

School Governors Role in HR 2024

Tony Lampert
HR Consultant

Introductions

- Name
- Role
- Expectations?



Aims/Outline of this evening....

- HR Role for School Governors
- Key HR Policies
- Key skills and competencies
- Why things go wrong ... and how to prevent them

National
Governors'
Association
recently said
something like ...



- Quality of Teaching is essential ---- but all good organisations require good management and there is considerable anecdotal evidence that this is not done well in schools:
- Lack of understanding of “management HR”
- Failings and weakness in HR Practices and Policies

Governors' Statutory Role – Core functions

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- **Holding executive leaders to account.... and the effective and efficient performance management of staff**
- Overseeing the financial performance

The framework/process ...

Governing Bodies should have Hindsight, Oversight and Foresight when governing the school.

In relation to Human Resources this might mean ?

- Hindsight - of staff data
- Oversight - staff performance and their welfare, and staffing policies
- Foresight - workforce strategy, staff development, culture, and succession planning

Through the above framework, the Governing Body can determine the employment relationship it wants with its employees, its values, and the culture it wishes to promote throughout the school.

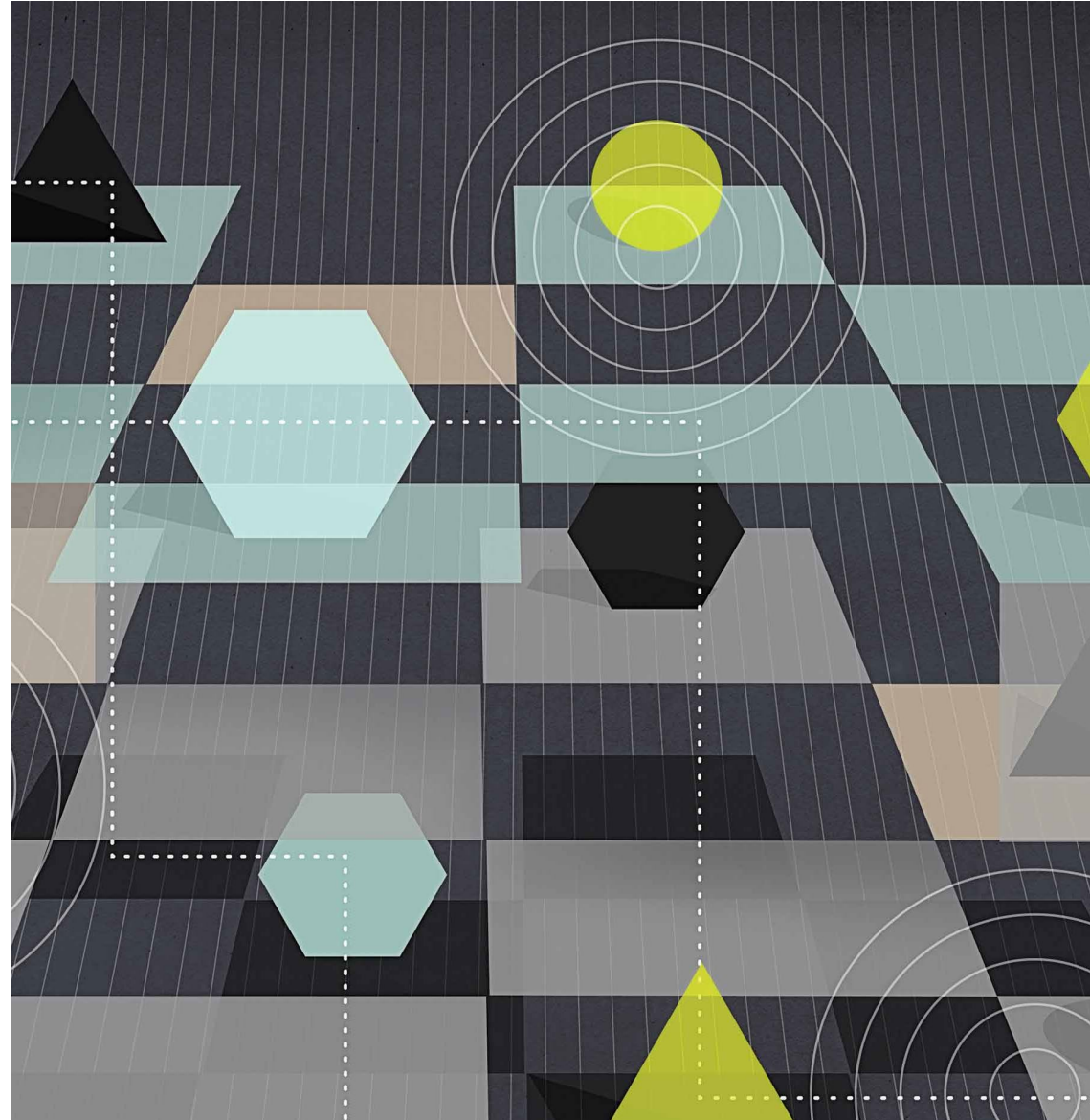


Maintaining School Governance March 2024

[replaces the old 2019 governance
handbook]

Governors' Role is Strategic!

- Ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place
- Bespoke to the school
- If there is a formal role for Governors, it needs to be clearly set out
- Monitor the implementation of policies and procedures



How should Governors discharge their HR role?

- Allocation of task
- Policy development
- Monitor - HR Metrics
- Compliance
- Scrutinise
- Understand role [formal procedures]



Allocate tasks ...

- Staffing Committee
- Safer Recruitment
- Single Central Record
- Formal procedures
- Lead on HR scrutiny
- Lead on Wellbeing
- Contact for Whistleblowing



Some key HR Policies for Schools

- Safer Recruitment
- Managing Discipline, Conduct and Grievance
- Managing capability/absence
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Performance Management/Appraisal
- Wellbeing
- Training and Development
- Pay
- Whistleblowing



Monitor – think about some key HR metrics....

- Turnover/retention rate
- Absence rate/sickness
- Formal Procedures
- Supply/Agency cover
- Diversity/equalities
- Pay
- Staff surveys/wellbeing
- Appraisals
- Impact of policies!



Compliance?

- SCR
- Regulations - Safer Recruitment/Safeguarding allegations/KCSE
- Employment Law
- Health and Safety
- Equalities
- Procedural and practice compliance with policies



Safer Recruitment....

- Get Trained - Accredited Safer Recruitment Training
- Be involved in the key appointments
- Monitor the Safer Recruitment Process in the school
- Are the school values reflected appropriately?
- Don't forget about the ad-hoc "appointments"
- Challenge the recruitment stats!



Single Central Record

- Who checks it?
- How frequent?
- What are you checking?
- How do you record it's been checked?
- Any follow up?



Possible SCR Checklist for Governors?

- Any blank cells?
- Any missing directly employed staff, Governors, or frequent volunteers?
- Any missing groups of Contractors?
- Are Supply/Agency staff listed showing the name of the Agency and date of confirmation of checks?
- Any known “leavers” remaining on the SCR?
- Does everyone have a full name listed? Any obvious name change that has NOT been recorded?
- Is there a valid ID Checked date for everyone on the SCR?
- If you record the “ID Evidence Seen” is there a Birth Certificate seen for all staff starting since September 2021?
- Does everyone have a Job Title or Job Category listed?
- Does everyone have a Start Date recorded?
- Are there any checks missing/pending by the start date?
- Do all qualified Teachers, HLTAs, Nursery Workers have a qualification check date recorded?
- Are there any workers who you know should hold a professional qualification without a qualification check date recorded?
- Do all Teachers [qualified and unqualified] and HLTAs have a Prohibition from Teaching check recorded?
- Are there any staff who are clearly NOT doing Teaching with a Prohibition from Teaching check recorded?
- Does everyone have a DBS checked date recorded?
- Do all directly employed, and Supply, staff have a date recorded for the Childrens Barred List check?
- Can you evidence that all new regular volunteers [since September 2022] have had a volunteer risk assessment?
- Do all the Governors have the Prohibition from Management [Section 128] check date recorded?
- Is there an “Overseas Check” column for all categories of workers?
- Has everyone on the SCR had a “Right to Work in the UK” check?
- Have all new directly employed workers had x2 References taken up [or a missing Risk Assessment completed]?
- For Primary Sector, has a Disqualification under the Childcare Act been completed for all Teachers, Leadership, MTS, Nursery Staff and Breakfast/Afterschool club workers? Have all workers who do not qualify under the Childcare Act been recorded as n/a?
- Has everyone undergone mandatory training and induction?

Formal Procedures

- Understand the procedures and your role in them!
- Allocate roles
- Don't run out of Governors!
- Seek professional advice/support – HR, Legal, LADO...
- Follow the procedures!
- Do NOT allow your position to become compromised.
- Do not avoid your responsibility!
- Settlement Agreements!



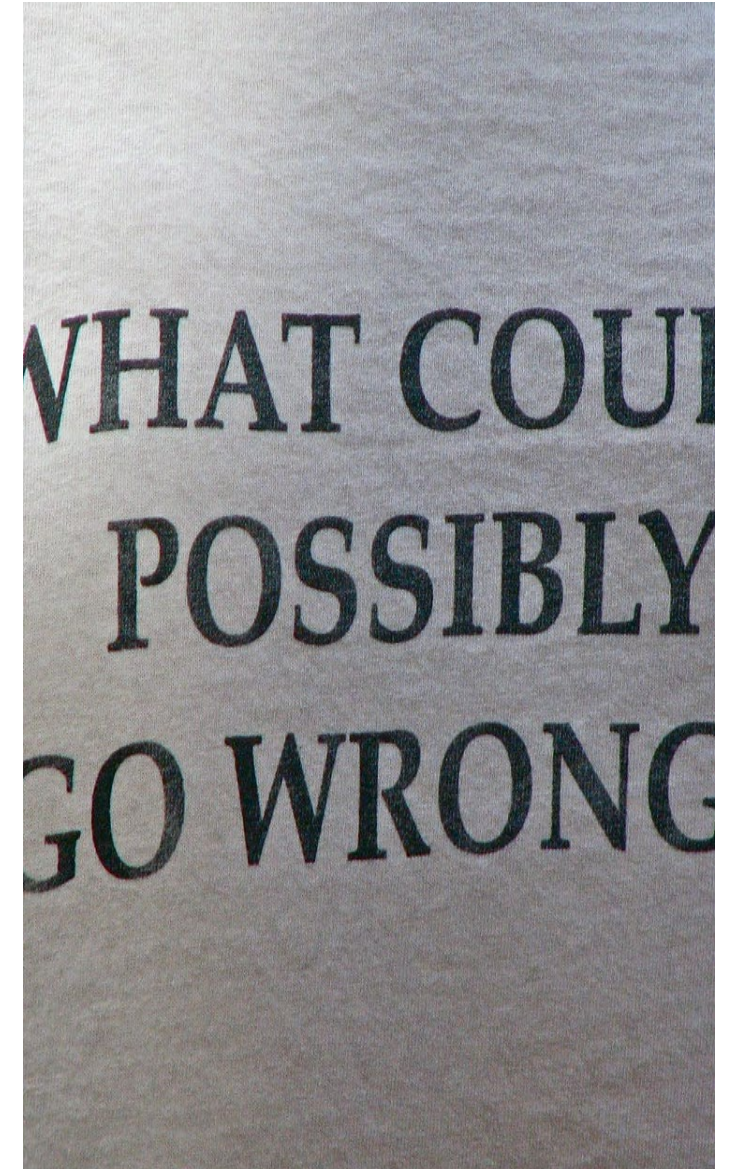
Staff Welfare

- Monitor HR data
- Exit interviews
- Staff satisfaction
- Engage with staff
- Understand the support available
- Support and challenge but don't undermine the Executive Leadership
- Seek professional advice and support
- Trade Union and staff reps



Ways to minimise stuff going wrong in HR...

- Scrutinise – relationship between Strategic and Executive Leaders
 - Ask Questions... what not why!
 - Speak to staff and engage with school
 - Read the reports and data
- Succession planning within Governing Body
- Get timely advice and professional support if required
 - Audits
 - External validation
 - Reviews
 - HR Support/mentoring in roles
 - Training in HR stuff.. Safer recruitment, disciplinary/grievance
- Follow the advice



Ask yourself.....

1. Does the School have the correct HR policies in place, are they fit for purpose (comply with legislation), and are they regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date?
2. How is time allocated to the hindsight, oversight, and foresight functions, and is that time sufficient? Could these functions be delegated?
3. Does the Governing Body need or have HR expertise on it?
4. Does the Governing Body have access to and know when to access independent specialist advice?
5. Does the Governing Body have the correct structures, such as committees and panels, in place to fulfil its responsibilities? Are the processes and those involved in these processes clearly laid out?
6. What benchmarking does the governing Body consider?
7. What is the School's relationship with Trade Unions/staff reps?
8. How does the Governing Body take account of the staff voice and how does it evidence the impact of such in its decision-making processes?



