The Governing Body’s Accountability Role

This section is divided into two parts:

Part One – Analysis of the accountability role

Part Two – Looking at ways forward.

The governing body is accountable to all stakeholders in the school. The key players are the pupils, the staff, the parents and the local community. There are others to whom the governing body is accountable. These include the LA, the DfE, and in the case of church schools, the Diocese. The governing body is responsible for spending public money and for providing education for the pupils. It must report to those involved on the plans, the progress of the school and any other matters that are important. To look at this role you need to consider what part you play in this work.

Summary of the tasks

- Consider, agree and monitor the annual budget.
- Develop procedures for the recruitment and selection of all school staff.
- In Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools, be the employer. (The LA is the employer for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.)
- Determine the pay policy for the school.
- Manage employee relations within the school including capability, discipline, grievance and dismissal.
- Directly manage the Headteacher’s performance through setting objectives, and agree a policy for the teachers to receive performance management from the Head.
- Prepare a health and safety policy and undertake risk assessments (Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools only).
- Ensure the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the national curriculum, which takes account of individual needs, and report on achievement and attainment to all stakeholders.
- Agree and publish pupil achievement targets for KS2, KS3 and KS4, reporting on progress towards meeting them and reporting on actual achievement.
- Ensure the school delivers Religious Education (RE).
- Set the admissions policy and hear appeals (Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools only)
- Control the use of the school premises during and outside the school day including determining charges for use by external groups.
- Ensure that free school meals are available for those who qualify.
- Be creative in communicating with stakeholders and ensure that access to governors on a regular basis is achieved.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are enabled to provide feedback or complain.
- Monitor its own effectiveness in communicating with all stakeholders.
- Celebrate success.
- Determine the value added within the school.
- Ensure appropriate communication and consultation with all stakeholders.

Accountability includes:

- Owning outcomes whether positive or negative
• Building a professional relationship with the Head and staff
• Reporting on:
  • Pupil attainment and other legally required information
  • The curriculum to all stakeholders
  • Implementation of policies
  • Use of resources, highlighting value for money and good employment practices
  • Role of the governing body, highlighting what it has done and what plans it has in place
  • Realistic previews of the school for prospective parents

• Engaging in dialogue with parents, listening to their views and being unafraid of discussing weaknesses that exist at present.
• Being innovative in establishing communication with stakeholders
• Valuing and respecting stakeholders’ views and ideas.
• Addressing complaints fairly, quickly and appropriately.
• Recognising that its neighbours are stakeholders and that responsibilities to them exist.
• Seeking to empower parents
• Monitoring its own effectiveness in terms of accountability.
• Working in a way which values consultation and adheres to timescales and thereby facilitates participation.
• Canvasing stakeholders for feedback.

• Other schools
  • Community

• Staff

• Ofsted

• Diocese

• Reporting on the contribution of PTA, parent helpers etc.
Question sheet for governors on accountability.

Please answer these questions on a 1-4 scale, with 1 being ‘Fully agree’ and 4 being ‘Completely disagree’. Then consider which parts need priority.

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<tr>
<th>Being Accountable</th>
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<tr>
<td>We publish full information about what we do</td>
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<td>We are aware of who we are accountable to</td>
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<td>We are aware of who is accountable to us</td>
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<td>We actively seek opportunities to explain the school’s plans and progress to stakeholders</td>
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<td>We welcome challenging input</td>
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<td>We take into account the views of stakeholders</td>
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<td>We actively canvass the opinions of pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders</td>
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<td>We know what information we have to submit to the LA and ensure we provide it</td>
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<td>We inform the LA and, if applicable the Diocese, if we have any concerns about the school</td>
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<td>We celebrate and publicise achievement</td>
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<th>Accountability Structures</th>
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<td>We receive regular reports from the Headteacher and Staff about the school.</td>
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<td>We have a range of Committees that meet regularly to receive, and discuss information and ask questions</td>
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<td>We have well attended main and committee meetings.</td>
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<td>Committee discussions, analysis of achievement/attainment data and outcomes always form an agenda item each term.</td>
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<td>We have a planned programme of monitoring visits, in and out of classroom hours, to the school.</td>
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<td>Governors are involved in pupil and community school activities, eg concerts, fetes.</td>
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<td>A governor, with the headteacher, meets annually with the Link adviser and, if applicable the Diocese, to discuss target-setting.</td>
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<td>A governor, with the Headteacher, meets annually with the Link adviser and, if applicable, the Diocese, to discuss the progress of the school.</td>
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We have a planned programme of training and development for all governors which is included in the School Development/Improvement Plan.

**The School Development/Improvement Plan and Post Ofsted Action Plan**

- We know our responsibilities in monitoring these plans
- We use our committee to monitor these plans.
- We ask about progress and discuss any changes that need to be made.

**The Staff**

- We consult and discuss our plans with the Headteacher and the staff.
- We have an effective performance management policy in place.
- Staff appointments relate to our vision for the school.
- We are appropriately involved in teacher recruitment and retention
- We value our staff and support them.

**The Budget**

- We regularly monitor the budget reports and discuss and approve any variations.
- We ask for explanations from the Headteacher as necessary.
- Our agreed budget is directly linked to the School Development Plan.

**The Curriculum**

- We have a planned programme for monitoring curriculum areas.
- We report on monitoring visits and use the information gathered.
- We ask challenging questions of the Headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators.
- We know how the curriculum is planned and delivered in our school

**Pupil Achievement**

- We receive pupil achievement data and analyse it.
We monitor pupil progress in all areas.
We analyse our pupil data against benchmark information.
We monitor value added.
We ask questions of the Headteacher about pupil achievement.
We set and ask for progress on pupil achievement targets

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<th>The Premises</th>
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<td>We have a premises plan.</td>
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<td>We monitor Health and Safety matters regularly.</td>
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<td>We monitor the premises budget thoroughly</td>
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<td>We know the state of our buildings and site.</td>
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<th>Information Requirements</th>
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<td>We know what information is legally required and provide it.</td>
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We inform parents regularly that our minutes are available.
Analysis of your questionnaire

As a whole group you will need to discuss your findings.

1. Which parts of the accounting role do you feel you are best at?

2. What is it that you are doing now that is successful?

3. What is it that you are doing now that you feel does not work?

4. Which areas need further attention?
Issues for you to discuss

- Accountability to the staff
- Reporting to parents
- Encouraging participation
- The LA, Diocese and others

To participate fully and fulfils your accounting role you need to consider these matters:

- Staff need to know what you are planning and how their views can be heard
  - Do your teacher and staff governors have a time to report back on governors meetings to the rest of the staff?
  - Do they have a “slot” on the meeting agendas or know how to get an item on the agenda?
  - Do you take full account of their views and consult when needed?
  - Do the staff feel the school is a safe place and that you take account of Health and Safety matters?
  - Do you explain your decisions to staff when needed?
  - Do the staff feel you are supportive?

- Reporting to parents is one of your most important responsibilities.
  - Do you include news from each class, a profile of any new governors?
  - Do you make the statutory information on the budget, SATs results and other statistics easy to understand?
  - Do parents know how to contact the governing body?
  - Is your prospectus attractive and does it make your school sound welcoming?
  - Do you have your School Development Plan available?

- Governors should encourage participation from all players
  - Do you ask the pupils their views and take account of them?
  - Do you have 6th form representatives on your governing body?
  - When parents approach, do you welcome them or see them as a distraction?
  - Do you have non-governors on your committees?

The LA and, for church schools, the Diocese are key partners in your school.

- Do you ensure that your minutes are sent to the LA?
- Do you consult the LA and, if applicable the Diocese when you are making plans?
- Do you take account of the LA’s and, if applicable, the Diocese’s view when making decisions?
- Is your budget balanced and any difficulties reported to the LA?
- If the LA and, if applicable, the Diocese expresses concerns about your school do you listen and act as necessary?
## Action plan for developing the accounting role

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<th>Costs</th>
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