George Spencer Academy – Governor Action Plan 2016-2017

Overview

In 2016, George Spencer Academy successfully became a World-Class School. This Quality Mark is for those schools already judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted but who believe they have moved beyond this judgement. We believe our Governance mirrors this. World class governance is essential for continuous and sustainable improvement – more so today than ever before, particularly as there is now greater scrutiny on governance.

With this in mind, we have set out our Governance Action Plan based on using the features of effective governance, taken from the Department for Education's (DfE) draft Competency Framework for Governance, which is due to be published in the autumn 2016; and the reflections from our Governors self-evaluation Summer 2016.

The features of effective governance comprise six key elements:

Strategic leadership

- Setting direction
- Culture values and ethos
- Decision making
- Collaborative working with stakeholders and partners
- External accountability
- Risk management

Accountability (for school and financial performance)

- Creating accountability for organisational improvement
- Rigorous analysis of data
- Effective controls for ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money
- Financial management
- Financial frameworks
- Staffing and performance management

People (including the chair and clerk)

- Building an effective team

Structures

Understanding roles and responsibilities

Compliance

- Statutory and contractual requirements

Evaluation

- Managing self and personal skills

School Inspection Handbook, August 2016: Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding (1)

- *Leaders and governors have created a culture that enables pupils and staff to excel. They are committed unwaveringly to setting high expectations for the conduct of pupils and staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are exemplary.*
- *Leaders and governors focus on consistently improving outcomes for all pupils, but especially for disadvantaged pupils. They are uncompromising in their ambition.*
- *The school's actions have secured substantial improvement in progress for disadvantaged pupils. Progress is rising across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics.*
- *Governors systematically challenge senior leaders so that the effective deployment of staff and resources, including the pupil premium, the primary PE and sport premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium and special educational needs*
- *funding, secures excellent outcomes for pupils. Governors do not shy away from challenging leaders about variations in outcomes for pupil groups and between disadvantaged and other pupils nationally.*
- *Leaders and governors have a deep, accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness informed by the views of pupils, parents and staff. They use this to keep the school improving by focusing on the impact of their actions in key areas.*
- *Leaders and governors use incisive performance management that leads to professional development that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. Teaching is highly effective across the school.*
- *Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.*
- *The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning.*
- *Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's work.*
- *Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity exceptionally well, for pupils and staff, so that the ethos and culture of the whole school prevents any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.*
- *Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Pupils are listened to and feel safe. Staff are trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and they report their concerns. Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support pupils who are at risk or who are the subject of a multi-agency plan.*
- *Leaders' work to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism is exemplary. Leaders respond swiftly where pupils are vulnerable to these issues. High quality training develops staff's vigilance, confidence and competency to challenge pupils' views and encourage debate.*

1. Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy					
Area	**Action**	**Lead**	**Cost**	**Deadline**	**Evidence**
• There is a clear and explicit vision in place.	In place - no further action required	LGB/SLT	Nil	Annual review – summer/autumn	School improvement plan Annual leadership residential notes 9/10 June 2017 and documentation
• We have strong and clear values.	In place – no further action required	LGB/SLT Students All Staff	Nil	Annual review – summer/autumn	School documentation School aims Principals report Curriculum offer Annual leadership residential notes 9/10 June 2017 and documentation
• Our strategic plans defines medium to long-term goals, including school priorities.	Review Raiseonline and inspection data dashboards to check current school priorities are accurate – if not, amend.	Govs/SLT	Nil	Annual review – summer/autumn	School improvement plan Full governor minutes Committee meetings minutes School priorities on all Governor agendas and SLT meetings Annual leadership residential notes 9/10 June 2017 and documentation
• There is a regular process for reviewing our vision and priorities.	Ensure vision and school priorities are included on Leadership residential – Summer 2017 – date confirmed as Friday 9 June and Saturday 10 June 2017	JW/FM	Nil	Friday 9 and Saturday 10 June 2017	Annual leadership residential notes 9/10 June 2017 and documentation Governor minutes Autumn 2017
• Governors receive summary reports from all stakeholders.	Check parents and staff surveys are planned for Spring or Summer Terms	JW/FM	Nil	By the end of the summer term 2017	Rate my learning surveys (students) completed in Autumn 2016 Principals' Report

					School Visits
• We have identified the risks and monitor the risk management process.	Finance Committee regular monitor risk register.	Chair of Committee		By the end of the spring term 2017	Risk register in place Committee minutes
• Governors consider when to initiate strategic change in the interests of students and all stakeholders.	Future expansion of school places – 80 secondary when new housing development starts.	SLT	TBC	2018-2019	Planning notes with land owners
• Decisions about growth are underpinned by robust due diligence processes.	Future expansion of school places – 80 secondary when new housing development starts.	SLT	TBC	2018-2019	Planning notes with land owners
2. Accountability **that drives up education standards and financial performance**					
• There is rigorous analysis of pupil progress and attainment information and comparison against organisational and national benchmarks and over time.	Continue to have dedicated autumn term meeting for analysis of summer results. Continue to ensure updated data is included in Principals' reports. Chair and Vice/Chair to continue to meet with CL's in the autumn term following results announcements. Appropriate SLT presentations at meetings	Govs/SLT FRM Chair/VC and FRM SLT			Governor minutes Principals' Report Presentations School visit forms
• There are clear processes for monitoring school improvement and providing challenge and oversight to school leaders.	Governors to conduct School Monitoring visits.	Govs	Time	At least one visit per term by more than half of Govs	School visit monitoring forms Governor agenda and minutes

• There is a transparent system for performance management of school leaders linked to strategic priorities.	Annual review of Pay Policy Annual review of Appraisal Policy P&P Committee in place	Trust/Govs Trust/Govs SLT P&P Committee	Nil	Policy cycle	Policies Files Confidential documents Moodle HR
• There is an effective oversight of performance and the framework for the pay and conditions of service for all other employees.	Annual review of Pay Policy Annual review of Appraisal Policy P&P Committee in place	Trust/Govs Trust/Govs SLT P&P Committee	Nil	Autumn Term	Policies in place Confidential documents
• There is a regular cycle of meetings: Full Governors and Committees.	Timeline of meetings agreed at first Full Governors each autumn – ensure meeting cycle is uploaded onto website	Govs	Nil	By the end of the spring term	Timeline of meetings distributed to all Governors Autumn 2016 2016-2017 Meeting schedule on website
• There is effective controls for ensuring regularity, propriety and value of money.	Finance Committee to include on their agenda: Review of Pupil Premium Funding Review of SEND Funding Review of Year 7 Catch Up Funding	Finance Committee	Income/ Expenditure Review against budget	Ongoing	Committee meetings

3. People
With the right skills, experience, quality and capacity

• Governors understand the purpose of governance and have completed a skills audit which is reviewed regularly	• All new Governors complete skills audit • Training programme is developed based on skills, experience and knowledge. • Governors attending appropriate training.	Training Programme	£2k	Annual programme	Completed skills audit Governor training programme Completed evaluations Trust training log

• There is an effective Chair and Vice-Chair in place.	• Annual elections of Chair and Vice Chair	Govs	Chairs Development Programme Course costs £300	Autumn 2017	Chair and Vice Chair elected. Chair has completed Leadership Development Programme for Chairs Annual election for Chair and Vice Chair undertaken Annual 360° of Chair undertaken Chair has also been commissioned to undertake external governance reviews in another local authority.
• Governors offer a diversity of perspectives to enable robust decision-making.	All Governors contribute to governor meetings	All Govs	Nil	All meetings	Governor minutes
• Governors are recruited through robust and transparent processes and there is a role specification.	All new Governors are selected following interview with Chair and Principal. Staff and Parent Governors are elected through usual processes.	JW/FRM	Nil	As and when needed	Governor minutes Governor documentation Skills audit
• There is a succession plan in place for the Chair/Vice Chair/ Committee Chairs and Governors.	To be developed for 2017-2018	All Govs	CPD costs	By the end of the summer term 2017	
• There is a professional clerk to provide expert advice and guidance to ensure the efficient and complaint operation of the LGB.	Clerk attends half-termly Clerks briefings Clerk regularly checks appropriate websites: NGA, FASNA, DfE regarding changes to legislation/policy	Clerk	Membership costs c. £500	Half-termly checks	Governor updates Feedback from individual Governors

4. Structure					
that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities					
• There are appropriate Committees in place with defined roles and responsibilities.	Improve Governor attendance at all meetings. Check if Committees have terms of reference and when last reviewed.	All Govs	Autumn term 2017	Termly	Terms of reference in place for Committees Unsure if Terms of Reference in place for Full Governors
• There is clear separation between strategic and operational leadership which is supported by positive relationships that encourage a professional culture and ethos across the school.	Chairs to ensure that this is done.	Chairs/Govs	Nil	Meetings	Governor minutes
• There are processes for ensuring good communication between all levels and structures of governance and to students, parents, staff and communities.	Consider implementing a Governor Communication Strategy. Do we need a separate communication strategy for staff, pupils and the community other than what is on the website?	All Govs	Termly	Half-termly updates to the Trust Board Termly updates on Governance section of website Annual report	Chairs feedback reports to Trust Board Website includes termly focused work of Governing Body
5. Compliance					
With statutory and contractual requirements					
• Governors are aware of their responsibilities under education and employment legislation paying due regard to statutory and contractual responsibilities.	Check Governors know what the statutory duties. Governors undertake Safer Recruitment, Health & Safety, SEND training.	Govs Link Governors	Nil	Termly	Trust Induction Training 20-4-17 Online Effective Governance course Health & Safety Training 9-2-17 SEND Training 15-12-16 Governor minutes

					Trust Governor Updates Link Governor Roles Policies in place
• Governors ensure that safeguarding, inclusion, SEND policies are in place.	Check policy cycle through Committees. Clerk to undertake a statutory policy checklist Website review undertaken 20-4-17 indicates that policies are out of their review cycle date	FM/Clerk	Nil	By the end of summer term 2017	Governor minutes Policy documents Website Statutory policy checklist
• Governors monitor the impact of pupil premium, SEND and any catch-up funding.	Agenda item for next Finance Committee Website review suggests these are out of date and not compliant 20-4-17	Clerk/ Finance Committee	PP Funding	By the end of the May half-term 2017	Governor minutes PP Strategy and impact statements Year 7 catch up funding statements
• Governors understand their responsibilities under the Equalities Act, promoting equality and diversity throughout the organisation.	Check Public Sector Duty completed and on website Part compliant – see website review 20-4-17	FRM	Nil	By end of May 2017	Governor minutes Equality Objectives document Included on website
• The school adheres to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook.	Register of Pecuniary Interest completed Governor information uploaded onto the Edubase	All Govs	Nil	End of December 2017	Finance Committee minutes Register of PI interests Edubase evidence
• Governors ensure that the school is compliant with what should be published on their website	Governors undertake a website review	Chair and LC	Nil	20-4-17	Website review submitted to Principal 20-4-17

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-academies-free-schools-and-colleges-should-publish-online	Website is currently not compliant across all areas.				

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To monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance</td></tr>
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<td>• We have an appropriate induction for those new to governance.</td>
<td>Induction pack in place.</td>
<td>JW/FRM</td>
<td></td>
<td>As and when needed</td>
<td>New Governor Welcome Pack
Login provided to NGA and FASNA
Login provided to Trust VLE - Moodle</td>
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<td>• We undertake regular skills audits, aligned to the school's strategic plan, to identify skills and knowledge gaps and inform a planned cycle of continuous professional development.</td>
<td>New Governors complete skills audit.
Training programme in place.
Training attendance monitored.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed skills audit
Training programme – and completed evaluations.
Trust Induction 20-4-17</td>
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<td>• We have regular processes for self-evaluation in terms of operation and effectiveness.</td>
<td>Annual self-evaluation undertaken 2016. Next one scheduled for end of summer 2017.

Results of self-evaluation used to update next year's Governor action plan 2017-2018.</td>
<td>All Govs

JW</td>
<td>CPD Costs</td>
<td>Action Plan to be drafted in time for first Committee meeting Autumn 2017.</td>
<td>Governor Action Plan 2016-2017 reviewed and any outstanding actions carried into 2017-2018 plan
Completed self-evaluations.
Training programme.
Evaluation feedback forms from Governors.</td>
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<td>• Our minutes accurately capture evidence of decisions and impact.</td>
<td>In place.</td>
<td>Clerk/Chair/Principal</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>After every governor meeting</td>
<td>Governor minutes.</td>
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