

# Headteacher's Report to the Governing Body



Guidance for Headteachers and Governing Bodies

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This guidance has been produced by headteachers and governors in order to assist headteachers in writing reports for their governing body. It draws on advice and guidance provided by Devon County Council, Wokingham District Council, Education Leeds and Governonet and tailored to the needs of Staffordshire headteachers and governors.

The 2006 Guide to the Law for School Governors states that *'the headteacher must give the governing body any information requested by it for the purpose of the exercise of any of their functions'* (Chap 13 par 76). The exact details in terms of content and format are a matter for the headteacher and the governing body to determine. It is hoped that experienced headteachers will find this guidance useful in fine tuning their reports for the governing body and that new headteachers will find it invaluable in helping them to write their first report.

This guidance is not prescriptive or exhaustive but provides a framework for the report along with an example of good practice. Some headteachers may choose to have a number of staff contribute to the report whereas others will produce it themselves.

Within the National Standards for Headteachers accountability is seen as essential for effective headship.

*'Head teachers account for the efficiency and effectiveness of the school to the governors and others....'*

## **They:**

- i. provide information, objective advice and support to the governing body to enable it to meet its responsibilities for securing effective teaching and learning and improved standards of achievements, and for achieving efficiency and value for money;
- ii. create and develop an organisation in which all staff recognise that they are accountable for the success of the school;

- iii. present a coherent and accurate account of the school's performance in a form appropriate to a range of audiences, including governors, the local authority, the local community, OFSTED and others, to enable them to play their part effectively.

Decisions delegated to the head by the governors are those which must be reported by the headteacher to the governing body at their next meeting. It is important that all aspects of reports from the headteacher to the governors are negotiated between the headteacher and the governing body. The following questions will assist the headteacher and governing body in making decisions about the style, format and content of the report.

- What information do governors want/need specifically from the Headteacher's Report?
- How much detail do governors want?
- How frequently should the report be prepared?
- How much time should be spent discussing the report?
- What are the guidelines on confidentiality?
- What are the expectations of how individual governors will use the report?

## There are two main purposes for Headteachers' reports to governors:

### Accountability

Reports are the main vehicle for the headteacher to account to the governing body for:

- the quality of education provided;
- the development of pupils and staff and their mobility;
- the standards attained and trends of performance;
- the efficiency of the management of the school's resources and curriculum;
- the progress made in implementing the school improvement plan and OFSTED action plan.

Reports will therefore contain monitoring information on both performance and policy implementation.

The information required to achieve this purpose is:

- a) that which enables governors to monitor performance, policy and delivery within a time scale. This is related to the success criteria contained either within individual policies, action plans or within the improvement plan, or to performance indicators which the governing body and headteacher have agreed in advance.
- b) that which celebrates success. This may include examples of particular achievements of individuals or groups which are not necessarily related to school improvement plan targets or policy implementation.

### Assisting decision making

Reports should provide governing bodies with the information they will need to make decisions or to formulate policy, for example, linking finance to the resourcing of the curriculum.

The information required to achieve this purpose may include the following:

- a) information on the school's own circumstances and how this compares and contrasts with that of similar schools, where appropriate, e.g. from comparative financial data to PANDAs;
- b) information on local and national legislation and policy developments which impact upon the life of the school;
- c) the headteacher's professional advice, or results of seeking advice from other sources, such as the LA adviser, school improvement partner (SIP), other governors, etc.;
- d) information requiring future actions;
- e) any other information the governing body requires.

In addition to the Headteacher's Report the governing body should receive reports from:

- Committees
- Working groups
- Members of staff, e.g. curriculum leaders (when appropriate)
- Pupils, e.g. through verbal or written reports from the school council (when appropriate)
- School improvement advisers
- School improvement partners

## Frequency

The Education (School Government) (Terms of Reference) Regulations 2000 state that

*'the headteacher shall report at least once every school year to the governing body on the progress made towards achieving the aims and objectives set and in particular towards meeting specific targets' (par 5.3).* Custom and practice however, has led to a report, which is usually written once a term and updated verbally to the full governing body or to a committee. The termly report enables headteachers to focus on the distinct aspects of the school for each term. For example, the autumn term can focus on pupil attainment following the publication of the PANDA report, the budget could be the focus for the spring term and the summer term is the time of the national tests. The focus of the report should reflect the issues of the term and should have a forward focus. If reports are a reflection on what has already happened governors are unable to influence/contribute to the issues. With a report which is forward looking governors can both plan their work and better support the activities within the school. This in turn will enable the governors to monitor and evaluate more effectively and be better placed to make sound decisions. The Headteacher's Report along with other reports can form the basis of the School Profile.

The School Profile has three elements:

- performance data pre-populated by the DfES;
- a summary of the latest Ofsted report;
- narrative sections written by the school.

The narrative sections for the school to complete include the following headings:



- What have been our successes this year?
- What are we trying to improve?
- How have our results changed over time?
- How are we making sure that every child gets the teaching to meet their individual needs?
- How do we make sure our pupils are healthy, safe and well supported?
- What have we done in response to Ofsted?
- How are we working with parents and the community?

The narrative sections vary slightly in size, ranging from 100 to 200 words. (A Guide to the Law for School Governors, 2006 chapter 13 par 26-27).

## style

Although headteachers and governors will have their own ideas about the style and format of the report, there are certain characteristics that are recognised as good practice.

- a) The report should be well structured, set out with clearly numbered and /or headed paragraphs for ease of use and reference.
- b) Some information could be shown as charts or appendices, e.g. PANDA details, reports from advisers.
- c) Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms. If however they are necessary they should be explained at an appropriate place in the report.
- d) Use plain and lively language.
- e) The tone needs to be business-like, friendly yet in a formal way. Remember you are reporting to lay governors.
- f) Be positive and illustrate the school's achievements.
- g) Be frank and open as this encourages trust.
- h) Indicate clearly which items are (i) for information or consultation, (ii) for action, (iii) where a decision is required.

The Headteacher's Report should always be sent out to governors in advance of the meeting (at least 7 clear days) with the agenda papers. It's good practice to be one of the first agenda items so that there is time to deal with matters arising from the report.



## confidentiality

Once the Headteacher's Report is distributed to governors it enters the public domain and must be made available at the school to anyone wishing to read it. It is important that information is not included which identifies individuals in the school - either pupils, parents or staff. It is recommended that in the annual discussion about the content of the report that governors are reminded about the need for confidentiality. This should include a reminder of the need to halt any discussion which is at risk of breaching the confidentiality rules.

Headteachers and governors may wish to consider whether the Headteacher's Report should be shared with staff as it contains much information that may be of interest to them. Confidential information should be written as separate statements and kept outside of the Headteacher's Report to protect all concerned but recognising the requirements of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. An alternative to making the Headteacher's Report available to the staff may be the teacher governor preparing a short summary after the full governing body meeting which includes information about both the meeting and the Headteacher's Report.

## The general content of the report

Writing a Headteacher's Report can be a time consuming activity and it is therefore important not to spend time describing issues that come from a governors' committee which will be reported on separately. The Headteacher's Report is also time-consuming for governors to read and understand therefore it needs to be concise. Where more complex explanations are required time needs to be allowed at the governors' meeting for these.

As indicated above, the report should follow the annual cycle of school events and include the following key areas:

- a) **The curriculum:** the quality of teaching and learning and issues from the school improvement plan.
- b) **The staff:** in particular how staff are managed and organised and staff development, including teaching and support staff.
- c) **The resources:** major expenditures needed, adequacy and effectiveness.
- d) **The pupils:** test results, monitoring and evaluating performance and target setting, attendance, exclusions, admissions, roll, special needs, inclusion, performance indicators and extra activities.
- e) **The finances:** monitoring the budget, donations, how the school has applied best value.
- f) **The premises:** health and safety issues, maintenance and improvements.
- g) **Leadership/management:** leadership issues, including performance management.
- h) **School Improvement Plan:** progress in key areas.
- i) **School self evaluation:** monitoring, judgements and progress in the key areas.
- j) **School improvement partner:** monitoring, judgements and progress in key areas resulting from the visit.
- k) **Other:** visits out, visitors in, community links, reviewing policies.



## The content of the termly report

Below is a list of suggested items which could be included in the Headteacher's Report on a termly basis. It is not expected that every item will be included every term.

### TERMLY

- **Monitoring of progress on the school improvement plan and other action plans**
  - progress on priorities of action plans for curriculum targets, (successes and failures), key issues from action plans;
  - progress on pupil achievement targets, including minority ethnic pupils;
  - results of the monitoring cycle on teaching and learning and including any external monitoring.
- **Curriculum**
  - reviews of statutory and other policies and schemes of work;
  - review of intervention strategies, e.g. Additional Literacy Strategy.
- **Staffing**
  - staffing changes, different organisation or responsibilities;
  - staff development and its contribution to the achievement of objectives;
  - progress of the performance management cycle.
- **Resources**
  - condition and suitability of resources, outside and inside;
  - resourcing needs in order to meet curricular objectives;
  - health and safety with equipment;
  - evaluating the impact of new resources.
- **Pupils**
  - achievements, baseline entry;
  - visits and journeys;
  - admissions, class organisation and projected numbers, mobility trends;
  - extra curricular activities;
  - discipline and behaviour, exclusions and racial incidents.
- **Finances**
  - progress of budget, explain variations;
  - recommendations of any adjustments, variations;
  - unofficial funds, e.g. (PTA) parent teacher association, school fund;
  - progress towards any bidding for funds;
  - comparative data on ethnicity and free school meals.
- **Premises**
  - improvement issues relating to school improvement plan;
  - maintenance issues;
  - health and safety, e.g. accident trends and reviews of risk assessments and fire drills;
  - progress with asset management plans.

### SPECIFIC TERMLY ISSUES

- **Autumn**
  - scrutinize national assessments and other data for trends, i.e. baseline, PANDA, SATS, GCSE, 'A' level;
  - provide information for governors to set new targets;
  - leavers' destinations;
  - previous year's attendance figures and information ensuring registers are kept up to date;
  - staffing structure for the year;
  - provide information asked for by the governing body including that needed for annual report to parents (if required), school prospectus and school profile

- **Spring**
  - report on final budget spending, explain variations;
  - priorities for new budget, linked to school improvement plan;
  - long term trend in numbers, implications for future budgets and staffing;
  - KS3/4 options
  - KS4/5 choices
- **Summer**
  - SATs results just in, initial reaction;
  - non statutory test results available for scrutiny;
  - final agreement of new school improvement plan;
  - autumn classes and staff organisation planned;
  - some collating of information to enable governors to start preparing the school profile.

#### **AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR**

- home school links
- community links, use of premises
- delivery of SEN and code of practice, linked to inclusion
- visitors to the school
- delivery of RE and collective worship
- review the policy for the secular curriculum for the school
- any issues concerning security
- arrangements for pupils with disabilities
- review of risk assessments
- child protection procedures and information about designated teacher



- prepare information from the school's self-evaluation, this could include school self review form
- progress on extended school provision/ community and learning partnerships

#### **WHEN THEY OCCUR**

- staff appointments, changes
- formal complaints
- reviewing policies, (see Annex 3 of the 'Guide to the Law for School Governors' for a full list of statutory policies)
- exclusions
- celebrations
- preparations for inspection
- information on the procedures for changing school sessions

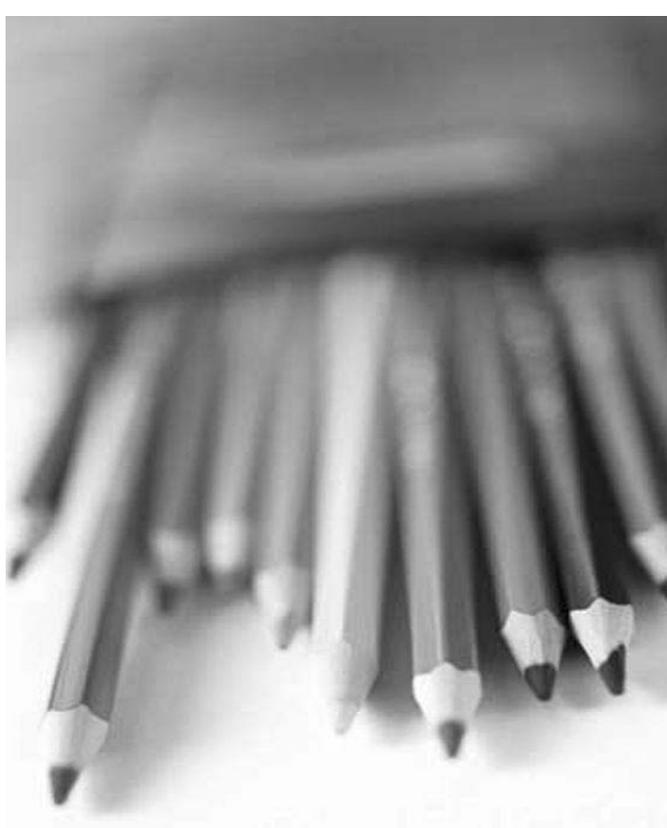
Both quantifiable and less readily quantifiable indicators can be used to monitor how the school is currently performing.

Examples of quantifiable indicators that could be provided are:

- National Curriculum assessments and tests and/or secondary examination results;
- SCAA tests or standardised results;
- pupil attendance;
- pupil exclusions;
- pupil involvement in extra-curricular activities;
- number of applications for admission;
- destinations of school leavers.

Less readily quantifiable indicators are:

- pupil behaviour and attitudes;
  - views and involvement of parents and the community.
- a) To monitor and compare the effectiveness of different parts of the school the headteacher can provide information on the performance of different year groups, different departments in secondary schools and different curriculum areas in primary schools. This could include involvement of curriculum co-ordinators.
- b) To monitor and compare the performance of different groups of pupils the headteacher can provide information on the performance of different types of pupils e.g. gender, level of ability, those to whom the special educational needs code of practice applies, minority ethnic pupils and pupils whose first language is not English. Information could also be supplied to enable a comparison of different groups of pupils in



particular subjects e.g. the results of boys and girls in English.

- c) To monitor how the school's current achievement compares with its previous achievement the headteacher can provide information on performance to enable measurement of consistency over time. This could be produced in graphical form to enable clear interpretations to be made.
- d) To monitor the school's achievements compared with that of other schools the headteacher can provide information on the school's performance compared with that of other schools locally and nationally and schools with similar characteristics.
- e) To monitor the attainment of pupils at the end of a course or period of time at school compared to their knowledge, understanding and skills upon entering the stage of education the headteacher can provide information to illustrate 'value added' e.g. from baseline assessment to year 2 reading scores, year 2 to year 4, year 4 to year 6 or from Cognitive Ability Test Scores (CATS) on entry to secondary school to YELLIS value added data in Years 10 and 11 or contextual value added (CVA) data from the PANDA.

Example of a  
Headteacher's report

BIDBURY JUNIOR SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S  
REPORT TO GOVERNORS  
CONTENTS

**CORE HEADINGS:**

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

- the planning process
- with actions
- progress towards targets
- progress/comments on vision

**PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS**

- outcomes of data analysis
- outcomes of monitoring
- assessment weeks
- comparative data
- SATs results
- suggestions for Governors' monitoring

**PROGRESS WITH OFSTED ACTION PLAN**

- progress with action
- evaluations of impact
- reports for Annual Report/ School Profile

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- celebrate special work or other achievements of pupils or staff, including past members

**CURRENT SCHOOL ISSUES**

- staffing
- professional development
- curriculum
- pupils
- budgets
- building and grounds
- SEN
- health and safety
- decisions which governors may have to make



**FUTURE ISSUES**

- new Government initiatives
- county initiatives

**ANNEX - CONTENTS TO VARY ACCORDING  
TO ANNUAL CYCLE**

- Number on Roll (NOR) - Autumn - year on year trend
- - Spring - projected numbers
- staffing and responsibility points
- attendance
- absence
- exclusions
- behaviour
- fire drill
- staff meetings and other training
- liaison
- leavers' destinations
- community links and visitors
- policies - monitoring and review
- calendar of events

The following extracts are from the headteacher's Spring 2001 report and include sections on School Improvement, Performance and Standards, Progress with OFSTED A.P. (Action Plan) and Future Issues.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Spring term Headteacher's Report to Governors. This has been a very busy term for us all as I'm sure you will have gathered from the fortnightly newsletters. We have made several staff appointments but, along with many other schools, we have had to contend with some staff absence and the resulting difficulty of finding supply cover at short notice. Building work and report writing have both contributed to stress levels, as has the behaviour of some pupils and, to a certain extent, the fact that I am out of school two days a week to carry out my role of associate HIAS attached inspector. In spite of these difficulties we continue to function well and the school continues to improve thanks to the hard work and determination of all staff.

## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS**

#### **TARGET ONE:**

To develop an enthusiasm for learning and a desire for excellence

- Strategies/actions are being carried out according to the relevant time-scales.
- New individual and challenging targets have been set for pupils in maths, English and for behaviour.
- Strategies for assessment of foundation subjects have been put in place.
- Children are encouraged to self-assess where appropriate.
- Special times have been planned - Book Day and Science Week.
- A celebration or "Happy Book" records good work or special achievements or compliments about the school

#### **TARGET TWO:**

To continue to improve the quality of teaching

- The Teaching Policy has been rewritten.
- Lesson observations are taking place.
- A review of the Learning Policy will include work on understanding what is meant by pace.

TARGETS 3, 4, AND 5: - see Progress on Ofsted Action Plan

### **PROGRESS WITH OTHER ACTION PLANS**

**SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT PLANS:** Subject managers reviewed their plans in discussion with either me or Kathryn and are currently producing new ones which will include costs for the new financial year.

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE:** All the actions in this plan have been completed with the exception of the Induction Policy and Supply charter.

The review of policies takes place according to a rolling programme.

An initial assessment of the school's progress towards achieving the Investors in People award took place on Tuesday 13th March. The resulting written report was very positive but indicated an area that needs more attention before the award can be achieved. We hope to have these developments in place before the assessor's final visit in July.

**CHILDREN:** The role of Young School Governors and the opportunities for playground activities continue to be developed. More competitive sport and more extra-curricular activities still have not been achieved, though we do have a Science and Technology Club, a Computer Club and a choir running at the moment. We are grateful to Kim, Nicola, Linda, Ian and Kathryn for giving up their time.

**PARENTS AND COMMUNITY:** Bidbury has been featured in the local news, a school calendar is being produced, the Christmas Production took place in the new Bedhampton Social Hall and the "Friends" continue to work hard and with great success to support us with their fund-raising activities.

**BUILDING AND ENVIRONMENT:** The south wing toilet refurbishment is now complete much to the relief of staff and pupils - the whole area is much more pleasant to work in! After Easter plans will be drawn up to make the alterations to the cloakroom and games store in that area. Plans are being made to convert the spare classroom into an ICT suite. Work has started on making a plan for the development of the grounds.

## **PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS**

February assessment week took place; the children's test scores have been entered on the class "brick" sheets and are now being analysed by Kathryn. We will have a clear idea of how much we are on track for achieving our 2001 targets once this analysis is complete.

Annual reports to parents went out on Friday 23rd March. The reports record progress for each child in maths, English, science and behaviour, with new targets having been set. The reports will be discussed with parents on Parents' Evenings the following week.

Monitoring of Writing Portfolios took place during the first part of the Spring term. Improvements to handwriting, presentation and layout of work were evident with there being a clear sense of progress, both for individual children as they have moved up the school and across the school generally from Year 3 to Year 6.

Lesson observations are being carried out at the moment; the focus is aspects of classroom management and pupil behaviour from the new Teaching Policy.

## PROGRESS WITH OFSTED ACTION PLAN

### TARGET THREE:

To raise standards in maths, so that by 2001 70% of Year 6 pupils achieve Level 4+ in maths.

- All the actions for sub-objective one have been carried out or are ongoing. Grouping pupils and ensuring equality of opportunity for access to teacher time/input are strategies which we need to keep coming back to.
- All the actions for sub-objective two have been carried out or are ongoing. Establishing firmer ICT links will be the subject for part of a maths Inset day next term.
- All the actions in sub-objective three are being carried out and are ongoing. New pupil targets have been set to be achieved by the end of the summer term.

### TARGET FOUR:

To raise standards of Literacy so that by the year 2001, 65% of Year 6 pupils will achieve Level 4+ in English SATS.

- All the actions for sub-objective one have been carried out or are ongoing. The inset day next term for English will be an opportunity to establish progress and assess further areas for development on an individual and whole staff basis.



- All the actions for sub-objective two have been carried out or are ongoing. More emphasis needs to be given to the use of frameworks for writing and the application of writing skills in all subjects.
- Sub-objective three needs more attention, though we do ensure boys' books are featured in Literacy hour texts.

### TARGET FIVE:

To challenge able children in their learning,

Actions in both sub-objectives have largely been carried out or are ongoing. The focus now needs to be on providing for able children in areas of the curriculum other than maths and English. This work will be facilitated next year when Kathryn is non-class based.

MARKING: Though not identified as a key issue for action by Ofsted, marking was an area identified as needing some attention. We have reviewed our Marking Policy and there is now consistency in the way children's work is marked. This is monitored through work sampling and classroom observations.

#### FUTURE ISSUES

- Standard Number - Governors need to consider whether the standard number for the school should be reduced from 70 to 60.
- Period of consolidation - We hope that from September we will be able to consolidate the many changes and initiatives that have applied to Key Stage 2 schools in recent years.



ITEM	WHEN?	INCLUDED?
<p><b>1. Monitoring of progress on the school improvement plan and other action plans</b></p> <p>a) progress on priorities of action plans for curriculum targets, (successes and failures), key issues from action plans;</p> <p>b) progress on pupil achievement targets, including minority ethnic pupils;</p> <p>c) results of the monitoring cycle on teaching and learning and including any external monitoring.</p>	Termly	
<p><b>2. Curriculum</b></p> <p>a) reviews of statutory and other policies and schemes of work;</p> <p>b) review of intervention strategies, e.g. Additional Literacy Strategy.</p>	Termly	
<p><b>3. Staffing</b></p> <p>a) staffing changes, different organisation or responsibilities;</p> <p>b) staff development and its contribution to the achievement of objectives;</p> <p>c) progress of the performance management cycle.</p>	Termly	
<p><b>4. Resources</b></p> <p>a) condition and suitability of resources, outside and inside;</p> <p>b) resourcing;</p> <p>c) health and safety with equipment; evaluating the impact of new resources.</p>	Termly	
<p><b>5. Pupils</b></p> <p>a) achievements, baseline entry;</p> <p>b) visits and journeys;</p> <p>c) admissions, class organisations and projected numbers, mobility trends;</p> <p>d) extra curricular activities;</p> <p>e) discipline and behaviour, exclusions and racial incidents</p>	Termly	

ITEM	WHEN?	INCLUDED?
<b>6. Finances</b> a) progress of budget, explain variations; b) recommendations of any adjustments, virements; c) unofficial funds, e.g. PTA, school fund; d) progress towards any bidding for funds; e) comparative data on ethnicity and free school meals.	Termly	
<b>7. Premises</b> a) improvement issues relating to school improvement plan; b) maintenance issues; c) health and safety, e.g. accident trends and reviews of risk assessments and fire drills; d) progress with asset management plans.	Termly	
8. Scrutinize national assessments and other data for trends, i.e. baseline, PANDA, SATS, GCSE, 'A' level.	Autumn Term	
9. Provide information for governors to set new targets.	Autumn Term	
10. Leavers' destinations.	Autumn Term	
11. Previous year's attendance figures and information ensuring registers are kept up to date.	Autumn Term	
12. Staffing structure for the year.	Autumn Term	
13. Provide information asked for by the governing body including that needed for annual report to parents (if required), school prospectus and school profile.	Autumn Term	
14. Report on final budget spending, explain variations.	Spring Term	
15. Priorities for new budget, linked to school improvement plan.	Spring Term	
16. Long term trend in numbers, implications for future budgets and staffing.	Spring Term	
17. Option choices KS3/5; KS4/5	Spring Term	

ITEM	WHEN?	INCLUDED?
18. SATs results just in, initial reaction.	Summer Term	
19. Non statutory tests results available for scrutiny.	Summer Term	
20. Final agreement of new school improvement plan.	Summer Term	
21. Autumn classes and staff organisation planned.	Summer Term	
22. Some collating of information to enable governors to start preparing the school profile.	Summer Term	
23. Home school links.	Annually	
24. Community links, use of premises.	Annually	
25. Delivery of SEN and code of practice, linked to inclusion.	Annually	
26. Visitors to the school.	Annually	
27. Delivery of RE and collective worship.	Annually	
28. Review the policy for the secular curriculum for the school.	Annually	
29. Any issues concerning security.	Annually	
30. Arrangements for pupils with disabilities.	Annually	
31. Review of risk assessments.	Annually	
32. Child protection procedures and information about designated teacher.	Annually	
33. Prepare information from the school's self-evaluation.	Annually	
34. Staff appointments, changes.	As required	
35. Formal complaints.	As required	
36. Reviewing policies	As required	
37. Exclusions.	As required	
38. Celebrations.	As required	
39. Preparations for inspection.	As required	
40. Information on the procedures for changing school sessions.	As required	

For further information please contact: Communication and Information, Governor Services  
Tel: 01785 278805 <http://education.staffordshire.gov.uk/governors>

If you, or someone you know, would like a copy of this booklet in large print, Braille,  
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**Staffordshire**  
**County Council**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE