

Education and Skills Director's Report to Governors

AUTUMN 2014

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***DEVELOPING THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF
YOUR GOVERNING BODY***

For more information please contact Sarah Beaumont, Governor Services Manager
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Summary

Congratulations to schools and to Barnet children and young people for high levels of attainment and progress in many areas. Initial, unvalidated, provisional results for 2014 indicate:

Early Years

- 65.3% of children in Barnet schools and settings reached an overall good level of development in the EYFS, compared to 60.4% of children nationally. This is a 5.7% increase on 2013.

Key Stage 1

- 75.9% of children at the end of *Year 1* were working at the expected level in phonics, above the indicative national average of 74.2%. This is a 3.7% increase from 2013 (72.2%).
- The proportion of children working at the expected level in Phonics in *Year 2* increased by 3.7% between 2013 and 2014, from 67.7% to 71.4%, whilst the national average is expected to fall by 1.7%.
- The proportions of pupils achieving a level 2 or above in Key Stage 1 assessment increased on the 2013 figure for Speaking and Listening (to 90.3%), Reading (90%), Mathematics (92.3%) and Science (91.4%), and all were above the indicative national average. Attainment in Writing fell by 0.1%.

Key Stage 2:

- The proportions of pupils achieving a Level 4+ increased on last year for all measures, which include: Reading (to 91.1%), Writing (86.2%), Mathematics (88.8%), Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (to 82.3%) and Reading, Writing and Mathematics (to 81.7%).
- The largest change was an increase of 3.6% in the proportion of pupils achieving a level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics (compared to a national increase of 2.6%), followed by a 3.2% increase in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4+ in KS2 Writing (national increase 1.9%).

Key Stage 4

- Provisional GCSE results for 2014 indicate Barnet's high standards have been maintained, but this is based on unvalidated data from a sample of Barnet secondary schools

Key Stage 5

- Initial indications from schools that have shared their 2014 A Level results with the local authority (14 out of 19 schools) show that, whilst 2014 national A-Level results are expected to see a small drop in the proportion of A*-E grades awarded, provisional results from Barnet schools indicate the borough's high standards have been maintained with 98% A*-E grades (in line with last year's outstanding results).

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors

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School improvement - proposed priorities and consultation on a new approach

Summary

A report on school improvement has been prepared for the next meeting of the Council's Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 15 September 2014. The report can be seen at:

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=697&MID=7925#A19098>

The report provides an update on the performance of schools and the attainment and progress of pupils. It draws some conclusions from this update about the key priorities that the Education and Skills Delivery Unit should be commissioned to focus on over the next 12 months. It also reports on a review of school improvement and proposes a new approach to school improvement as the best way of sustaining high performing schools for the foreseeable future.

The report proposes that the Council's main priorities for school improvement for the academic year 2014 to 2015 should be:

- Increasing the number of good and outstanding schools and reducing the number of schools 'Requiring Improvement' or that are 'inadequate'.
- Improving attainment and progression at the end of primary so it is in line with the top ten per cent in the country.
- Improving Primary Writing.
- Raising the achievement of FSM pupils and closing the FSM gap.
- Improving progression of Looked After Children (especially at Secondary)
- Improving pupil attendance in Primary Schools.

The report describes the current education landscape, with the increasing autonomy of schools, together with the shift of school improvement resources from the local authority to schools. It suggests a more flexible approach to how the school improvement system in Barnet operates.

A Schools Standards Partnership Board of headteachers and local authority officers has been meeting during the last year to review our current arrangements and develop ways to build and improve on what we do. While there are examples of valuable partnership working between schools in Barnet, system leadership and school to school support are not yet sufficiently systematised or central to an agreed borough-wide school improvement strategy. There is also a lot more that can be done to make the most of the resources and expertise available through outstanding headteachers (such as, National Leaders of Education and Local Leaders

of Education) and Teaching Schools.

The Schools Standards Partnership Board believes that there are significant potential benefits to be gained by establishing a more strategic longer-term approach to school improvement, based on systematic school-to-school support and drawing on the system leadership capability of many of the best headteachers and schools, including Academies. Barnet schools and the Education and Skills service are in a strong position to make a successful, timely transition to school-led improvement, building on the existing strengths of schools and central services and drawing on the experience and expertise of good and outstanding Barnet headteachers.

The report sets out a proposed new approach to school improvement (in Appendix B) and recommends that we consult schools on the proposed approach, including proposals to establish a series of school improvement partnerships by April 2015 so that every school in Barnet is able to benefit from or contribute to system leadership and a self-improving school system.

**Governors’
Role**

Governors to note the information above

**For
information
by
Contact**

All governors

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Alternative Delivery Model – update on the ADM survey and proposals for further consultation

Summary

The Council has been working with schools to develop a new way to deliver education related services in Barnet. Firstly, thank you to all of the headteachers and governors who attended briefings in June and who completed our online survey during July and August.

The aim of the survey was to seek initial views on:

- the aims, objectives and drivers
- the potential benefits and risks of each model
- the evaluation criteria
- the potential role of schools in a new model
- the level of support for each of the models under consideration.

Overall, 136 responses were received during the survey period. There was a good mix of responses from headteachers and governors, with over 63% of responses coming from chairs, vice-chairs or parent governors.

There was very strong support for the vision and aims that have been set out for education services, alongside clear agreement with the key drivers for change.

Whilst there was a broad range of views on the relative importance of the criteria for deciding on the best model for the future, well over 50% of respondents ranked “Supports delivery of better education outcomes across Barnet” and “Preserves or improves service delivery performance in key services (SEN, Admissions, Education Psychology etc.)” in their three most important criteria.

Over a third of respondents were very keen or quite keen for schools to be involved in the ownership of a new organisation, with a further third willing to consider it. Support was stronger from headteachers than it was from governors. It was also stronger in the responses from primary heads and governors than it was from secondary schools.

In respect of the six models under consideration, initial views were:

- Some support for the In-house model
- Little support for the Outsourcing model
- Moderate support for a Local Authority Trading Company
- Strong support for a Social Enterprise model
- Good support for the Joint Venture commissioning model
- Good support for the Joint Venture ownership model

The results of this initial survey have been analysed and used to inform a report to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 15 September 2014. The report can be seen at:

The report includes a draft outline business case, which sets out proposals for further consultation to develop a new way of delivering the Council's Education and Skills service in partnership with schools. The draft outline business case sets out how the changing educational landscape creates strategic, financial and performance drivers that combine to make a compelling case for change in order to:

- Maintain Barnet's excellent education offer
- Maintain an excellent relationship between the Council and schools
- Achieve the budget savings target for the service up to 2020

It incorporates an options appraisal of the six possible models listed above and concludes that three of the six models are better placed than the others to meet the objectives of the service, but that further work is required to confirm the commercial and financial viability of these options. The three models proposed for further consideration are the three partnership models – the Social Enterprise model, the Joint Venture commissioning model and the Joint Venture ownership model.

Approval to proceed to consultation on the three options is being sought from the Committee at this stage to ensure that the selection of the preferred option can be properly informed by the outcome of that consultation. This will include further consultation with schools and formal consultation with the market, which is essential to ensure that the financial assessment of each of the options is sufficiently complete and robust to enable a decision to be made on the preferred option. A final outline business case will be put before members of the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee in January 2015.

If the recommendations are approved, the further consultation on possible delivery models will take place this term, with schools, as well as other groups, including residents and service users and employees. The council will work with the headteacher reference group to develop materials to inform you and assist with decision making. Further briefings for all headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies will take place during October, to allow all schools to consider the proposals at their Governing Body meetings in the second half of the term.

For any further details please contact: Deborah Hinde, Project Lead.

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Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors

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Summary

As schools are aware, reducing absence in primary schools is a key priority for us this year because of the significance of the relationship between absence and achievement and specifically because of the gap between attendance in Barnet and the national and London averages. Poor attendance is a nationally recognised school improvement issue, particularly for key groups, and there is clear evidence where absence is successfully reduced, that a robust whole school approach is the key.

Pupil attendance at Barnet primary schools in 2012/13 (the last available figures for a full school year) was below the national average and well below the London average.

Consequently, we are organising a conference aimed at providing support and encouragement to schools where levels of absence remain stubbornly high. The conference will be on 8 October 2014 and we hope that priority schools are able to send two or three representatives. Invitations have been sent to the headteachers.

The focus of the conference will be on attendance as a whole school issue. There will be a number of speakers (from both within and beyond the borough) who will share their experiences of reducing absence and who will then be available for informal discussions.

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors

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Summary

At its last meeting in July the Schools Forum received a report on schools' revenue balances.

Total revenue balances for maintained schools (excluding Academies) are £15.2m, which is an increase of £2.1m over the previous year. A number of primary schools have revenue balances in excess of 15% of their 2013/14 budget share whilst the highest level of balance for the 7 maintained secondary schools was 13% of their 2013/14 budget share.

Members of the Forum (which includes headteacher and governor representatives from all types and phases of school) agreed that, such high balances require further scrutiny, albeit that it is recognised that many schools may be saving money for capital projects. The Forum agreed that letters should be sent to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of schools have had revenue balances of 12% or more over the last 3 years, or with a 2013/14 outturn balance exceeding 20%. The letters will ask schools to explain their high balances and any specific plans they might have to spend them.

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors of maintained schools

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Summary

The authority managed to establish, with the support of schools, 208 additional reception class places last year and a further 118 this year. A huge thank you to schools who have worked with us over the last year to achieve this! As a result of the withdrawal of a proposal to open a Free School combined with a late influx of families to new building developments in the Colindale/Burnt Oak area, we faced a particular shortfall of places at the start of this term in the Colindale area. We are extremely grateful to The Orion School for agreeing to take on an extra bulge class at this late stage, despite already having 4 reception classes. There are a number of late applicants across the borough that will need to be placed as term starts and it is expected that all unplaced children will be offered a place at Orion or in other schools by the end of September.

A report on the planning of new school places from 2015/16 to 2019/20 is being submitted to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 15 September 2014 and can be seen at: <http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=697&MID=7925#AI9098>

The report updates Barnet's commissioning strategy for school places to ensure that Barnet meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient places up to 2019/2020. The commissioning strategy sets out the investment plans currently in place, those that are in development and where further planning is required as we move towards the end of the decade. The strategy covers the need for additional primary and secondary school places and provision for children with special educational needs to meet the growing population in the borough. The report outlines the requirement for future capital investment to deliver school places in order to inform the council's budget setting process.

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors

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Reconstitution of Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools 2014-15

Summary

All Governing bodies of maintained schools must be constituted under the 2012 Constitution Regulations or the 2012 Federation Regulations, as appropriate, by 1 September 2015. It is therefore recommended that, if they have not already done so, Governing Bodies should begin discussions regarding reconstitution during the Autumn Term 2014.

Points to consider when deciding on the constitution of the governing body

Governing bodies should be no bigger than they need to be to have all the skills necessary to carry out their functions. The size and structure of the governing body should be designed so that every member actively contributes relevant skills and experience.

The Regulations, as amended, create an explicit requirement that all appointed governors have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.

The specific skills that governing bodies need to meet their particular challenges will vary. It is therefore for governing bodies and other appointing persons to determine in their own opinion, having regard to the guidance, what these skills are and be satisfied that the governors they appoint have them. They may interpret the word skills to include personal attributes, qualities and capabilities, such as the ability and willingness to learn and develop new skills.

Governing bodies should use a skills audit such as that produced by the National Governors' Association (NGA) to identify any specific gaps that need to be filled in the skills, knowledge and experience of existing governors. The outcome of the audit will help the governing body or other appointing persons to formulate their opinion as to whether prospective governors have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school. It will also help to inform governor elections.

Experience has shown that all governors need a strong commitment to the role and to improving outcomes for children, the inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and the willingness to learn. They need good inter-personal skills, appropriate levels of literacy in English (unless a governing body is prepared to make special arrangements), and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data. Foundation governors need the skills to understand the ethos of the school and its implications for the way it is governed.

Experience also shows that effective governing bodies seek to secure or develop within their membership as a whole expertise and experience in analysing performance data, in budgeting and driving financial efficiency, and in performance management and employment issues, including grievances. They seek to recruit and/or develop governors with the skills to

work constructively in committees, chair meetings and to lead the governing body.

Requirements for all maintained schools

The governing body must not be smaller than seven members, and must include (subject to the requirements regarding foundation governors in qualifying foundation schools and voluntary aided schools):

- at least two parent governors;
- the headteacher unless the headteacher resigns as a governor;
- one, and only one, staff governor;
- one, and only one, local authority governor; and
- the governing body may appoint as many additional co-opted governors as they consider necessary. However, the number of co-opted governors who are eligible to be elected or appointed as staff governors must not, when counted with the one staff governor and the headteacher, exceed one-third of the total membership of the governing body.
- There is no upper limit but governing bodies should have regard to the statutory guidance in deciding their size.

Additional requirements for foundation and voluntary schools

In addition to the requirements set out above, foundation and voluntary schools are required to have partnership or foundation governors as follows:

- foundation and foundation special schools without a foundation must have at least two partnership governors;
- foundation and foundation special schools that have a foundation but are not a qualifying foundation school must have at least two foundation governors;
- qualifying foundation schools must have up to two more foundation governors than all other governors;
- voluntary aided schools must have two more foundation governors than all other governors; and
- voluntary controlled schools must have at least two foundation governors.

Surplus Governors

A school may have more governors in a particular category than is provided for in its instrument of government. This situation could arise if a governing body has decided to reconstitute and reduce in size but sufficient

resignations are not forthcoming for the remaining members to fit within the new structure.

Governing bodies, and chairs of governors in particular, should make every effort to achieve any restructuring or downsizing amicably through sensitive and honest negotiation about which governors are best placed to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school. This may be an uncomfortable process and should be handled sensitively and with care. If necessary, the governing body should put in place a fair and transparent process to define the skills it requires and conduct a skills audit of its members.

Where negotiations and the result of a skills audit do not result in sufficient resignations and there remains a surplus of governors:

Any surplus in the number of foundation governors must be resolved by the person responsible for appointing foundation governors. They should decide who should continue to hold office on the basis of which foundation governors are best skilled to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school, and to secure the purposes for which they were appointed as a foundation governor.

Any surplus in any other category of governor must be resolved by a separate vote of the governing the governing body on each category in which there is a surplus. This vote must be specified as an item on the agenda issued seven days in advance of the meeting. Governors are not permitted to vote on their own category. The chair has a casting vote if necessary. Governors declared surplus do not cease to hold office until votes are cast on all categories in which there is a surplus.

Governors are invited to attend a workshop devoted to sharing good practice on constitution and committee structures on Wednesday 1 October 2014 at 7 – 9pm at the Hyde School. Please register through the Governor Support and Development programme.

**Governors’
Role**

Governors to note the information above

**For
information
by**

All governors of maintained schools, which have not already reconstituted in line with the School Governance (Constitution)(England)Regulations 2012

Contact

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Summary

The new OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (September 2014) provides clear guidance for inspectors on the duties and responsibilities of school governors. In order to assist governors and headteachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in governance we are offering an 'Effective Governance Checklist' which we are suggesting you complete and discuss with your headteacher. This is attached as Appendix One.

We will make the effectiveness of governance one of the key foci for the Local Authority visit to the school in the spring term and are able to offer support through Barnet Governor Services or through BPSI. If governors decide they need support before that time the headteacher can contact either of the services mentioned above.

Governors' Role

Governors to note the information above

For information by Contact

All governors

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Introduction The final version of the 2014 School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document was laid before Parliament on 8 August 2014. The updated version will come into force on 1 September 2014. A copy of the document plus departmental guidance is available on the GOV.UK website.

Summary Summarised below are the main changes since the 2013 document and additional advice can be obtained from Deborah Shaw or from your school via the AskHR portal:

- Details of the September 2014 pay award – 1% uplift to the minima and maxima of all pay ranges.
- Revised framework for setting leadership pay.
- Simplified leadership pay arrangements and streamlining of allowances by bringing them into base pay.
- Removal of the 43 point leadership pay spine.
- Removal of the restrictions about starting salaries for leadership roles.
- Removal of the existing requirement for pay differentials between leadership roles.
- Removal of the prescribed £1500 differential between TLR allowances.
- Removal of the detailed list of 21 administrative/clerical tasks.
- Significantly shorter Section 3.
- Removal of the non – statutory guidance in Section 4.
- Closure of the Chartered London Teacher scheme, with a two year transition period.

These new provisions for determining individual pay ranges will only apply automatically to new appointments or to existing posts following restructuring or significant changes to responsibilities.

There is no requirement to re-assess the pay of existing head teachers or other school leaders in September 2014.

Schools will need to review their pay and appraisal policies from September 2014 to reflect the changes to setting Leadership pay and to clarify their

approach to making decisions about pay progression for the leadership group.

As you may be aware, last year was the final year that automatic pay rises were awarded to teachers; from September 2014 pay increases for any teacher should be linked to their performance at appraisal. It is anticipated that the number of pay appeals to be heard by Governing Bodies will rise in the Autumn term when decisions about the level of pay rise (or not) are communicated.

OFSTED have confirmed that they will be checking that schools have robust performance management systems in place and that pay rises, from September 2014, are clearly linked to their performance as evidenced at the annual appraisal.

Please do not hesitate to contact Deborah Shaw if you have any queries or questions about the 2014 STPCD or if you would like to discuss access to training in relation to conducting a pay appeal or would like us to arrange a bespoke session for your school or local cluster of schools.

**Governors’
Role**

Review and update pay and appraisal policies including the criteria for pay progression.
Ensure that appraisals are carried out and that pay decisions are legal, fair and consistent and can stand up to scrutiny if challenged by staff or OFSTED.
Review the composition of appeals panels and plan for pay appeals during the Autumn term.

**For
information
by**

All governors

Contact

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Summary

In April 2014 we transferred to the new way of working and asked schools to use the new Payroll and HR online systems “My View” and “AskHR” to process pay, transactions and to raise queries and access information.

We do acknowledge that the transition has not been easy and are aware that schools have experienced difficulties with access, input and the overall efficiency of the systems. Your support and patience during the transition is greatly appreciated.

It is clear that a significant majority of you want the partnership with Capita to work, but we have not met your expectations. We have committed to change this through working with you and your staff to introduce improvements to how we work and reduce the workload on the school office.

Feedback from schools has already made a difference. Over the summer we have been working hard to address many of the technical issues and end-user problems that have been raised. Going forward, we will establish regular user groups to help drive not just the improvements, but also future innovations that will make a difference to schools. We need to continue to make sure we are meeting your needs. To do this we will focus on four areas:

Involving you more: listening and making sure that schools have a say in what changes are needed and what your priorities are. We will do this to ensure you have much more involvement in service developments and setting your expectations and requirements. To do this, we will set up two consultative groups (one for headteachers and one for school managers) to meet regularly with the Human Resources Director to provide direct feedback and monitor our performance

Improving the technology: using your feedback about how the systems work to inform investment in the technology to make it work more efficiency for you. We understand that the concept of ‘self service’ should reduce the amount of work for the school office, and this hasn’t happened. We will get this right, focussing on your priorities.

Improving quality: we will work with schools at simplifying administration and looking at what has been the root cause of errors. Our pay accuracy has been very good, better than before. However, we can help schools further by improving the accuracy and speed of our administration and advisory services.

Keeping it local: you have said you value people on site in Barnet who you know and trust. We promise to retain these people and ensure you still get a local service that understands what your school is trying to achieve.

Closer engagement with schools will commence at the beginning of the autumn term when we start the programme of regular meetings with school representatives.

It is paramount that we have your trust and satisfaction in the services we deliver and we are committed to achieving that.

**Governors’
Role
For
information
by**

To note the information above

All governors

Contact

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Arrangements for Managing Allegations Against Staff

Summary

All governors are reminded of the arrangements for handling allegations against staff within the children's workforce in Barnet. These arrangements are managed by the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Essential information about the relevant procedures, how to make a referral, training and safer working practice is now on the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board website at the link below:

<http://www.barnetscb.org/lado>

Governors' Role

For governors to note the information above

For information by

All governors

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The SEN Code of Practice

Summary

The attached document will assist school leaders and governors to consider the steps that should be in place to implement their new responsibilities for Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Governors may also find this link useful – a summary document on schools' responsibilities, drawn from the new SEN Code of Practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings>

There will be an opportunity to ask questions and get clarification and a short presentation will take place at the Chair's Briefing on the 17 September 2014.

Governors' Role

For governors to note the information above

For information by

All governors

Contact

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Appendix One

**CONFIDENTIAL
EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST**

Criterion	Grading 1 (high) to 4 (low)	Comment / source of evidence (as appropriate)
1. The governing body carries out an annual audit of the skills of its members		
2. Members of the governing body have the correct skills for the job		
3. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities		
4. The chair provides effective leadership for the governing body		
5. Governors attend training to fill gaps in their knowledge and skills		
6. Succession planning prepares governors well for new roles		
7. The chair and committee chairs are re-elected each year		
8. Governors keep up to date with and discuss national developments in respect of governance		
9. The size, composition and committee structure of the governing body is conducive to effective working		
10. Meetings are professionally clerked and run efficiently		

11. Minutes effectively capture the key points of meetings, particularly the quality of challenge from governors		
12. Every member of the governing body makes a regular contribution		
13. The governing body formally evaluates its performance		
14. Findings from the evaluation inform a governance development plan		
15. The governing body is a driving force in the development of the school's vision and ethos and its long-term aims		
16. Systems are in place for governors to ensure that the school development plan reflects these aims		
17. The governing body's activities and agenda setting are driven by the strategic planning cycle		
18. Governors are able to identify ways in which they have contributed actively to school improvement		
19. Governors understand the school's performance data well enough to properly hold school leaders to account		
20. Governors track use of pupil premium and understand its impact on outcomes		

21. Governors understand and are able to discuss the relative performance of different groups in the school		
22. Governors track use of sports funding and understand its impact on outcomes		
23. Governors ensure that the headteacher's performance management targets address key school priorities		
24. Governors know how good the teaching in the school is and what is being done to improve it		
25. Governors ensure that financial management systems are robust and ensure best value for money		
26. Governors know how good pupil behaviour is and what is being done to improve it		
27. Governors fulfil their statutory duties in respect of safeguarding and health and safety		
28. A range of formal and informal systems are in place to obtain the views of pupils, parents and staff		
29. Stakeholder views inform governing body decision making		
30. There is regular reporting to parents and the local community		

31. Relationships within the governing body and between governors and school staff are good and reflect mutual respect		
32. Governors are available to the school and participate regularly in activities beyond meetings		