

GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK

LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES



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INTRODUCTION

Endeavour Academies follows the direction on governance set by the Confederation of School Trusts and sees its responsibilities as operating within four overlapping domains:

1. Board leadership
2. Structures
3. Accountability
4. Compliance.

The single charitable objective for the trust is to enhance education for a public benefit. Trusts are set up to do just one thing – run and improve schools to give young people a better future. Therefore, the quality of education must be at the heart of everything

The quality of education within schools cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. We see Endeavour Academies as a knowledge building organisation. As such, the goal is for every teacher in every classroom to be as good as they can be in what they teach. There is no improvement for pupils without improvement in teaching and no improvement in learning without the best professional development for teachers.



LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES

Trustees and executive leaders are clear that the local tier of governance is absolutely essential to effective governance. The Confederation of School Trusts identifies three critical roles that the local governing body has within overall governance structure of the trust:

- Local governors are the trust's ambassadors in the local community and indeed hold deep knowledge of the school community and its specific needs
- Local governors can play a very important role in relation to safeguarding and safety as they know their schools intimately, and in many cases have closer involvement in the school than the trust board
- Local governors can play a very important role in the scrutiny of education quality and performance. The Ofsted Inspection Framework (2019) makes it clear that those responsible for governance should hold leaders to account for the quality of education and inspectors will always seek to meet those responsible for governance during the inspection.

To support this, the DfE guidance makes clear the significance of the role of school governance:

“Governors should be ambitious for all children and young people and infused with passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes. Governance must be grounded in reality as defined by both high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of pupils, staff, parents, carers and local communities”

Key Features of Effective Governance - Governors Handbook - DfE Guidance March 2019



THE IMPORTANCE OF LINK GOVERNANCE

Knowing the school well, its strengths and weaknesses, is a key element of effective governance and informs the quality of the professional challenge and support for school leaders. In order to serve this purpose the local governing bodies at Endeavour Academies have governors who take responsibilities for the following areas:

- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Curriculum
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Safeguarding
- Attendance
- Personal development
- 'People' (recruitment and retention, staff development, wellbeing, performance management)
- SEND and LAC
- Post 16
- EYFS.

The aim of the trust is to ensure that each local governing body is skilled enough to effectively support and challenge school leaders and feel confident in asking the 'big questions'.

'Link governors' are identified by the local governing body to focus their monitoring role in relation to a specific area of school life. In some areas the role may be shared.

It is envisaged that the link governor will arrange to visit the schools in the trust throughout the year to gather evidence on the specific area of responsibility. In order to ensure that these visits are as effective as possible, governors should be able to triangulate information from a variety of sources and to provide professional challenge to school leaders on behalf of the local governing body. These sources of information might include:

- School development/improvement plan
- Self-evaluation form
- Recent LGB minutes
- Copies of monitoring report, e.g. safeguarding reviews/curriculum reviews
- Good practice booklets.

It is hoped that this information, together with some of the 'challenge questions' from this booklet will make for a highly effective visit which ultimately leads to raising standards through its combination of support and challenge. Once the link governor visit has finished, it should be written up using the agreed format and reported back at the next local governing body meeting.

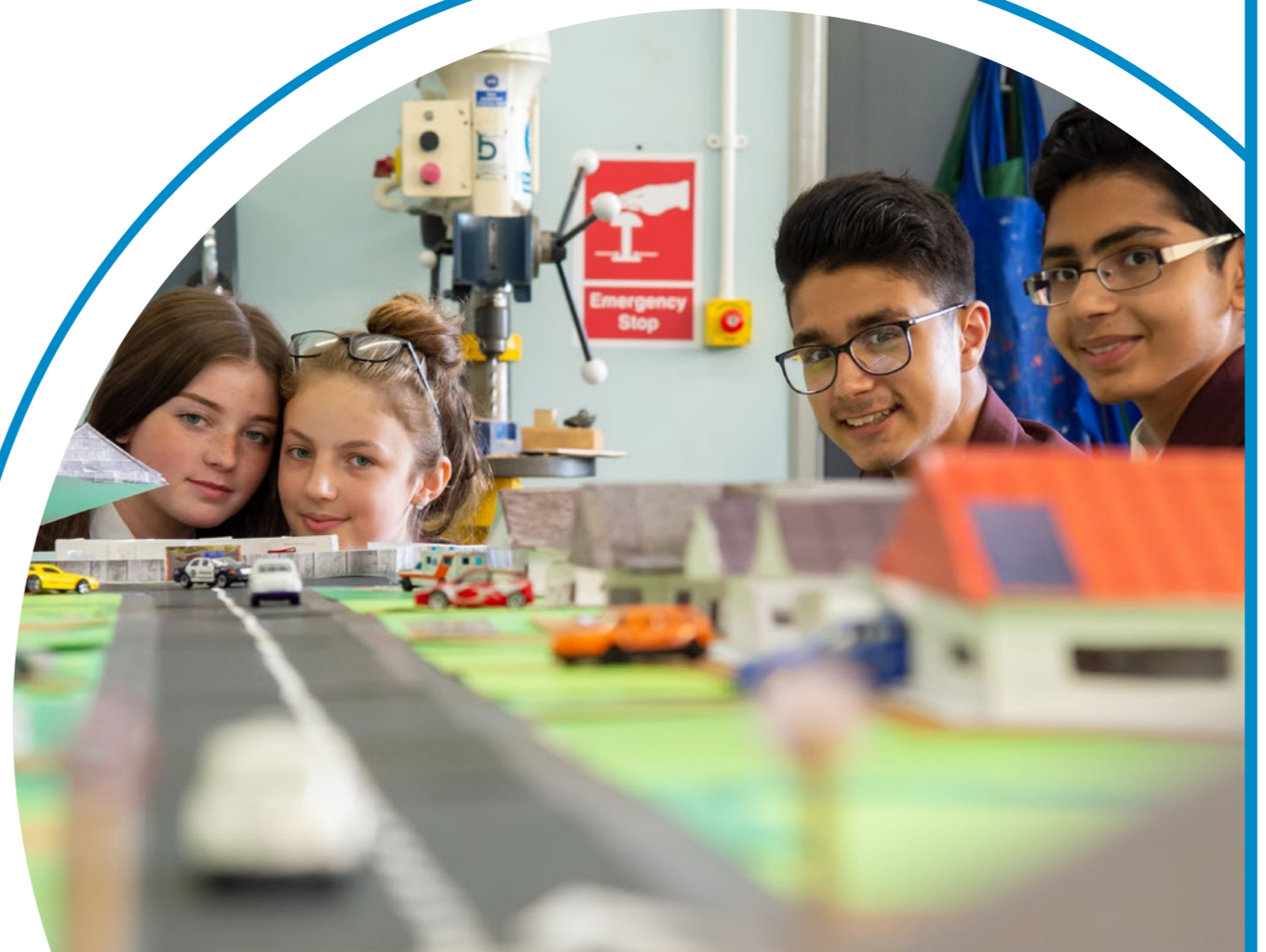


TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

1. How consistent is teaching across the school?
2. In which subjects and year groups is teaching the strongest?
3. Are there any areas of the school - subjects, year groups or key stages, where teaching is a concern?
4. Where teaching is weaker, how do you ensure that the impact on pupils is minimised?
5. What is in place at the school to address a teacher who is not performing well? What support is provided for them?
6. How long does it take to improve a teacher whose performance is not what it should be?
7. What impact is performance management having on improving teaching and learning?
8. How does the school ensure teachers have good subject knowledge?
9. How does the school ensure that teaching assistants have the subject knowledge that they need to support pupils?
10. What is behaviour like in lessons? How good are teachers at getting pupils to behave well so they can focus on teaching?
11. What aspects of teaching are strongest/most consistent?
12. What aspects of teaching have been identified as needing development?
13. What is in place to allow strong teachers to share their good practice?
14. What do you do about improving the impact of teaching where it is not having the necessary effect on learning?
15. How often are pupils' books scrutinised?
16. Are book scrutinies carried out by teacher, subject or pupil group?
17. What does the scrutiny of pupils' books tell you about the teaching in the school?
18. How is the scrutiny of pupils' books used to identify where/how teaching and learning needs to be improved?
19. What responsibility do subject leaders have to improve the teaching in their area?
20. How good are subject leaders at identifying issues in teaching?
21. Are any teachers teaching outside of their specialist subject area? (secondary only). If so, what has been put in place to provide subject specific training for them?
22. What do pupils say about the quality of teaching?
23. How do teachers ensure that work is set at the right level for the most able pupils?
24. How do teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs (SEND) are able to succeed in the classroom?
25. What does the school do to help pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) integrate and learn English as quickly as possible?
26. How does the school use different forms of assessment to support the pupil's journey through the curriculum (e.g. formative assessment/in-school summative assessment/nationally standardised assessment)?
27. How are pupils supported who are not making sufficient progress?
28. Where additional support is provided, how is this monitored?
29. How do progress and attainment of different pupil groups compare?
30. How are the children with SEND challenged and supported to reach their potential?
31. How have teachers and middle leaders been supported to design appropriate assessment?
32. How do you ensure that assessment is not burdensome for teachers?

CURRICULUM

1. What is the rationale for your curriculum design? How is this shared?
2. Does your curriculum identify the knowledge pupils need to progress?
3. Is your school curriculum ambitious for each and every pupil in the school?
4. Can you demonstrate that your curriculum is both broad and balanced?
5. How does the curriculum structure ensure that students remember more?
6. How do you ensure that there is a model of curriculum progression for every subject?
7. How does the sequencing of the curriculum ensure you build on, rather than repeat students prior learning?
8. Have you tailored the curriculum to the school's context?
9. Is there a process for reviewing the school's curriculum?
10. How do you support middle leaders with the process of curriculum design?
11. How do you monitor the impact that the curriculum is having on pupils' knowledge and understanding?
12. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the school curriculum?
13. How do you ensure that the curriculum has enough depth and coverage of knowledge in all subjects?
14. How do you ensure that there is a mechanism to ensure teachers review the curriculum?
15. How is student engagement with the curriculum monitored?
16. How is literacy prioritised within the curriculum?



BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

1. How is the effectiveness of school policies/procedures measured and evaluated?
2. How are the behaviour expectations communicated to pupils, staff and parents?
3. How are the attendance expectations communicated to pupils, staff and parents?
4. Are records of disruptive behaviour and incidents of bullying maintained to a sufficient standard? For example, are they up to date, detailed and include information about further action taken?
5. How is consistent implementation of the school's Behaviour Policy monitored?
6. How is consistent implementation of the school's Attendance Policy monitored?
7. What early help provision is in place to support pupils who are exhibiting poor behaviour choices linked to an adverse childhood experience?
8. How are behaviour issues explored with pupils to ensure that any underlying safeguarding or pastoral issues are identified?
9. Is the Exclusions Policy understood by all stakeholders and applied fairly and consistently, is the legal framework adhered to in terms of, for example, sixth day provision?
10. How well do the headteacher and senior leaders understand the legal processes and requirements for permanent exclusions?
11. What alternatives are considered before an exclusion is issued?
12. What is the pattern/trend in fixed term and permanent exclusion, and what is being done to address these identified patterns?
13. Are some groups of pupils excluded disproportionately more than others. If so, what is being explored to address this apparent disproportion?
14. How are pupils reintegrated after exclusion and what level of involvement in the reintegration is expected of parents?
15. Are pupils ever sent home or told not to come into school without it being recorded as an exclusion?
16. What interventions have been used in order to improve the behaviour of individual pupils?
17. Have these interventions been monitored for effectiveness and impact?
18. How is data used to improve behaviour and what examples can the school give?
19. Are there any incidents which are recurring with specific teaching staff or pupils? If so, what action is being taken to address these?
20. Is the school's rewards system well received, and does it promote good behaviour?
21. How is the impact of the school's reward system evaluated?
22. Does the school have an effective reporting procedure for bullying and behavioural issues?
23. How are the reports for bullying and behaviour evaluated and measures?
24. Does the school have an anti-bullying programme?
25. How is the curriculum planned and implemented to teach pupils about bullying, including peer-on-peer abuse and online bullying?
26. Are there any specific groups of pupils who are subjected to bullying?

SAFEGUARDING

1. Since the start of the pandemic, the landscape has changed and there are an increasing number of families in distress. Extra familial risk and harm has increased (e.g. child exploitation, youth violence). What are the local issues affecting our children?
2. How do you manage safe recruitment processes and allegations against staff?
3. How does the Staff Code of Conduct contribute to a culture of safeguarding?
4. What relevant training have staff had to ensure they are knowledgeable about how to keep children safe? What has been the impact of the training?
5. Have there been allegations within the LADO made against staff since the last inspection? How were they handled?
6. How do governors monitor how effective provision is for the most vulnerable?
7. Are all staff aware of our most vulnerable pupils? Do staff understand the contextual risks?
8. How do you support staff who work directly with those children whose safety and welfare is at risk?
9. How did the school safeguarding pupils during the pandemic?
10. How do you identify children who need early help?
11. How do you help those who are most at risk of abuse?
12. How do you use pupil voice to inform your own practice?
13. How do you use the curriculum to help pupils to be aware of safeguarding risks?
14. How does the curriculum protect them from the risk of radicalisation?
15. For children vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism, how are we keeping children safe from these risks?
16. What are we doing to keep children safe online? Refer to: i) policy, ii) education and training, iii) infrastructure and technology.
17. How is positive behaviour consistently reinforced?
18. Are you confident that children feel protected and safe?
19. What are your processes which explain how children who are persistently absent, excluded or not in receipt of full time education, are safe?
20. How do you ensure that all exclusions are legal and justified?
21. Can you identify which children have come off-roll this term? What processes are involved in removing from roll?
22. What are your processes for ensuring that children who are dual registered with Alternative Provision are safe?
23. How has your school responded to the Sexual Abuse Review?
24. Are there any aspects of safeguarding which are not working as well as you had intended them to?





ATTENDANCE

1. How does the school's attendance data compare with national attendance averages?
2. What information is considered when setting attendance targets?
3. Are there any trends identified when analysing attendance data, e.g. specific groups of pupils such as pupil premium?
4. What support and interventions are in place to support these groups of pupils to attend school regularly?
5. What support and interventions are in place to enable a child to attend school that has a medical need?
6. What is being done to ensure that the school meets its attendance targets?
7. Is there a record of any persistent absences?
8. What are the school's arrangements for identifying and where necessary, reporting to the local authority, a child that is missing from education?
9. Are there any trends identified when analysing persistent absence data, e.g. specific groups of pupils, year groups?
10. What support and interventions are in place to support these groups of pupils to attend school regularly?
11. How are attendance issues explored with pupils to ensure that any underlying safeguarding or pastoral issues are identified?
12. What interventions have been used in order to reduce the number of recurring attendance issues experienced by some pupils?
13. How is the effectiveness of attendance interventions measured and evaluated?
14. How is attendance promoted and improved within the school?
15. How is the Attendance Register used to identify and address barriers to learning and other issues within the school?
16. What interventions have been used in order to improve the attendance of individual pupils and what has the impact of these been?
17. Are there any pupils on part-time provision (less than 25 hours)? If so, is this a short term arrangement to assist in the pupil's reintegration to full time provision? Is there a written plan in place that is agreed, regularly reviewed and signed by the parent and pupil?
18. How is the effectiveness of behaviour and attendance interventions measured and evaluated?
19. How is data regarding behaviour, attendance, exclusions and bullying used to improve the performance and progress of pupils?
20. Are there any incidents which are recurring with specific teaching staff or pupils? If so, what action has been taken?
21. Does the school have peer mentors or a buddy system in place? If so, how were the pupils involved in the programme chosen?
22. Is the school's reward system well received and does it promote good attendance?



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Is there a whole school approach to personal development that is reflected in the school's values and vision?
2. What is in place for the delivery of PSHE in the school and how are elements embedded into the curriculum?
3. How does the school know that the PSHE offer is effective and what is the evidence for this?
4. How is PSHE teaching monitored and who is responsible?
5. What opportunities are given to pupils to investigate and explore the viewpoint of others?
6. How does the school promote respect and positive attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in local, national and global communities?
7. How is the ability to recognise and value common values across cultures, religions, ethnicity and socio-economic groups nurtured within the school community and the wider community?
8. Does the school have a clear coherently planned programme of curriculum enrichment which has been promoted to pupils and parents?
9. How is access to, and pupil engagement with, curriculum enrichment activities monitored for quality and effectiveness, for all pupils and for specific groups, e.g. SEND, disadvantaged, lower attainers?
10. What are the strengths of the curriculum enrichment programme and what could be improved?
11. What opportunities are provided for children to be active during the school day through extracurricular activities?
12. How do you monitor the take up by pupils of the opportunities the school provides?
13. To what extent do disadvantaged pupils consistently benefit from these opportunities?
14. Does the school facilitate access for pupils to high-quality agencies and providers, e.g. Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, Cadet Forces and the National Citizenship Service?
15. What does the school do to develop character traits such as resilience, confidence and independence?
16. What does the school do to encourage pupils to eat healthily and maintain an active lifestyle? How is this shared with parents?
17. Demonstrate how the school gives pupils an age appropriate understanding of healthy relationships?
18. How does the school ensure that pupils engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own?
19. How are the Gatsby Benchmarks used to improve their careers provision?
20. How are fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty promoted and explained?
21. How is the development of understanding and knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system carried out in the school?
22. What pupil voice groups take place in the school?
23. Does the school have a careers programme in place?
24. What is provided for pupils' to develop an understanding of the world of work?
25. What are the strengths of the school in developing effective and good citizens of the future?
26. What needs to improve in order to develop pupils into effective and good citizens of the future?



'PEOPLE'

(RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION, STAFF DEVELOPMENT, WELLBEING, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT)

1. Does the school have a recruitment strategy? (Does the school face particular challenges in recruiting staff?)
2. How does the school ensure that teachers new to the profession remain in the profession for at least five years?
3. What does the school do to ensure that teachers and leaders have a manageable workload?
4. What does staff wellbeing look like?
5. How has the school responded to the Early Careers Framework?
6. How are middle leaders supported and empowered?
7. What does the school do to develop the skills and competencies of its senior leaders?
8. Is there a talent management strategy to ensure that staff with high potential are encouraged to remain in the organisation?
9. Is there a strong evidence informed professional development programme in place?
10. What is the CPD offer for support staff?
11. What are the strong features of professional development in the school?
12. In which areas does professional development need to improve?



SEND AND LAC

1. How does the school ensure that its provision is ambitious and designed to give SEND pupils the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life?
2. Give examples of how the curriculum has been successfully adapted for SEND pupils.
3. How well do pupils with SEND progress at this school?
4. How does the school engage with pupils with SEND, their families and carers?
5. How do class or subject teachers further support the learning of SEND pupils?
6. What evidence is there to demonstrate that school's interventions are effective for pupils with SEND?
7. How confident are teachers, especially those new to the profession, in teaching children with SEND?
8. How do you identify and assess SEND in your school? How are parents involved in the process?
9. Are pupil outcomes improving as a result of the provision being made for them?
10. When analysing behaviour and attendance data for SEND pupils, what outcomes do you draw?
11. How do you track the progress of students with SEND?
12. How do you train and support teachers to be able to meet the needs of students with SEND?
13. How do you support the transition of SEND pupils from primary to secondary school?
14. Is the pastoral system in school sufficiently robust to support CLA?
15. What additional support has been put in place?
16. How is the progress of CLA monitored?
17. When looking at data for CLA on attendance and behaviour, what conclusions can you draw?
18. How are CLA supported to make the transition into Year 7 and then Post 16 education/employment?
19. Can you give an example of a CLA who has made good progress as a result of additional support what has been put in place?
20. How aware are staff of the issues that effect CLA which can disadvantage their learning?



SAFEGUARDING

1. Inspectors will always look to see how well children are helped and protected to ensure their safety. They will want to make sure arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
2. Who is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)?
3. What is the whistleblowing policy?
4. What is your safeguarding policy?
5. What is the most recent safeguarding training you had and when?
6. Safeguarding scenarios, e.g. What would you do if a child told you his mum smacked him this morning?

SEND

1. Inspectors will evaluate the impact of the curriculum and particularly its impact on children with SEND and seek to understand how the setting meets children's needs. The inspector will talk to children during the inspection and discuss with you what you intend those children to learn and remember.
2. How do you support children with SEND?
3. How does your curriculum meet the needs of children with SEND?
4. What are your learning goals for (chosen child) with SEND?
5. How do you ensure children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes?

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

1. The inspector will want to know how you build and develop partnerships with parents and carers. How do you communicate with parents?
2. How do you evaluate your provision and what role do parents play in the evaluation?
3. How do you work with parents?
4. What do you do to involve parents?
5. How do you develop positive partnerships with parents?
6. How do you support children and their parents who have English as an additional language?
7. How do you share information about children's progress with parents?
8. How do you help parents support children's learning at home?
9. How do you encourage a love of reading at home?
10. How do you engage parents?
11. How do you work with parents to promote attendance?

PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM

1. Inspectors will be interested in how and why you do what you do and a lot of that will stem back to your pedagogical approaches and your curriculum. What informs your practice?
2. Why did you set up this activity, what is the purpose? (You may be asked to reference the 3 I's.)
3. How do you add value to children in your care?
4. How did you decide on your curriculum?
5. What makes your setting unique?
6. What informs your practice?
7. How do you ensure your curriculum is ambitious?
8. How do you ensure important learning and understanding aren't missed?
9. What does assessment look like for you?
10. What do you do when children are repetitive in their play?
11. How do you feel that activity went, what did the children get from it and is there anything you could have added?
12. If you have approaches particular to your setting they may ask about them too, e.g. forest schools sessions, or the curiosity approach.

UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN

1. Inspectors will want to see your knowledge and understanding of the children in your care. What experiences have children had inside and outside of your setting?
2. They may choose one or two children in particular and ask for you to tell them about the child, what their starting points were, where they are in their development, what their next steps are and so on.

VALUES, COMMUNITY AND CELEBRATIONS

1. What are British values and how do you teach them?
2. What is your local community like?
3. What is cultural capital?
4. What do you celebrate in the setting? How does that reflect your local community?
5. What is your setting's ethos and values?

TRANSITIONS

1. What relationships do you have with children's previous/future educational settings?
2. How do you prepare them for their next setting?
3. How do you help children to settle when they first arrive?
4. What is your training and experience? (Especially for those in leadership positions.)
5. How do you look after staff wellbeing?
6. Do you feel supported in your role?
7. How are staff supported?
8. How is your workload?

FOR OLDER CHILDREN IN EYFS SETTINGS

1. What is your early reading support?
2. How is phonics taught?
3. What interventions do you have to close the attainment gap for reading and writing?
4. How are you instilling a love for reading?
5. Discussion of our curriculum maps and long term plans.
6. How does what you do link to year one?
7. How do you build on learning from pre-school and nursery?

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

1. The inspector will want to know how you build and develop partnerships with parents and carers. How do you communicate with parents?
2. How do you evaluate your provision and what role do parents play in the evaluation?
3. How do you work with parents?
4. What do you do to involve parents?
5. How do you develop positive partnerships with parents?
6. How do you support children and their parents who have English as an additional language?
7. How do you share information about children's progress with parents?
8. How do you help parents support children's learning at home?
9. How do you encourage a love of reading at home?
10. How do you engage parents?
11. How do you work with parents to promote attendance?

POST 16

1. How consistent is teaching across Post 16 subjects?
2. In which subjects is teaching the strongest?
3. Are there any areas where teaching is a concern?
4. What aspects of Post 16 teaching have been identified as needing development?
5. What do Post 16 students say about the quality of teaching?
6. What professional development opportunities exist to help teachers improve their teaching on Post 16 courses?
7. What do students say about the quality of teaching?
8. What is the rationale for the Post 16 curriculum?
9. Is the Post 16 curriculum ambitious for every student?
10. What are the strengths and weaknesses for the Post 16 curriculum?
11. How do you monitor the attitude to learning and behaviour of Post 16 students?
12. How is good attendance monitored and promoted?
13. Have any Post 16 students left the academy this term? Why did they leave? Where have they gone?
14. What provision is in place to support more vulnerable students?
15. What do you do to keep all students safe? Are you confident that they feel safe?
16. How has your Post 16 provision responded to the Ofsted review on sexual abuse?
17. What type of assessment is used to support the students journey through the curriculum?
18. What is in place for the delivery of PSHE in Post 16?
19. How does Post 16 ensure that students engage with views and beliefs that are different from their own?
20. How do you monitor academic progress?
21. How does the progress of different groups compare?
22. Is there a programme of extra-curricular provision?
23. Given the importance of securing a 'standard' or 'strong' pass in maths and English, how do you support students who arrive in Post 16 without these?
24. What are the strengths of this and how could it be improve?
25. How are the most able pupils challenged and supported at post 16?
26. What does Post 16 do to help students prepare for university?
27. How does Post 16 support their career aims of students who do not intend to go to university?
28. What are the strengths of the career programme and what needs to improve?
29. How well do students with SEND progress in Post 16 education?
30. How do you engage with parents? How do you seek their views?



APPENDIX 1 - GOVERNOR VISIT PROFORMA

Appendix 1

Macmillan Academy

Macmillan Academy
Governor Visit Proforma

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Name: | Area of responsibility: | |
| Format of visit (e.g. meeting, lesson observation): | | Date: |

Notices

Praises

Questions

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APPENDIX 2 - GOVERNOR VISIT PROFORMA

Appendix 2

ARCHIBALD
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Archibald Primary School
Record of Governor Visit

| | |
|---|--|
| Name: | Date: |
| Purpose of visit: | Classes/staff visited: |
| Summary of activities: | |
| | |
| What have I learned as a result of the visit | Positive comments about the visit |
| | |
| Further questions /follow up | |
| | |
| Signed: | Date: |

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SCHOOL VISITS – AN AIDE-MEMOIRE

What is the purpose of the visit?

What has prompted my decision to visit?
 Who has prompted my decision to visit?
 Is the reason specific or general?
 What are my/other people's expectations?
 How can my visit benefit the teacher?

How shall I carry it out?

What particular areas of the school am I interested in?
 What particular activities am I interested in?
 What particular age-group(s) am I interested in?
 Are there any questions that can be answered by observation?
 What questions should I ask?
 Who should I ask?

Did I achieve my aim?

To what extent did I address the reason for my visit?
 Which of my questions did I answer?
 To what extent did I fulfil my own/other people's expectations?
 What difficulties did I meet and why?

Is there any follow-up?

Have I recorded my experiences?
 Did I 'report back' to the head and staff?
 Have I prepared a short report for the next governors' meeting?
 How can I build on this for the next visit?

| | ALWAYS | NEVER |
|--------|--|---|
| BEFORE | Arrange details of visit. Agree purpose of visit. Discuss the context of the lesson to be observed. Agree role within the lesson. | Turn up unannounced. |
| DURING | Keep to the role agreed. Keep questions for the class teacher until after the visit is over. Please remember confidentiality. Stick to the times and purpose agreed. Be sensitive to the mood in the classroom and the expectations of the children. | Assume a different role. Walk in with a clipboard. Distract the pupils from their task. |
| AFTER | Thank the teacher and the pupils. Discuss the visit with the teacher at their convenience. Feedback to the governing body. | Leave without acknowledgement. Break rules of confidentiality. |





Stockton Road
Middlesbrough
TS5 4AG



01642 800800



enquiries@endeavour-academies.org.uk
www.endeavour-academies.org.uk