Governance monitoring
Checklist template

Instruction notes

This checklist this is a summary of all the criteria if you wanted to go through it with your board as a paper exercise/audit before planning more thoroughly.

Area of improvement identified	What needs to be in place?
1. Has the board developed long-term aims and a vision for the school/trust with clear priorities?	A mission statement and vision for the school/trust has been led and agreed by trustees/governors, in consultation with the wider school community (pupil, parent, staff and local community involvement is evident).
	There is evidence of governor/trustee involvement in three-year budget planning and ensuring resource allocation is appropriately aligned to the trust/school improvement priority areas (minutes of finance meetings, details in the budget itself).
	There is evidence of using data to inform planning for the long term: • Financial benchmarking exercises are completed annually (Select here to see DfE tools to support this), school improvement priorities in the strategic plan are based on areas for development identified through analysis of data (in-year, trends, previous year's results). • You have identified at least two skilled members on your board who are confident in accessing and analysing data independently of the leaders in school/across the trust?).
2. Can the board clearly link their priorities, decisions, and actions to the School/Trust Improvement Plan?	Governor/trustee monitoring is detailed in School/Trust Improvement Plans.
	There is evidence of decisions/actions that directly link to improvement plans and strategy (e.g. in minutes of meetings).
	Evidence of actions based upon reports from external professionals, such as school improvement advisers, external auditors, etc. can be demonstrated.

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3. Are the board's roles and responsibilities clear and aligned to improvement priority areas?	Trust/committee structures and roles are clearly defined (structure documents, schemes of delegation, terms of reference, for example).
	Governor role descriptions and person specifications are available and in use, based on specific skill sets required.
	Records of induction, role familiarisation and relevant training are in place, based on specific improvement priority areas (NB this is often kept by the clerk to the board).
	Agreed plans and procedures are in place for monitoring improvement activities and visits (are lines of enquiry outlined in the school improvement plan? Milestones detailed? Policy implemented for governance visits. (Please refer to the 'Governor's visits to schools' module).
	Roles and committees are organised effectively, with skills assigned as per a regularly reviewed skills audit.
4. Do you monitor the senior executive leader's progress toward performance management milestones regularly and are they attributable to improved outcomes for children?	There is a structured schedule in place for completion of performance reviews, including interim (termly?) assessments, and an external adviser is used at least annually to support appropriate identification of targets.
	The board are aware of the CEO's/headteacher's personal objectives and how they link to overall improvement plans.
	There is evidence of board ratification of the CEO/headteacher's appraisal and processes for ongoing monitoring (e.g. CEO/HT report).
	All staff performance management objectives are aligned to improvement priorities, and governors randomly sample and monitor the effective implementation of performance management across the school or trust (e.g. pay decisions: increasing pay bill equates to increasing outcomes and is supported by data).
	The board independently consider and analyse data from sources such as ASP, OFSTED and/or FFT data

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5. Is the board able to analyse progress and attainment data efficiently?	dashboards, and minutes of meetings show challenge based on this.
	The board explores the links between data analysis and external reports from professionals around areas such as PP/LAC/SEND/FSM/EAL provision, approaches and any impact.
	The CEO/headteacher's report details progress and accompanying challenge is evident in minutes.
	Benchmarking with statistical neighbours, national comparisons, etc is undertaken and board members are satisfied school(s) is/are not an outlier(s) – NB if they are, there is a tested rationale as to why this is the case?
6. Does the board analyse and monitor other data sources to inform practice?	Staff attendance and exit interviews.
	Attendance and lateness data.
	Behaviour data.
	Anonymised teaching profiles.
	School exclusion data.
	Views of parents/carers and other stakeholders.
7. Does the strategic planning cycle drive the governing board's agendas and activities and ensure compliance?	Agendas/meeting minutes are aligned to the School/Trust Improvement Priorities.
	Board monitoring is detailed in School/Trust Improvement Plans.
	An annual schedule of termly or half-termly business is available.
	A timetable of monitoring visits is available and aligned to milestones in the improvement plans.
	A three-year budget plan is available and ratified.
	Agendas and meeting minutes show the board's ratification of decisions and policy reviews are documented.
	A policy review schedule is available (this may be facilitated and kept by your clerk).
	Equality, inclusion and health and safety monitoring is available. Statutory policies are in place: e.g.

	safeguarding, RSE, whistleblowing, SEND, Prevent, data protection, FOI, etc. (Select here to see DfE tools to support this.)
8. Are the board's financial management systems robust, so that they can ensure best value for money?	There is evidence of the board being actively involved in budget setting and analysis and directing resource alignment to improvement priorities.
	Three-year budget plan.
	Capital fund budget plan.
	Evidence of the board agreeing and reviewing levels of delegated spend.
	Audit/SFVS completed has been within last 12 months and actions undertaken, and progress monitored.
9. Does the board gather the views of stakeholders and act upon the feedback given?	Parent, staff, and pupil surveys are available (not just conducted by executive school leads, did you contribute to the questions?).
	Evidence of stakeholder feedback in agendas/meeting minutes.
	Parent View website is considered, and parents/carers are encouraged to complete.
	Governors and trustees undertake community engagement activities as appropriate, e.g. open meetings, drop-in sessions, focus groups.
10. Do those who govern visit the school(s) to get to know and monitor implementation of the school/trust strategy?	Reports of visits to school documented.
	A policy and code of practice for governance visits to school in place.
	A schedule is in place which shows you have identified optimum visit times to monitor strategy implementation.