

Governor Induction Handbook
Information for New and Prospective
Governors of the Local Governing Board



2023-2024

To be read in conjunction with
Local Governing Board Terms of Reference
& Scheme of Delegation

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1. Introduction

Academy governors make a positive contribution by giving up their time and bringing their skills and experience to help the Academy provide the best possible education for every pupil.

The Department for Education has high expectations of governors and the responsibilities and demands placed upon governors have increased in recent years. At Redhill Primary Academy (“Redhill” or “the Academy”), we believe that it is essential that all new and prospective governors fully understand the role and its statutory duties.

We ensure that all new governors have a full and comprehensive induction before commencing their role and that they are given support which might be required to enable them to fulfil their role effectively and with confidence.

2. This Handbook

This handbook is intended to provide part of the induction procedure for new governors through which they will gain a better understanding of their new role and to provide them with essential sources of information. An induction checklist will be completed at the formal induction (Appendix 2) and filed in the central governance record maintained by the Academy.

It is also a useful document for prospective governors to read and consider before deciding whether to apply for any vacancies on the Local Governing Board which might arise.

3. What is the role of the Local Governing Board?

The Local Governing Board (“LGB”) has three core functions:

a) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction:

The LGB is the key strategic decision-making body of every school. Its role is to provide support to the Headteacher to set the Academy’s strategic framework and to ensure all statutory duties are met. The LGB should ensure that it has a clear vision. This should include ambitions for current and future pupils as well as the Academy’s relationship with other schools. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Academy’s ethos promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

b) Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the Academy and its pupils, and staff performance management:

Effective LGBs hold their Headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by asking the right questions. It is essential that governors use and are familiar with specific data about their Academy to help them inform these questions. This may involve asking questions about any underperforming groups of pupils and whether school leaders have credible plans for addressing underperformance or less than expected progress.

c) Overseeing the financial performance of the Academy and making sure its money is well spent:

The LGB should make sure money is well spent by ensuring that it has at least one governor with specifically relevant skills and experience of financial matters. All governors however should ideally have a basic understanding of the financial cycle and the legal requirements of the

Academy on accountability and spend. Asking the right questions is equally important in relation to money as it is to educational performance. Questions to ask may include whether resources are allocated in line with the Academy's strategic priorities and whether the Academy is making best use of its budget, including expenditure relating to the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

4. The responsibilities of the LGB

The LGB is a committee appointed by the Trust Board in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Trust. The responsibilities of the LGB are set out in the TTMAT Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference which also define the LGB's relationship with the Trust Board.

Individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the LGB except where the Trust Board has delegated a specific duty to that individual. The LGB may also delegate any of its functions to a committee, or to the Headteacher, or to groups of identified individuals, but it must monitor the activities of any such individual/group and receive reports. Formal decisions resulting from delegation may only be taken at LGB meetings or with the agreement of Governors, "off the table". There are matters which will also require the approval of the Trust Board.

5. Governors' relationship with the Headteacher

It is essential that governors have a clear understanding of the role of the Headteacher and that they form a good and effective working relationship that, in turn, facilitates good leadership and management. The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day running of the school and the governors should not get involved in this.

The governor's role is not, however, to simply rubber-stamp every decision of the Headteacher. The LGB has a right to discuss and question whilst always respecting the professional roles of the Headteacher and staff. The LGB answers for its actions to the Trust Board, parents, and the wider local community for the performance of the Academy.

6. Constitution of the LGB

Governance is most effective with a small core group of members with a balance of skills and experience as this enables every governor to contribute to the work of the governing body. Each governor serves a term of office for four years although a governor can resign from their position at any. Details of eligibility for reappointment are provided in the Terms of Reference document.

The performance of a LGB has a real impact upon the success of the Academy. The LGB at Redhill is resolutely committed to regularly evaluating its performance and ensuring, through the use of a skills audit, that we recruit governors with skills and experience that will enhance the existing make up.

7. Meetings

There is a clear expectation that all governors attend every meeting. Apologies must be sent to the Chair of Governors and the Clerk with a note of the reason for absence, which might be recorded in the minutes.

There will be a minimum of three LGB meetings per year (one each term). Governors will normally receive packs containing the agenda and relevant documents two weeks prior to each meeting by post. It is essential that all

governors read and fully consider the materials prior to each meeting to ensure that they are in a position to pose effective questions.

A meeting schedule is published in advance and meetings are held at Academy from 4.00pm until approximately 6pm. Some of the committees which are required to convene to deal with pay reviews, complaints, appeals, and disciplinary issues are often required to meet at short notice and within Academy hours.

Finance & Remuneration Committee meetings are scheduled to enable matters to be summarised to all governors and for key decisions and documents to be ratified at the LGB meetings.

8. Committees

Some governors sit on committees that meet separately to the LGB. In particular, the **Finance & Remuneration Committee** which comprises of the Chair of Governors and two other governors. The Headteacher and TTMAT Director of Finance also attend meetings of the Committee which operates under agreed Terms of Reference to: -

- Work with TTMAT representatives to formulate the annual budget plan and salary recommendations, considering the priorities for the Academy each year.
- Complete the annual performance management review of the Headteacher and consider the annual salary review for all employees.
- Monitor income and expenditure throughout the year against the annual budget plan.
- Provide a termly report at LGB meetings and alert governors to any potential issues which may arise.
- Consider proposals for capital expenditure and, if appropriate, make recommendations relating to the same to the LGB.
- Review all matters relating to the maintenance and development of the Academy's premises and grounds, including Health & Safety.
- Review policies and schedules relating to Health & Safety, Accessibility and Risk Management.
- Prepare and/or review other policies, as required.
- Agree annual action plans and monitor how Academy premiums are spent (i.e. PE, sports, services, CIC, Pupil Premium).
- Receive and act upon any issues identified by audit.
- Establish and oversee the operation of the Academy's Appraisal and Pay Policy, including the arrangements and operation for the Academy's appraisal procedures for the Headteacher.

- Annually review procedures and policies for dealing with staff discipline and grievances and make recommendations to the LGB for approval.

Agreements reached by the Committee are reported to the LGB, with the LGB being required to ratify all expenditure proposals and other recommendations arising from its work. These are typically reported in the minutes of meetings held by the Committee and presented verbally at LGB meetings.

Other Committees

Other committee meetings when required comprise:

- Appeals
- Complaints
- Pupil discipline
- Staff Grievance

9. Link/Special Interest roles

All governors need to know their Academy well if accountability is to be robust and their vision for the Academy is to be achieved. At Redhill therefore, all governors typically take an interest in a specific area or year group. For example, we have governors with areas of special responsibility such as Safeguarding or Special Educational Needs and also governors who are linked to year groups to monitor the progress or the pupils within those cohorts.

Link/special interest governors are encouraged to visit the Academy to meet with pupils and staff members. The Link-Governor role should be thought of as an ongoing process of visits to keep up-to-date with changes to the curriculum and legislation, working practices at the Academy and the monitoring of data and action plans to evaluate the impact that these have had upon the success of the Academy.

When visiting the Academy, it is important to remember that governors are not inspectors. It is not the role of a governor to assess the quality or method of teaching; these are matters for the Headteacher. If governors wish to spend time in a classroom, they need to be very clear why they are doing so.

After each visit to Academy, governors are requested to complete a report detailing the key aspects of their visit and submit this to the Chair. The Headteacher will ensure that the report is distributed to all governors with papers for the next LGB meeting. This enables the LGB to have a depth of understanding about the whole Academy.

10. Effective governance

The core features of effective governance include the LGB having:

- A broad and balanced range of skills, with all governors demonstrating commitment and offering diverse perspectives to ensure appropriate internal challenge;
- The right people contribute effectively under the leadership of the LGB Chair and operate within an explicit code of conduct;
- Clear governance structures with clearly defined remits, particularly in relation to the functions delegated to committees;
- Clear separation between strategic and operational role of the LGB and the Academy leaders;

- A positive relationship between the LGB and its Academy leaders enabling robust constructive challenge on the basis of a good understanding of objective data particularly on pupil progress, staff performance and finances;
- Robust processes for financial oversight and business planning, with effective controls in place to ensure compliance, propriety, and value for money; and
- Processes for regular self-evaluation, review and improvement including skills audits, training and development plans, and independent external reviews as necessary.

11. Governor professional development

The Redhill LGB is committed to ensuring that all governors have relevant and appropriate training to enable each governor to make an effective contribution. We recognise that training is essential in order to ensure that governors have the skills and knowledge that they need. Every governor needs to keep up to date with key education and legislative changes that may affect their Academy and their role.

The Academy can access the Local Authority provision which provides a wide range of training courses. It also subscribes to other training providers, including the National Governance Association. Training is discussed and planned regularly at meetings; a training record and training impact document is then maintained by the Chair of Governors to ensure that we have a balance of training and to also monitor the impact of the training upon our effectiveness

12. Getting to know our Academy

It is essential that all governors know their Academy well if accountability is going to be robust and their vision for the Academy is going to be achieved. Visiting the Academy is a very good and helpful way to do this. At Redhill, governors are encouraged to visit the Academy during the day to talk to pupils, to go on learning walks, to talk to staff members, to observe lessons, to look at pupil books, to attend special assemblies/celebrations and to become involved in the life of the Academy.

All governors have a duty to obtain view of all stakeholders (staff, pupils, and parents).

13. Complaints

The LGB has a duty to consider complaints about the Academy and any service it provides.

The Academy has a complaints procedure (available on the website) for dealing with complaints. Most parental complaints will be resolved by the class teacher or the Headteacher. If, however, any complaint cannot be resolved by the Headteacher then the complaint, can make representation, in writing, to the Chair of Governors, with further recourse to a Complaints Committee, if the matter is not resolved by the Chair. If the complainant is not satisfied with the handling of their complaint by the Complaints Committee, he/she may refer this to the ESFA or another appropriate third party.

14. Safeguarding & Prevent

At Redhill, safeguarding is taken very seriously with a high level of priority. All governors are required to hold an enhanced DBS check. All governors are required to read key documents such as “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and

undertake relevant Child Protection and Prevent training. Certification of such training is recorded by the Academy and made available to inspectors, if requested during an Ofsted visit.

If during any visit into the Academy a governor has any concerns over a child's wellbeing then these should be reported to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads who are Claire Whiting (Headteacher), Lydia Cartwright (Deputy Headteacher) and Sam Farmer (Foundation Stage Manager).

15. Inspection

Schools are inspected by Ofsted. As part of every inspection, the quality and effectiveness of governance is a central part of the overall judgement on the leadership and management of the Academy. Ofsted has published the criteria that inspectors will use to judge the effectiveness of an Academy's governance (The School Inspection Handbook 2023).

The LGB Chair and one or two other governors may be required to attend a meeting with the Ofsted Inspector during any inspection. As strategic leaders of the Academy, governors will be part of the inspection process. The criteria include a strong focus on how governing bodies use data to challenge and hold the Headteacher to account and how they evaluate their own impact and develop their own skills.

16. Register of Business Interests

The LGB and senior staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict of interest arising between any external business and personal interests with the interests of the Academy. All governors and senior staff are required to complete a relevant disclosure form which is retained by the Clerk. Registers of declared interests are also maintained by the Clerk and published for governors' consideration at each termly meeting of the LGB. The register for governors is further published on the Academy and Trust websites, in accordance with statutory guidance.

17. Helpful hints for new governors

- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Be prepared by ensuring that you have read all paperwork prior to meetings and, if there is anything you are unsure about, seek clarification via the Chair, Headteacher or the Clerk in advance.
- Make sure that you are familiar with key documents such as the Raising Attainment Plan and familiarise yourself with the Academy website and the key policies.
- Get to know the Academy and the staff.
- During meetings, you can express your views on matters within the agenda. Any personal concerns should be raised with the Chair or the Clerk outside of the meetings.
- It may be useful for you to shadow another experienced governor during Academy visits initially to gain insight into the workings of the LGB.
- Read external documents such as the DfE Governance Handbook and Competency Framework.

18. Additional governor involvement

At Redhill, we also encourage our governors to become involved in the life of the Academy through participation in activities outside of their core functions such as:

- Attendance at Academy concerts/performances;
- Attendance at special assemblies;
- Attendance at the Christmas lunch and/or summer picnic;

- Being involved in fundraising activities such as the Summer Fayre;
- Supporting pupils with activities outside of the Academy such as educational visits; and
- Attendance at sporting events.

19. Alternatives to becoming a governor

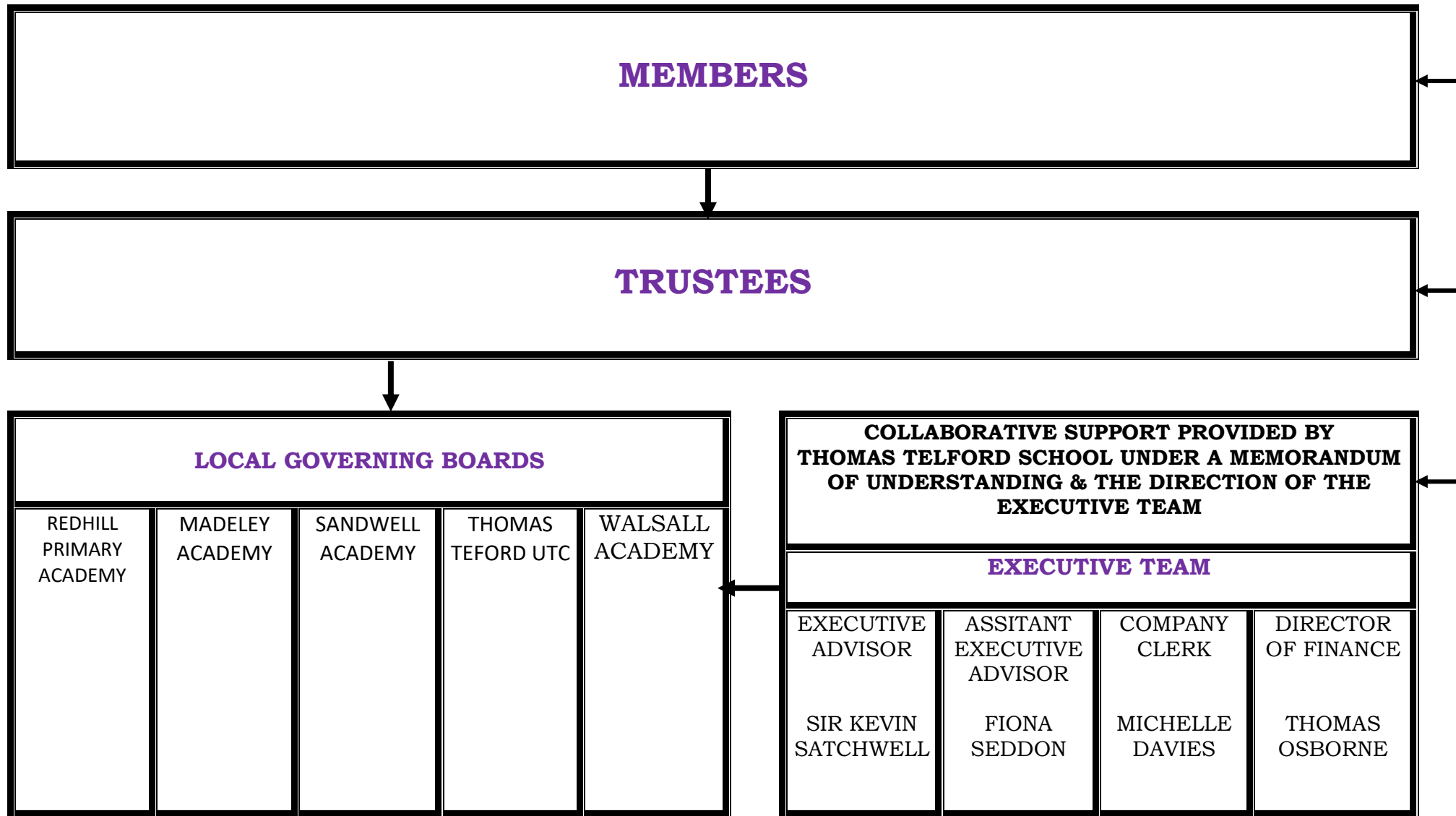
If, after reading this handbook you decide that becoming a governor is not right for you then there are alternative ways to become involved with the Academy for example:

- Becoming a volunteer in Academy;
- Joining the Friends of Redhill to organise fundraising events; and
- Joining one of the parent groups such as the Health and Wellbeing working group.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Handbook. Becoming a governor is a significant commitment and we do really appreciate the support provided by those who choose to serve on the LGB.

Appendix 1

TTMAT Organogram



Details of the individual serving as Members, Trustees and Local Govering Board members can found under the governance tab of the TTMAT website: www.ttmat.net

Appendix 2

Governor Induction Checklist

Name.....

Date.....

Meeting with Chair of the LGB

Areas that will be covered:

- Meeting the Headteacher
- A tour of the Academy
- Overview of the role of a governor
- Academy vision and ethos of the Academy
- Current issues facing the Academy
- Allocation of a governor mentor

Documents for new governor to complete

- Contact details form
- Governor skills audit form*
- Consent form*
- Business Interests disclosure*
- Governor Code of Conduct*
- ID documents/DBS checks

**provided by the Clerk either prior to formal appointment*

Governors will receive (and should read*)

- Schedule of meeting dates
- Minutes of the last full LGB meeting*
- Latest Headteacher's report*
- Latest version of KCSIE*
- A copy of the Child Protection Policy*
- Comprehensive setting-specific introduction to SEND*
- Relevant statutory training (GDPR, Prevent, Safeguarding etc.)

Governors should also read

- The Child Protection Policy
- KCSIE
- DfE Governance Handbook & Competency Framework
- Terms of Reference for Local Governing Boards
- Scheme of Delegation
- Academy staff list
- Academy Prospectus
- Academy vision and aims
- Academy Newsletter
- Latest Ofsted Report
- Key Academy Policies (on the website)
- Pupil Premium Statement
- Parent View

Useful Sources of Information:

www.dfe.gov.uk

Department for Education website. The Governance Handbook can be found here.

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Office for Standards in Education website

www.nga.org.uk

The National Governance Association website

Appendix 3

Glossary of Useful Abbreviations & Phrases

A,G&T	Able, Gifted and Talented
ADHD	Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AfL	Assessment for Learning
APP	Assessing pupils' progress
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASET	Advisory Service for Travellers
APS	Average Points Score
BESD	Behavioural, Emotion and Social Difficulties
BV	British Values
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CIC	Child in Care
CLPE	Centre for Literacy in Primary Education
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
Disaffected	Describes pupils who are challenged by the education process
Disapplication	Where the National curriculum requirements may not apply
DFC	Devolved Formula Capital
DfE	Department for Education
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant
ECT	Early Career Teacher
EHCP	Education, Health Care Plans
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
EAL	English as an additional language
ESL/EFL	English as a second language/Foreign language
EYFS	Early Year Foundation Stage
Foundation	First stage of primary school (age 3 to end of reception)
F&RC	Finance & Remuneration Committee
FOI	Freedom of Information
FSM	Free School Meals
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
H&S	Health and Safety
HT	Headteacher
HTR	Headteacher's Report
ICT	Information Communication Technology
Inclusion	Educating all pupils including those with special needs
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IHCP	Individual Healthcare Plan
KS1	Years 1 – 2, up to 7 years of age
KS2	Years 3 – 6, 7 to 11 years of age
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Child
LAAC	Looked After and Adopted Child
NAHT	National Association of Headteachers
NGA	National Governors Association
NOR	Numbers on Roll
NUT	National Union of Teachers
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PP	Pupil Premium

PPG	Pupil Premium Grant
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
RAISEonline	Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through School Self Evaluation
RAP	Raising Attainment Plan
SATS	Standard Assessment Tests
SDP	School Development Plan
SEF	Self-Evaluation Form
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDCO	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator
SFVS	Schools Financial Value Standard
SIA	School Improvement Advisor
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
Statementing	The formal assessment of SEND pupils requiring specific additional resources/funding
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibility (additional management responsibility for which the teacher received extra pay)

Appendix 4

FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Effective schools generally share certain characteristics:

<p>Professional Leadership The Headteacher is the professional leader of the school. An effective Headteacher is purposeful, fully involved in what goes on in the classroom and helps to make sure that staff have opportunities to show leadership and participate in making decisions</p>	<p>Monitoring Progress Staff systematically monitor and evaluate the achievements and progress of all pupils and of the school as a whole</p>
<p>Shared Vision and Goals Staff and Governors work together with clear aims and vision and with a common ambition</p>	<p>Pupil Rights and Responsibilities The school promotes pupils' self-esteem. It encourages them to take responsibility, particularly for their own work</p>
<p>Rich Learning Environment The school provides a climate in which pupils are able and willing to learn. The atmosphere is orderly and purposeful, and the working environment is attractive</p>	<p>Purposeful Teaching The quality of teaching is high, particularly because lessons are efficiently organised, have a clear purpose and are well structured. The teaching takes account of the fact that different pupils learn in different ways.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning The school's activities have one central purpose – to help pupils to learn and achieve their full potential</p>	<p>A learning Organisation The school presents learning as something that is for the adults working there, as well as for pupils. The school provides training and development for all staff including school-based staff development.</p>
<p>Clear and High Expectations The school has high expectations of its pupils. The expectations are communicated clearly to pupils and lessons are challenging</p>	<p>Home-School Partnership Relations between home and school are supportive and co-operative. Parents get actively involved in their children's work and in the life of the school</p>
<p>Positive Reinforcement Discipline is clear and fair. Staff ensure that pupils know how they are doing and that they are praised for good work and rewarded for good behaviour.</p>	



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