



governance, leadership and management

...achieving excellence in schools

Governor Mark

Recognising high quality school governance.

Short Guidance and Section 5 – **Strategic Leadership**



Supported By the DCSF

Governor Mark – Short Guidance and Section 5

Governor Mark is a broad ranging governing body self-evaluation tool. It evaluates impact as well as systems. Early experience has shown that the greatest challenge in meeting the standard for many schools, both in the eight criteria and the Impact Statement, is in the impact of the governing body on school improvement.

Section 5, whose focus is the strategic leadership of governors, is a good place to start if yours is a governing body exploring the possibility of using Governor Mark as a self-evaluation activity, particularly regarding its engagement with the school improvement planning cycle. To complete the form the governing body needs to evaluate its work within these four grades:

FC – Fully compliant with the standard

PC – Partly compliant with the standard

NC – Not compliant with the standard

BP – If you believe that you are not only compliant but exhibit a ‘best practice’ example.

Probably the most important aspect of the grid is the indication of evidence in support of any application. This might include minutes, headteacher reports, agendas, reports from local authority inspectors or advisers, any development plans, and so on.

The key to good evidence is that it shows the impact of the governing body on the work of the school. Yours may be an outstanding school, but if governors simply follow along the professionals in the school and rubber stamp school initiatives, you will find it hard to achieve this award.

If, for example, you grade your governing body as ‘fully compliant’ in 5c(ii) which is about linking the governing body timetable of meetings to the development plan, a Governor Mark assessor will have a look at the development plan to see how far governing body activity is featured, and whether the agendas and minutes of relevant meetings bear out the aspiration that the work is driven by an improvement timetable. It may not be enough to simply have the improvement plan as a standing agenda item - your meetings and agendas will need to be more focused than that.

Governor Mark is a set of standards and a quality mark that is managed by a partnership of three local authority governor services teams – Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, under the name ‘GLM’ (Governance, Leadership and Management). All Governor Mark documentation as well as sources of advice and guidance are free and can be found at www.glmpartnership.org

Criterion 5: Strategic Leadership

Sub criterion 5a The governing body is at the heart of strategic planning,	BP	FC	PC	NC	Evidence reference
i) The governing body in consultation with the head teacher and senior leadership team determines the strategic priorities for school improvement based on rigorous school self evaluation					
ii) The governing body has a high level of strategic influence, brought to bear in decision making and makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school					
iii) The governing body in consultation with the head teacher and senior leadership team reviews and determines: a) the staffing complement and structure when appropriate e.g. when vacancies arise and b) the leadership structure. Reviews will include consideration of alternative structures					
iv) The governing body can effectively apply the procedures for the appointment of a new head teacher					
Totals for 5a					You must have at least 50% BP or FC

Sub criterion 5b The governing body is actively engaged in both Policy formulation and review					Evidence reference
i) The governing body participates in policy making and ensures that the community can contribute, where appropriate, to ensure that policies reflect the distinctive nature of the school					
ii) The governing body has a plan to regularly review policies to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that all statutory policies are in place					
iii) The governing body has evidence that actual practice reflects policy					
Totals for 5b					You must have at least 50% BP or FC

Sub criterion 5c The governing body deploys resources effectively in support of the school development cycle	BP	FC	PC	NC	Evidence reference
i) The governing body has achieved the Financial management Standards in Schools (FMSiS)					
ii) The governing body has a clear timetable for school development/improvement planning and organises meetings to fit in with the development/improvement cycle					
iii) The governing body sets the school budget to reflect the priorities in the school's development plan and is active in monitoring and amending financial decisions throughout the cycle to keep within the budget					
iv) The governing body effectively and efficiently deploys resources to achieve value for money					
v) The governing body is adept at longer term budget planning, including capital spending and Asset Management priorities					
Totals for 5c					You must have at least 50% BP or FC

Criterion 5d The governing body is active in target setting and promoting the raising of standards	BP	FC	PC	NC	Evidence reference
i) The governing body is focused on raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of all learners					
ii) The governing body sets challenging targets including statutory targets and include these in the school improvement/development plan					
iii) The governing body receives a report from the school improvement partner and acts upon them					
iv) The governing body is focused on raising standards including the setting of challenging performance targets					
Totals for 5d					You must have at least 50% BP or FC

Sub criterion 5e Performance Management and pay	BP	FC	PC	NC	Evidence reference
i) The governing body has a performance management policy and ensures that all teachers, including the head teacher, and staff are appraised in accordance with statutory requirements.					
ii) The governing body receives a report annually on the implementation of the performance management policy for all staff, and ensures it is fit for purpose					
iii) The governing body appoints performance management governors for head teacher appraisal and they work effectively with the school improvement partner in the appraising head teacher performance and setting of objectives consistent with school improvement priorities					
iv) The governing body is clear about its responsibilities with regard to staff pay					
Totals for 5e					You must have at least 50% BP or FC
TOTALS for CRITERION 5					You must have at least 15 BP /FC overall in criterion 5.