> </ul>
<p>ii) The governing board is engaged with the completion and updating of school self-evaluation and is aware of the sources of data and information that validate the judgements in these documents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the planned priorities emerging from self-review informs the basis of the school improvement or development plan and governing board and evaluation activities.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is scheduled to fit in with the annual planning cycle.</li> <li>• The governing board analyses and discusses key data and information and governors use it to verify judgements and identify priorities for improvement.</li> </ul>



**4f. The governing board supports, looks for, and uses opportunities for innovation in order to improve performance through change**

Good practice standard	Examples of evidence	
i) The governing board has a commitment to look for new ways to improve provision, teaching, learning and assessment and the range of facilities available in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board can demonstrate the effective use of three-year budgets, best value and procurement procedures.</li> <li>• Governors have a record of attracting support for the school from the wider community for core and extended provision.</li> <li>• Governors can show that new technologies are part of working practice to improve communication and consultation, complying with GDPR and Freedom of Information regulations.</li> <li>• The governing board can demonstrate that workforce arrangement and staffing structure has enhanced teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Governors can demonstrate the achievements of new ways of working, by collaborating effectively with other schools and agencies to enhance innovative partnerships.</li> <li>• The governors collect pupil and parent feedback and act upon results and any recommendations made.</li> <li>• Evidence of the school working in networks and clusters. E.g. Teaching School Alliances, Consortia, Multi-Academy Trusts, Federations etc.</li> </ul>	
ii) The governing board demonstrates innovative approaches to maximise resources and has an approach to maximise the potential of information technology.		
iii) The governing board has agreed and keeps under review the staffing structure to meet the needs of the school/organisation.		
iv) The governing board gathers feedback from pupils, parents and the community and has a mechanism for acting on suggestions for change where possible.		
v) The governing board has pro-actively supported the development of partnerships which consider procurement / commissioning and collaborative working.		
vi) The governing board has a succession planning strategy for the leadership of the school and has considered a range of structures and leadership models.		

## Criterion 5: Support and Challenge

<b>Overview – Area for consideration</b>	The governing board provides effective support to the headteacher and staff and demonstrates appropriate challenge
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### Sub-criteria

#### 5a. The governing board and the headteacher create the climate whereby both support and challenge can be provided

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) There is a high level of trust and respect between the headteacher and the governing board and the headteacher is open to questions and suggestions from the governing board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agendas and minutes of meetings between the school leadership and governors that demonstrate joint working and appropriate support and challenge.</li> <li>• The governing board is active in promoting the good reputation of the school.</li> <li>• There is evidence that the Nolan principles are discussed and understood by all governors and there is evidence that all governors understand their duty to declare any conflicts of loyalty/interest.</li> </ul>
ii) There are clear ground rules for discussions and decision-making, including the required confidentiality following decisions.	

**5b. The governing board is skilled in asking relevant and challenging questions which provide the evidence required for decision-making**

Good practice standards	Examples of Evidence
i) The governing board acts as a sounding board for the headteacher thinking through the use of appropriate questioning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of appropriate questioning and scrutiny in governing board minutes.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board holds the headteacher and school leadership to account by robustly challenging underperformance. They do this by asking questions in a positive and constructive manner and ensure that, where appropriate, the governing board follow this through.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that issues raised are followed up at subsequent meetings e.g. Reports to governing board, commissioning of external professional advice.</li> </ul>

**5c. There is an effective partnership between the governance and leadership**

Good practice standards	Examples of evidence
i) Governors have a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning and have a clear structure for engagement with the school's leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of any planned meeting schedule demonstrating engagement with the school's leadership team.</li> </ul>
ii) The governing board can discuss the schools' strengths and weaknesses openly and frankly with the school's leadership team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of school improvement activity focused on raising standards which have been supported by joint working between governors and the school's leadership team.</li> </ul>
iii) The school's leadership team has the opportunity to work with governors on improvement issues and the implementation of policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of projects where governors and staff are leading together.</li> </ul>
iv) Where there is a local governing body within a Multi Academy Trust there is a clear scheme of delegation identifying roles and accountabilities that is understood by all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of joint working on policy formulation or review.</li> <li>• Evidence that the scheme of delegation demonstrates joint working on school improvement issues.</li> <li>• Minutes provide clear evidence that the boundaries of local governance are understood and that the MAT provides effective support and challenge, based on the principle of one organisation and one group of children and young people.</li> </ul>

## 6. Impact:

The Governor Mark quality standard for school and academy governance is intended to support schools through moderated quality criteria of the governing board's contribution to leadership and management.

Underpinning the principles behind this model is the emphasis on a governing board ensuring that quality processes are in place which make a significant **impact** upon the achievements of the school or organisation. Intrinsic to this approach is the belief that if governing boards have adopted such quality processes their contribution and influence can make a real difference to the leadership and management of the school or organisation.

Effective governance **must** be evident in outcomes for pupils and the school community.

**For this section you need to identify areas where the work of the governing board has influenced achievement in the school.**

The areas of achievement we would like you to consider fall into three headings:

1. School Improvement
2. Partnerships and Community Engagement
3. Pupil wellbeing and safety

**Further help in writing Impact Statements is available in the Governor Mark Document: How to Succeed.**

For **each** of the three areas identified above complete the following:

**1. The issue identified and why?**

*In this section it is important that you identify a particular issue and explain how the governing board discovered / learned about the issue and why it was a priority for the school to address.*

**2. What did the governing board decide to do about it?**

*In this section you should explain what the governing board decided to do to address the issue*

**3. What action was taken by the school?**

*As a result of the governing board decision what did the school do*

**4. How did the governing board monitor progress?**

*In order to ensure that action in (2) was followed through – how did the governing board monitor progress*

**5. What was the impact of this strategy and action?**

*What was the **IMPACT** of (2) and (3)*

**6. What lessons did the governing board learn?**

*Did the governing board discuss the process and review whether there were any lessons learned from the process?*

Note: Each Impact statement should be no more than 1000 words.

N.B This form is provided in the Evidence Grid for completion in Word format.

## **Annex:**

### **Nolan principles:**

The Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles, were defined by the Committee for Standards in Public Life. They are:

**Selflessness** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

**Integrity** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

**Honesty** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.