



Role description for a local governor

The role of a Vanguard Learning Trust (VLT or the Trust) governor is to:

- Support and promote the school and VLT within the school community and champion and contribute to the work of the Trust in developing and implementing its vision of outstanding, inclusive education;
- Demonstrate collective responsibility through the oversight of the school and by providing help and support to the other schools in the Trust as required;
- Focus on safeguarding, the curriculum, educational provision and performance, community engagement, health and safety, and risk identification and management at the school;
- Attend meetings of the LGB or VLT (when required) and participate in LGB panels when necessary, and
- Act as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher and senior staff by knowing the school, supporting and challenging leaders' judgements in relation to the quality of education, including next steps after external assurance work, and the effectiveness of operational matters in relation to estates management, eg. risk assessments to ensure the school meets the needs of the pupils and families it serves.

This role description lays out the requirements to be a governor of a school in VLT and applies to a single school or joint school LGB. Section 2 details the general, day to day requirements of a governor and section 3 contains the key responsibilities of the local governing body along with the key functions or activities that are undertaken to fulfil the role. The examples provided are not exhaustive but provide a good overview of governance requirements at the school-level in the Trust.

Governors are expected to:

Be compliant

- Ensure compliance with the requirements of the articles of association and DfE regarding eligibility as if you were a trustee, and remain eligible to be a school governor; and
- Ensure that you at all times comply with the expectations for governors and the Code of Conduct for VLT trustees, members and governors.

Be prepared

- Build continuous knowledge of VLT and its schools, as well as trends and issues within education more generally; and
- Understand the legal framework for VLT and its operations including familiarity with the articles of association, Funding Agreement, governance framework, scheme of delegation, and Ofsted inspection framework and seek clarification where necessary.

Be an active participant

- Attend meetings you are expected at, contribute positively at those meetings to clarify information and help enable informed decision making;
- Read all papers for meetings in advance of the meetings and then ask questions that are either clarifications or that aid further understanding of the issues and so help discussion about the options available and decisions required;

- Speak, act, and vote in what you believe to be the best interests of the school(s) for which the LGB is responsible (while some governors are elected by parents, the responsibility of all governors is to the school(s) as a whole);
- Undertake training and development to improve knowledge and/or effectiveness; and
- Undertake specific role(s) (such as link governor) and fulfil it/them diligently.

Act appropriately

- Work as part of the team and form effective relationships with trustees, other governors and senior school and Trust staff;
- Respect confidentiality of information and opinions as well as the need for trustees/governors to be able to have in-depth and private discussions;
- Respect all board of trustees/LGB decisions and support them in public;
- Act within the framework of the policies of the Trust and its legal obligations;
- Respect that operational management of the school is the responsibility of the headteacher and senior staff; the role of governors is to be strategic and hold the headteacher to account for delivery of that strategy and performance; and
- Understand that assessments of the quality of teaching, or the quality of individual staff is the role of the headteacher through teaching and learning and performance management processes.

Likely time commitment for governors

The time commitment for governors, besides those with specific roles, is likely to be:

- Attendance at a LGB meeting every half-term, which will probably be in the evening but could be early morning;
- Attendance at board of trustees' committee/forum meetings as required by a link governor role;
- Attendance at two full day governance days (one in November and one in June);
- Attendance at any necessary governor panels (such as for staff or pupil matters) which are set up as required and are not expected to be required often; and
- The headteacher may request attendance from governors at events for staff or pupils and governors are encouraged to attend if possible.

Person specification for governors

An effective governor will demonstrate:

- A commitment to securing the best educational outcomes for all children;
- A commitment to the vision, values, and objectives of VLT and the school(s) overseen by the LGB;
- An understanding of the role of a governor and experience of non-executive governance;
- A commitment to the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a governor and adhering to Nolan's seven principles of public life (contained within the Code of Conduct);
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills, both in person and via electronic communication (including email and video/audio conferencing);
- An ability to evaluate and make use of a wide range of information and data, to question effectively in a manner that encourages reflection and helps move discussion forward
- Impartial and evidence-based decision making;
- The capacity to develop specific knowledge and understanding of the school and its community;
- A sense of fairness;
- A commitment to equalities;
- Tact and diplomacy;
- An ability to work as a member of a team;
- An ability to respect confidentiality; and
- A commitment to participate in training and self-evaluation.

Key responsibilities of the local governing body

Areas of responsibility	Key LGB functions
Governance & risk	Deliver governance oversight within remit set by BoT Review school-level risk register and monitor risk assessment processes and ensure actions are completed
Strategy, growth & stakeholder engagement	Consider stakeholder feedback and ensure agreed actions are followed up
Educational provision & school improvement	Approve curriculum and term dates including the school day Review school improvement work including evaluations Review school scorecard and domain Approve school-level policies including the Pupil Premium statement
Safeguarding & student matters	Conduct link visits for safeguarding Attend safeguarding forum Convene and chair exclusion and complaint panels and make decisions
HR/staffing	Monitor vacancies, recruitment and involved in AHT/DHT recruitment Agree teachers' pay progression
Finance & premises	Receive termly management accounts (CoG) Review draft budget Ensure action is taken with assurance findings

Key functions/activities of a governor

Areas of responsibility	Key governor functions
Governance and risk	Recommending the appointment/removal of community governors to the board of trustees (BoT)
	Recommending the removal of elected parent governors if contravene code of conduct to the BoT
	Establishing working groups and terms of reference as required
	Attending Ofsted inspections
	Approving the school's risk management policy and approach to risk management
	Reviewing the school's risk register
	Fulfilling link-governor roles (lead governors for education and standards, safeguarding, SEND, H&S, and audit, compliance and risk)
	Reviewing and approving policies delegated for governors' approval as part of the scheme of delegation, receiving assurance that they are compliant with legislation
Stakeholder engagement	Conducting an annual personal and LGB review to identify development areas
	Delivering parental engagement including surveys
	Delivering local community & stakeholders engagement in line with school and Trust requirements
	Delivering, with the headteacher, staff engagement including surveys as required
	Managing local authority relationships as required
	Ensuring compliance with website publication requirements and DfE statutory guidance
	Setting, with the headteacher, school brand guidelines and website design
Managing crisis communications as required	
Educational provision & school improvement	Approving and monitoring the curriculum, including where relevant EYFS, in line with statutory requirements
	Ensuring compliance with education regulations & Funding Agreement inc. careers guidance
	Approving changes to the school age-range, or the addition/removal of nursery or SEN provision

	Recommending changes to over-subscriptions admissions criteria to the BoT
	Approving the school day
	Approving the school year and INSET days
	Approving any actions required following any external assessments of school performance
	Developing an understanding of the school's progress, performance and outcomes in order to assure trustees and stakeholders that it is providing high quality, effective and efficient education
	Reviewing the attendance, progress and attainment targets for the school
	Analysing the school's educational data and understand the local and national data
	Approving the school SEF and development plans
	Reviewing the school scorecard
	Monitoring the completion of recommended actions from assurance work
	Approving in-year admissions in accordance with the admissions policy
	Convening a panel to hear a parental complaint at the school or another Trust school
Safeguarding & student matters	Approving part 2 of the Trust's safeguarding policy and procedures in line with KCSIE guidance
	Ensuring appropriate safeguarding records are maintained
	Ensuring the school appoints a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy
	Approving the school's behaviour policy
	Convening a panel to hear appeals against fixed-term pupil suspensions
	Convening a panel to review a permanent exclusion of a pupil
	Ensuring the school is delivering provision for students in line with SEND Code of Practice
HR/staffing	Agreeing teachers' pay progression as outlined in the school's pay policy
	Approving the staffing establishment for a school (within the agreed financial parameters)
	Supporting and participating in the performance management of the HT
	Supporting the performance management of DHTs
	Supporting the BoT in the recruitment process for a HT
	Approving commencement of recruitment for all posts within approved budget
	Supporting the HT in a review of staffing structures/arrangements
	Approving the implementation of changes to staffing structures in line with policy guidelines
	Ensuring the Trust's safer recruitment procedures are followed
	Convening a panel to hear staff disciplinary/grievance issues including the suspension and/or dismissal of staff
Finance and premises	Maintaining a register of pecuniary and business interests, updated annually
	Reviewing and providing feedback to the HT on the annual budget including the use of any historic accumulated reserves for any school/Trust central services
	Monitoring actual year-to-date income and expenditure vs budget, including variants
	Reviewing/monitoring the use of unbudgeted expenditure from in-year income
	Reviewing/monitoring the use of reserves
	Supporting the BoT in investigating potential fraud or financial irregularities by the HT
	Supporting the HT in the effective management of school assets/resources