

Navigating Ofsted inspection

A tool for governing boards in single schools

Ofsted inspect governance under the 'leadership and management' judgement. Inspectors meet with governors to establish if the governing board:

- understands its role and carries it out effectively
- has set a clear vision and strategy
- ensures resources are managed well
- holds leaders to account for the quality of education
- complies with statutory duties

The following tool:

- outlines areas of focus based on how governance is inspected
- sets out how to demonstrate effective governance through the course of routine board business
- includes NGA resources that boards can use to review and – where opportunities are identified – improve practice

Contents

1. [Governing board self-evaluation](#)
2. [Vision and strategy](#)
3. [Quality of education](#)
4. [Stakeholder engagement](#)
5. [Safeguarding](#)
6. [Statutory duties](#)

Area of focus	Boards demonstrate effective governance through:	NGA resources
1 Governing board self-evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an induction programme that helps new board members to understand their role regular self-evaluation and external reviews that improve the quality and impact of governance conducting a skills audit (at least annually) and addressing any gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A guide to planning induction Self-evaluation questions Governing board skills audit E-learning: Interactive skills audit External reviews of governance
2 Vision and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collaborative working with school leaders and stakeholders to develop a clear and ambitious vision a strategy document that sets out how the vision will be achieved evaluating data that helps to monitor agreed strategy outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A guide to Being Strategic E-learning: Monitoring performance data and targets E-learning: Creating a new vision
3 Quality of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitoring the impact of what pupils are taught (reviewing assessment and destination data to support this) monitoring the impact of the curriculum on all pupils and particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those eligible for pupil premium checking the school's performance and asking questions about standards being familiar with statutory assessment system as well as the school's own system of non-statutory assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum: the governing board's role SEND guidance Pupil premium guidance Questions for boards to ask E-learning: The governance of SEND E-learning: Pupil premium
4 Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaging with staff, parents, pupils and the wider school community using stakeholder insights to support triangulation of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning: Stakeholder engagement, the governance role

Area of focus	Boards demonstrate effective governance through:	NGA resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring staff workload and wellbeing • ensuring that the school has mechanisms in place to engage with all parents and carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with parents and carers • Improving staff wellbeing
5 Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and comply with the law at all times. • ensuring that pupils in the school know how to keep themselves safe • engaging in appropriate safeguarding and child protection training for all governors (and safer recruitment training as required for recruitment panels) • monitoring the number and types safeguarding incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding: a guide for governing boards • Webinar: the governance of safeguarding • E-learning: Safeguarding • E-learning: Safer recruitment
6 Statutory duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building governing board awareness of legal and compliance responsibilities through induction, attending meetings, carrying out board business and undertaking further development • regularly monitoring health and safety policies (and their implementation) • ensuring that the school is compliant with all aspects of discrimination law • ensuring that the curriculum meets all legal requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety oversight • Equality and diversity guidance • Estates management guidance • E-learning: Equality and diversity

Questions inspectors may ask

1. What is the governing board’s vision for the school?
2. What is the strategy for achieving the vision – who determines this?

3. How does the board ensure that progress is made on strategic priorities?
4. What training is there for governors?
5. Do your pupils feel safe whilst at school? How do you know?
6. How do you know safeguarding is robust? What staff and governing board training takes place?
7. What sources of information do you use to find out the views of parents, staff and pupils?
8. How is pupil premium funding being used and what is the impact?
9. How do you ensure that pupils gain the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens?
10. How do you monitor [attendance and absence](#) rates?

More Ofsted resources from NGA

- [Guidance](#) on the Ofsted inspection process and summary evaluations of MATs
- [Ofsted inspection training](#): what governors and trustees need to know
- [Ofsted webinar on inspection and governance](#) – debunking myths and exploring board experiences
- [Ofsted inspections e-learning](#): an interactive guide

[Explore the full range of Ofsted resources](#)