



Trustee and Governor Induction

TRUST POLICY & PROCEDURE

Trustees and Governor Induction Policy	
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Statement of Intent

The Trustee Board, Governing Body and Senior Management Team of Talbot House Trust (North East) Limited (the Trust) believe it is essential that all new trustees and governors receive a comprehensive induction package covering a broad range of issues and topics. There is a commitment to ensure that the new trustees and governors are given the necessary information and support to fulfil their role with confidence. The process is seen as an investment, leading to more effective governance and retention of trustees and governors.

The role of the trustee and school governor can be demanding but very rewarding and is a good way to give back to the local community. Trustees and school governing bodies are responsible for working with the Trust to ensure that it delivers a good quality education and care. Together with the Senior Management Team (SMT), who is responsible for day-to-day management, they set the Trust's aims and policies.

People may choose to be a governor and a trustee, just a trustee or just a governor.

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1. The Role of the Board

The board has a strategic role in the development of the trust but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues. A Trustee's role will cover the whole Trust whereas a governor's role will cover the School only.

You are there to:

- **Provide a strategic view** – help to set and maintain the broad framework within which the Senior Management Team and the staff should run the Trust/School.
- **Act as a critical friend** – provide the senior managers with support and offer advice and information but also to provide some challenge. You are there to monitor and evaluate the trust's/school's effectiveness and should therefore be prepared to ask challenging questions.
- **Ensure accountability** – the senior managers and staff report to the board on the trust's/school's performance.

1.1 What makes an effective board?

- You care about improving children's educational and social progress.
- You want to work as part of a team and can value and respect the contribution made by different people.
- You are willing to listen, learn and to ask questions.
- You are open to ideas and have a feel for what is important to people.
- You are enthusiastic.
- You can commit time and energy.
- You will attend training.

1.2 What does the effective board member need to be familiar with?

- The recent history of the trust.
- The type of school, care home and the nature of the children we work with.
- The number of pupils registered in the home and school.
- How the trust/school is staffed, organised and managed.
- For governors, their input into the School Evaluation Form (SEF) and School Development Plan (SDP) and curriculum provided by the school.
- The range of social enrichment activities on offer and the nature of any extended services
- The school and trust policies.
- How the trust communicates with parents, families, and wider community.
- The layout of the buildings, grounds, their suitability and state of repair.

2. Skills Audit

The Trust will identify skills gaps by reviewing the experience and expertise of the board members on a regular basis. This should be undertaken annually, for example if there are significant changes to the membership or to individual governors' roles and responsibilities. A good way for the board to assess their current skills is to use a matrix that self-evaluates the pre-identified core requirements they have and those that collectively they need to acquire. Please see Appendix C in order to complete your own Skills Audit.

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3. Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS)

As you are going to work as a volunteer for an organisation where your work will bring you into contact with children, you will be asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Check.

4. Trustee and Governing Body Meetings

As the board composition for governors and for trustees may be different, there are actually two meetings each time the full boards meet. Firstly the governors meeting is held, with the trustees meeting following on straight afterwards. During the governors meeting, the school is the focus with the wider trust being reported on in trustees meetings. You will be given at least a term's notice of the next full trustee and governing body meeting date, however we aim to agree the dates of the next year's meetings at the end of the summer term.

4.1 Talbot House have four full board meetings per year and are as follows:

- Autumn Term 2 full governing board followed by trustees meetings, one which is usually about six weeks into the term, it convenes the board and votes in any re-sitting or new members, the chair and the vice chair along with committee membership. This is also the AGM for the members.
- Spring term 1 full governing board followed by trustees meetings.
- Summer term 1 full governing board followed by trustees meetings.

In practice, they may need to meet more often than this, in conjunction with the terms set out in the instrument of government.

4.2 Our senior team will produce reports for each meeting giving details to the board on progress and planning in their respective areas. You should receive your papers seven days before the meeting and should read them in preparation. Each senior manager will present their report, but not read the entire document, simply pull out salient points. Any governor or trustee can raise questions at that point about the content or subject of the report. Trustees/governors can request a particular focus for reports, in advance of the meeting.

5. Committees

In order to make the best use of time and skills, we will ask the board members to become part of a committee to focus on specific areas in the school or wider trust. Therefore, in addition to full board meetings various committees have to meet as necessary. Usually committees meet once per term unless there is a specific reason to meet more often. The governing board committees are:

- Non-Educational
- Educational

You will either be part of the Non-Educational or Educational committee. Full details of dates of meetings will be provided.

We currently have the following trustee committee:

- Payroll

Other committees are covered as required, for example for complaints.

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6. Monitoring

Governors need to see that specific elements and key curriculum areas are being delivered and that the pupils are receiving the best possible education. Trustees will be asked to monitor the home too, with a link trustee for residential being appointed. Health and Safety monitoring and inspection will be undertaken by a specialist contractor. The governors' role is to concentrate on an 'overview' of development of the school, and not to be too tied up with the detail, which is the business of the staff in their day-to-day work.

6.1 How is monitoring completed?

Governors are given an area to monitor for a period of time – usually a year and will be related to a priority on the School Development Plan (SDP), and follow the protocol set out for governor visits to school. The chosen priority should have an action plan, which is a more detailed version of what is shown on the SDP. The chosen priorities will be assigned a link staff member who will go through the action plan with the governor during monitoring and demonstrate how progress is being made. They also get the chance to discuss how they could better achieve the goals on the action plan, say with additional resources or time. The head teacher will provide the governor with a reporting template to cover the subject being monitored which will also assist them in providing a report for board.

6.2 What should a governor expect from a visit?

Visits allow governors to become familiar with the school at work, and to get to know the children and staff. It allows the governor to observe teaching taking place, so when reports are received, and discussions take place, governors can see things in the context of the school.

Visits should be viewed by governors as adding to their personal bank of knowledge, which at some time may be brought forward to contribute to a discussion or evaluation at a meeting of a committee or of the full governing body or in an Ofsted inspection.

6.2.1 Before the visit

- Clarify a focus for the visit. The governing body and/or the senior team may suggest this.
- Agree an appropriate time to visit with the members of staff involved and the senior team.

6.2.2 During the visit

- Try to relax and enjoy yourself.
- Observe discreetly.
- Do not intervene, only get involved in activities when invited.
- Do not monopolise the staff's time.
- Show an interest and ask questions but never comment on the staff's conduct or on individual pupils.
- Do not allow yourself to become an instrument to advance a particular issue.
- Do not express your own opinions when pressed on controversial issues.

6.2.3 After the visit

- Discuss your observations with the relevant member of staff as soon as possible.

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- Make notes when the visit is still fresh in your mind.
- Never include comments about individual children or mention by name.
- Remember monitoring staff performance is the role of the head teacher and not the governor.
- Prepare a draft report of your observations using the template and share this with the appropriate member of the senior team.

7. Governor Training and E-learning

The trust subscribes to Learning Link provided by the NGA (National Governance Association). They are a leading provider of online professional development for governors and trustees. New and existing members of the board are encouraged to explore the courses available there.

7.1 Once subscribed you unlock a catalogue of engaging and interactive e-learning modules such as:

- Governance : Your role, your responsibilities, your organisation
- Key functions of the governing board
- The constitution of the governing board
- Effectiveness: Governance making an impact, changing lives
- Strategy: Living your values, reaching your vision, managing the risk
- Progress and attainment: using data to improve educational outcomes
- Working together: building the team and improving the organisation
- Ofsted and the new inspection framework
- Governance visits to schools
- Governance monitoring: a tool to help drive improvement
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Holding to account: How to question and challenge
- Holding to account: How to conduct a courageous conversation
- Governing board duties on compliance
- Safeguarding: the governor's role
- Health and Safety

We recommend new trustees and governors complete the above modules, some of which are as little as 15 minutes long. However there are many more modules which will be useful to any board member. You should receive a certificate from each one and this should be passed to our HR department. Login details and demonstration of the site will be given to you in your induction.

7.2 Face to face training is also available from a number of sources. Governors and trustees are encouraged to recommend courses they feel would assist them in their role. A publication is available from Newcastle City which is where we procure our governor services from. Our clerk will update the board about particular courses during meetings.

8. Attendance

Any trustee or governor who is absent from meetings of the full trustee/governing body for three consecutive meetings will be contacted by the chair to discuss their position. If you need to offer apologies for a meeting this should be done through the chair or the clerk in advance of the meeting with the reason for your absence. Meetings may be either face to face or

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virtual via Microsoft Teams, in some cases a combination of both types of attendance will occur.

9. Confidentiality

Trustee and governing body meetings are not open to the public. Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed.

- Trustees and governors observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the trustee and governing body in meetings and from their visits to the Trust as trustees/governors.
- How an individual trustee/governor votes should always be regarded as confidential.
- The minutes of any part of the meeting that are confidential should be kept separate. In the main confidential items will be those where the privacy of an individual needs to be respected.
- Any old documents governors wish to dispose of should be shredded, given the sensitive nature of some of the information.
- Meeting papers should be left in the room after the meeting to shred.

10. The Role of the Chair

The chair has a pivotal role to play in helping the trustee and governing body to work as a team. The chair must have a clear view of the trustee and governing body, understand the shared visions for the school and know how that vision is to be achieved.

10.1 The tasks of an effective chair as listed by Ofsted.

Effective chairs:

- Give a clear lead in organising the board's work, delegate and ensure other governors/trustees are fully involved.
- Manage meetings effectively.
- Keep other trustees/governors fully informed.
- Hold regular meetings with the Chief Executive Officer.
- Co-operate with other agencies to support school improvement, for example Ofsted, School Improvement Partner.

11. Top Tips for Trustees and Governors in the First 12 Months

By Judy Burgess (Educational Consultant for Governance)

- Don't bring up issues about your own children at trustee or governing body level.
- Consider the best interests of the organisation and the children.
- Remember you are equal to all trustees and governors.
- Remember decision making is corporate, bring your view, but abide by the corporate decision.
- You have no power, responsibility or liability as an individual.
- Get to know the organisation, speak to the SMT, the chair and the clerk.
- Ask for a mentor governor as a first point of contact.
- Your volunteer status means getting summaries – don't allow governance to become a full-time job.
- Remember the trustees and governing body steers, the senior team manages the rowing and the vessel.
- If you are a member of a committee be familiar with its terms of reference.
- Find out about confidentiality.

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- Don't be part of decision making where a personal interest or occupation allows you to become biased – declare the interest and withdraw.
- If you don't feel you have enough information to make a decision then say no – remember you can abstain.
- Prepare well for all meetings.
- Attend training where possible, ask about options including distance learning.

12. A Guide to the Law for Trustees and School Governors

12.1 Delegating some decision making tasks to the SMT is very common and good practise. The trustee and governing body must agree what decisions will be delegated in the Governing body delegation planner.

12.2 The SMT has the day-to-day responsibility for staff management and the running of the Trust. The chair can take decisions in an absolute emergency but must report back to the trustees and governing body when this happens.

12.3 Remember in the Guide to the Law:

- “Must” means law
- “Should” means strongly recommended
- “May” means the trustee/governing body's choice

The SMT and staff carry out many responsibilities, where the trustee and governing body has the legal responsibility. The trustee and governing body needs to ensure they are happening; not necessarily perform them themselves.

13. Visiting the Trust

All trustees and governors should visit during the working day and you should arrange an early introductory session with the Chief Executive and the Chair. There are two main reasons why trustees and governors make visits. Firstly a new trustee/governor may visit to familiarise themselves with the Trust. The second main reason is a focused visit, which is part of the governor's 'monitoring' role.

The governor's role is that of a 'critical friend' not an inspector and a visit should be used to learn about the Trust but not to make judgments about the professional expertise of teachers.

Useful Websites

www.dfes.gov.uk

www.governornet.co.uk

www.nga.org.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

www.qca.org.uk

www.nagm.org.uk

www.ngc.org.uk

www.talbothoustrust.co.uk

Governor Line (0800 722181)

Department for Education and Skills

Governornet

National Governor's Association

OFSTED

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

National Association of Governors and Managers

National Governors Council

School Website

A free telephone helpline service for governors

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INDUCTION DETAILS

Your full induction will take place on a date to be confirmed at Talbot House Trust and will be carried out by Jo Reiling and Rev'd Allison Harding.

All points will be covered but please read and sign below to confirm you have read the Trustee and Governor Induction Policy, the Instrument of Government, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 part one, the Trustee/Governors Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest Policy.

I confirm that I have read the documentation above and will/have attend the induction on the stated date and time.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....

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Appendix A

Code of Conduct for Trustee and Governing Boards

General principles

All trustees of Talbot House Trust have legal obligations as a trustee under charity law, under company law as a director and in accordance with all applicable legislation, rules, regulations and the Charity's own governing document, its Articles of Association, and its rules, procedures and policies.

Charitable objects for the public benefit

Every Trustee has a duty to deliver the charitable objects for the public benefit and to act in the best interest of the Charity.

Governance framework and guidance

Trustees are recommended to be familiar with the following:

- the Articles of Association of the charity
- the charity's policies and procedures, in particular those applicable to trustees
- the Charity Commission's guidance on the role and obligations of trustees
- the NCVO Good Governance Code for Charities
- the Nolan principles of public life of which trustees should be mindful in conducting their trustee role and charity business, these principles are:
 - selflessness
 - integrity
 - objectivity
 - accountability
 - openness
 - honesty
 - leadership
- The company law duties which directors have under the Companies Act 2006 are to:
 - avoid conflicts of interest
 - not accept benefit from third parties
 - declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements with the charity
 - act within powers
 - promote the success of the charity to achieve its purposes
 - exercise independent judgment
 - exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence

Trustee's obligations

Each Trustee must:

- act within the governing document of the charity and the charity's related policies and procedures
- support the charitable objects of the charity
- be responsible for protecting the charity's assets
- be an active trustee, use any skills, experience and knowledge to assist the charity in any role as a trustee
- aim to be accountable and transparent
- seek to understand the charity and keep up to date with its development

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- submit to board or trustee appraisals, as applicable
- comply with all applicable legislation and regulations
- not seek to gain materially or financially or otherwise from any involvement with the charity, unless specifically authorised to do so
- act in the best interests of the charity
- prepare fully for all meetings
- participate actively in board meetings and uphold the charity's clear decision making process
- participate in collective decision making, accept a majority decision of the board and will not act individually unless specifically authorised to do so
- not bring the charity into disrepute
- not, unless authorised by prior notice in writing from the charity, put him/herself in a position of conflict of interest or loyalty with the charity
- endeavour to work considerately and respectfully with all those he/she comes into contact with at the charity, including trustees, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, stakeholders
- provide support and critical challenge to the other trustees, the chair and senior staff
- keep the business of the charity confidential and not discuss this other than as authorised

Breach of Code

Each trustee understands that any substantial breach of any part of this code, or of any other governance document or policy or procedure of the charity, may result in procedures being put in motion that may result in him/her being asked to resign from the trustee board. Should this happen the trustee will be given the opportunity to be heard at a meeting of the trustees. In the event that he/she is asked to resign as a trustee of the charity, he/she will accept the majority decision of the board in this matter and resign at the earliest opportunity.

Retirement of Trustee

If a trustee wishes to retire from being a trustee of the charity at any time, in accordance with the Articles of Association, he/she will resign in writing by notice to the chair, stating his or her reasons for leaving. In accordance with the Articles they will ensure that they also resign as a member and director of the charity at the same time. A period of one month prior to retirement is requested as notice.

Purpose of the Code

The code aims to define the standards expected of the charity's trustees in order to ensure that:

- the charity is effective, open and accountable;
- the highest standard of integrity and stewardship are achieved;
- the working relationship with any staff and advisers is productive and supportive.

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Appendix B

Governors Profiles and Contact Details

Chair of Trustees and Governors: Rev'd Allison Harding

I am currently the vicar of Newburn Parish which incorporates St Michael's, Newburn and St Mary's, Throckley. Before becoming a vicar, I worked as a homelessness officer, education welfare officer and probation officer. As a probation officer, I worked with young people and their families at Gateshead Youth Offending Team; I have always had a concern for young people and particularly enjoyed working with those who struggled with education or faced challenges within their family and community. It is my hope that all young people can believe that they are unique and special, and that they can be given the support to reach their potential and make a positive contribution to society. I am delighted to be involved at Talbot House. Outside of work I enjoy spinning, watching sport and looking after my grandchildren and my labrador, Lucy.

Allison's email address is revallisonharding@gmail.com

Trustee and School Governor: Louise Cannell-Mirza

I am a solicitor within the Family Team at Ward Hadaway, Newcastle. I completed my law degree at Northumbria University in 2005 and trained and qualified at Ward Hadaway thereafter. As a family lawyer, I deal with all aspects of family law including divorce, finance and children disputes. I also advise on issues relating to adoption (including international adoption), relocation of children, domestic violence and cohabitation issues. I represent parties within complex public law care proceedings when Local Authorities issue court applications in relation to children. I am also accredited through the Law Society to represent children in such cases. I also advise the NHS, education and employment sectors in relation to their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children. Outside of work, I like to travel and be outdoors as much as possible with my family and young children who keep me very busy and very entertained!

Louise's email address is: louise.cannell-mirza@wardhadaway.com

Trustee and School Governor: Linda Wright

I have been a Counsellor for just over 22 years. During that time I have held various positions including Chair of Cityworks committee, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Public Health and Safety and currently hold the position of Chair of Regulatory and Appeals. I also had the honour of being Lord Mayor of Newcastle (Council Year 17/18). Although retired now, I am a trained shorthand typist having worked most recently as a Personal Assistant. I had over 5 years of experience as a school Governor and was Chair at Throckley Primary School for over 20 years. I am married with three children and six grandchildren and in my small amount of free time I love to knit, go walking with my dog, read and go to the ballet.

Linda's email address is: lindaisabelwright@gmail.com

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Trustee and School Governor: Dr Lisa Alcon

I am currently the Chief Operating Officer at SJOG which is a national charity supporting adults with learning, physical disabilities and autism in residential, supported living and domiciliary services. My role is vast, and I also have nursing and older community services, homeless hostels and an ever growing national safe house accommodation pathway for people affected by modern slavery and human trafficking. I am also the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Lead for SJOG.

I have worked in the field of autism for nearly 30 years and specialised in this area many years ago. I was previously Head of Children's Services for an autism specialist provider where my responsibilities involved children's homes and schools.

I have been successful at the BILD International Leadership Awards for Innovation Practice for Young People and the National Autism Awards, but nothing beats seeing children and young people thrive.

Trustee and School Governor: Nina Ramsay

I am a qualified Art Psychotherapist & Clinical Supervisor. I have been practising since 2010 and have worked for a number of charities supporting children, young people and adults with many referral issues including complex trauma, attachment issues, abuse, identity issues, eating problems, suicidal ideation and self-harm and loss. I also have worked with fostering/adoption agencies supporting carers/adoptive parents in thinking about how to therapeutically parent their children, assessing and supporting carer needs and supporting the placements of looked after CYP.

Since 2012 I have been providing supervision to various therapeutic practitioners and I currently work for Durham County Council and Someone Cares as a Clinical Supervisor, Swiis Foster Care and Foster Cares as an Independent panel member and am setting up in private practice to continue to support my caseload of private supervisees, clients and organisations who need training/consultation/restorative supervision.

I recently left Acorns (North Tyneside) where I set up a therapeutic service for parents whose children attend the service and prior to that I oversaw a large therapeutic team at Barnardo's Orchard Mosaic Project.

In my spare time, I enjoy travelling with my husband, eating out, reading and learning new skills. I'm particularly fond of anything Japanese!

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Staff Governor: Karen Cowans

On leaving university I worked for British Airways as a personnel/staff trainer. It was after some time here I was given the opportunity to train and became a dispensing optician, a role which I thoroughly enjoyed. After having my three children, I joined the Prison Service, working in Durham and Bracknell adult prison and Hassockfield young offender's institute. My main role in the adult prisons was security and hostage negotiation. I was then very fortunate to be offered a position at Talbot House Trust. From that day the ethos of Talbot House has been my passion. I feel privileged to be given the chance to meet our young people and be part of a team that strives to bring change to their lives, personally, socially and emotionally giving them the opportunities they deserve.

Staff Governor: Stephen Hughes

I have been the science teacher at Talbot House Trust for the last two years, having moved from Dorset to be nearer my children and grandchildren. With over 25 years in hospitality running pubs/clubs and restaurants, I consider myself to have a wide and varied skill set to motivate and support children and adults to achieve their true potential. As well as teaching, my wife and I are foster carers, offering a secure and safe place for children in need of respite or support in unsettled times. Being a staff Governor means I can be an integral part of the process to help Talbot House Trust achieve its goals, as a teacher sharing the grass roots commitment to ensure our pupils achieve their very best.

Parent Governor: Sophie Robinson

I have worked with children and young people since 2011 and started my career working in a young offender's prison. I then went on to work at St Nicholas hospital in Gosforth as a mental health support worker and began working in children's homes in 2015. I became registered manager at Chadersley in September 2019. I have spent some time building up a strong staff team and our young people who live at Chadersley have made some excellent progress since they arrived. I love my job and I enjoy working with everyone at Talbot House Trust. Outside of work I am a very sociable person who loves spending time with family and friends.

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Appendix C

Trustee and Governing Board Skills Audit

No individual is going to have all the skills listed in the audit. The trustee and governing board is a team, and the purpose of the audit is to ensure that each skill below is covered by at least one of the trustees/governors.

This exercise is designed to enable all members of the trustee and governing board to set out their skills and experience whatever their backgrounds, and make clear that the essential and desirable skills for governance can be acquired through a range of life experiences. The skills and knowledge sought are those which enable governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have focussed discussions which create robust accountability for Trust's leaders.

1. Poor, 2. Adequate, 3. Good, 4 Excellent

Name:

Questioning – the ability to ask searching questions in a non-confrontational way			
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1.	2.	3.	4.
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Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

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Assimilating information – the ability to understand the relevant points from written and verbal information received, and to draw appropriate conclusions			
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1.	2.	3.	4.
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Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

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Assertiveness – the confidence and ability to make a point, or stand your ground, without being abrasive or damaging relationships with others

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Strategic Planning – an understanding of long term plans and how these will best be realised in the current environment

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Influencing – the ability to get other people to consider your perspective, while taking their views and opinions into account

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

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Specific skills and experience – useful for some governors to possess (eg all governing bodies need some governors to have financial skills and skills in analysing data)

Chairing skills – the ability to chair meetings in a way that ensures all business is covered in a timely way, that everyone has the opportunity to contribute and that appropriate decisions are made and properly recorded

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Data analysis – an understanding of a range of data in a range of formats and the ability to assimilate and analyse this, drawing appropriate conclusions

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Financial awareness – understanding of and experience of managing a budget and an understanding of accounting processes

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

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Recruitment – experience of drawing up person specifications, job descriptions, advertisements and of conducting interviews and making recruitment decisions

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Performance management – an understanding of what effective performance management involves and experience of conducting appraisal interviews and drawing up performance objectives

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

Dealing with difficult situations – the ability to deal with emotive or potentially confrontational situations calmly, and to bring them to an appropriate conclusion

1.

2.

3.

4.

Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example

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Experience of conducting formal hearings eg complaints / staffing hearings / pay appeals			
1.	2.	3.	4.
Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example			
School specific skills – add any additional skills you have identified below			
1.	2.	3.	4.
Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example			
1.	2.	3.	4.
Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example			
1.	2.	3.	4.
Please give a brief explanation of this score below, including an example			