



Link Governor Toolkit

**FORMING LIVES READY
TO FACE THE FUTURE**



Safeguarding	2
Inclusion	3
Curriculum and Teaching	4
Achievement	5
Attendance and Behaviour	6
Personal Development and Wellbeing	7
Early Years	7
Post 16 Provision	8
Leadership and Governance	9

Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Safeguarding	
• How leaders ensure there is an open and positive safeguarding culture and understanding of contextual safeguarding. • How leaders, staff and governors know, understand and carry out their safeguarding responsibilities - KCSIE, Working together to safeguard pupils. • A vigilant safeguarding culture supported by ongoing staff training and awareness of key risks. • Clear safeguarding roles, effective logging of concerns and appropriate escalation when required. • Effective multi-agency working with timely information sharing and secure record keeping. • Pupil voices are heard and they are taught how to stay safe including online and who to go to for support. • Transparent safeguarding policies and rigorous safer recruitment, including regular SCR checks. • Strong pupil support through curriculum, visible supervision, mental health services and anti-bullying measures. • Regular monitoring, audits / review, supervision to ensure continuous improvement in safeguarding practice. • How leaders fulfil their responsibilities - child on child violence, harmful sexual behaviours, domestic abuse, bullying.	How do you ensure there is an open and positive safeguarding culture in school and how do staff understand safeguarding risks that occur beyond the school environment? How do you know that safeguarding is understood as everyone's responsibility across all staff groups, including non-teaching staff? When is the training? How do you know that safeguarding training is keeping staff vigilant and confident in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns? How do you ensure safeguarding concerns are recorded appropriately and escalated quickly when necessary? How do you work effectively with external agencies and how do you ensure information is shared securely and in a timely way to safeguard pupils? What does pupil voice say about how pupils feel listened to, understand how to stay safe, including online and know who they can go to if they need help? How do you assure governors that safeguarding policies and safer recruitment procedures, including regular checks of the Single Central Record are consistently implemented? How do you ensure that the curriculum, pastoral support, supervision and anti-bullying measures effectively support pupils' safety and wellbeing? How do you monitor and review safeguarding practice to identify areas for improvement and strengthen safeguarding arrangements over time? How do you ensure that issues such as child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, domestic abuse and bullying are identified early and managed effectively?

Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Inclusion	
Ofsted will look at inclusive practices within the school. How have leaders created an inclusive school for all pupils? Vulnerable pupils (DA, SEND, Children's social care or previously social care, other) • How vulnerable pupils' and their needs are identified and assessed. • How leaders reduce barriers through support. • How leaders monitor pupils' progress and assess the impact of intervention and support. • How leaders make sure that alternative provision is safe and decisions are made in the best interests of pupils. SEND • How well leaders and staff understand and use the graduated approach. • Staff training on the graduated approach. • How leaders link with local area partnerships, families, external agencies. Pupil premium and supporting disadvantaged • The impact of the pupil premium strategy and funding.	Which groups of pupils are most vulnerable and what evidence do you use to understand their needs? How do you identify vulnerable pupils and assess their needs effectively? How do you reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing for vulnerable pupils? What support do they receive? How do you monitor the progress of vulnerable pupils and evaluate whether interventions and support are having a positive impact? How many pupils are currently in AP? What checks do you have in place to ensure safety is secure and how is the AP decision made in the best interests of pupils? SEND How do you and the staff ensure the graduated approach for SEND is understood and applied across the school? How do you ensure staff are appropriately trained and confident in using the graduated approach to support pupils with SEND? How do you work with families, local area partnerships and external agencies to ensure pupils with additional needs receive support? Pupil premium How do you evaluate the impact of pupil premium funding in improving outcomes and removing barriers for disadvantaged pupils? What are the main barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils and how has the Pupil Premium strategy been designed to address them? How is Pupil Premium funding being spent to impact pupils' outcomes? How do you monitor the impact of your strategies throughout the year? How do you demonstrate that Pupil Premium spending provides value for money and leads to sustained improvement for disadvantaged pupils?

Social care (or previously known) • How leaders collaborate with the Virtual School. • How pupils who are known (or previously known) to children's social care are supported.	Social care How do you work collaboratively with the Virtual School to support pupils who are looked after or previously looked after? How do you ensure pupils who are known, or previously known, to children's social care receive appropriate support?
Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Curriculum and Teaching	
• Pupils secure strong foundations needed to achieve across the curriculum - reading, oracy, spelling, maths. • Leaders' understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching, knowing barriers and putting actions in place to improve. • Evidence informed understanding of effective teaching. • How leaders construct and sequence a broad and ambitious curriculum. • How leaders ensure implementation of the curriculum is effective including how leaders make sure that teachers have the subject knowledge that they need to implement the curriculum. • How leaders ensure staff know the needs of pupils, use reasonable adjustments and adapt teaching to accelerate learning. • How leaders assessment approaches are effective. • How leaders ensure pupils receive teaching they need to catch up and keep up in foundational knowledge. • How leaders prioritise foundational knowledge in secondary for those who have not yet secured and how they ensure staff have training to deliver.	How do you ensure pupils develop strong foundations in reading, oracy, spelling and maths so they can achieve successfully across the curriculum? How do you evaluate the quality of the curriculum and teaching, identify barriers to learning? What actions are in place to secure improvement? How do you ensure that approaches to teaching are informed by educational research and evidence of effective practice? How have you designed and sequenced a broad and ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to build knowledge and skills over time? How do you ensure the curriculum is implemented effectively, including making sure teachers have strong subject knowledge to deliver it well? How do you ensure staff understand pupils' individual needs and make appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments to accelerate learning? How do you know that assessment approaches are effective in identifying what pupils know, remember and can do? How do you ensure pupils receive timely support to catch up and keep up where gaps in foundational knowledge are identified? What phonics programme are you using? What is the impact? (Secondary schools) How do you ensure staff are trained to deliver this effectively?

	Sports and PE Premium (primary) What is your strategy for using the Primary PE and Sport Premium and how does it improve pupils' physical education? How has the funding increased participation in sport and physical activity, particularly for disadvantaged or less active pupils? How is Sport Premium improving the quality of PE teaching and the range of sports and opportunities offered? What measurable impact is the funding having on pupils' skills, fitness, and engagement in healthy lifestyles? How are improvements sustained beyond the funding, and how do you ensure the spending provides value for money?
Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Achievement	
• How leaders promote achievement across the curriculum. • How well pupils make progress in foundational knowledge and across the curriculum in all year groups. • Pupils' achievement in national tests including all groups and particularly DA, SEND, LAC, PLAC / social care - gaps should be closing. • How pupils are well prepared for their next steps - education, employment or training.	How do you promote high levels of achievement for all pupils across the curriculum? What is current progress for pupils in your school? Are there any contextual issues we need to consider? Can you talk me through the main take away points from the IDSR and are these reflected on the school improvement plan? Which subjects are underperforming and what are the actions in place to address? Are they making a difference? Which groups of pupils are underperforming and what are the actions in place to address? Are they making a difference and are gaps closing? How do you ensure pupils are well prepared for their next stages of education, employment or training? How do you know that pupils are ready for the next stage of education with the appropriate knowledge and skills that they need?

Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Attendance and Behaviour	
Behaviour • How leaders and staff have high expectations and create a calm, orderly, respectful and positive environment including behaviour at social times where staff know, support and care for pupils. • Effectiveness of leaders' analysis of patterns or trends so issues are identified and actions in place to address. • Effectiveness of leaders' work, to ensure that bullying is not tolerated. • Pupils' attitudes to learning - any form of discrimination, harassment, abuse or violence – online or offline – is dealt with quickly, consistently and effectively. • How well leaders and staff understand and apply the school's behaviour policies, rules and routines including use of reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND. • Suspensions and permanent exclusions are used appropriately. Attendance • Leaders have strategies in place to any issues. • Effectiveness of leaders' analysis of patterns or trends including groups, identification of barriers, actions in place to address and impact of these. • How well leaders are securing improvements where attendance is low and/or persistent absence is high, either overall or for groups of pupils. Data shows an improving trend.	Behaviour How do you promote high expectations and create a calm, orderly and respectful environment, including during social times, where pupils feel known, supported and cared for? Talk me through the suspension and permanent exclusion data. What is your current analysis of behaviour patterns and trends? What are they and what actions are in place to address? Impact? How do you ensure that bullying / harassment is not tolerated and that consistently? How many serious incidents are there currently that are logged and what are you doing to keep pupils safe? How do you ensure that staff understand and apply behaviour policies, routines and expectations, including making reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND? Attendance What strategies have you put in place to improve attendance and address any identified concerns? Talk me through the attendance data. What is your current analysis of attendance patterns and trends, including for different pupil groups, identify barriers to attendance and evaluate the impact of actions taken? How are you securing sustained improvements where attendance or persistent absence is a concern and how does the data demonstrate improving trends over time? Talk me through your procedure for punctuality? What does the data tell you?

Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Personal Development and Wellbeing	
• The personal development programme (including how it supports DA pupils) is coherent and appropriate. • Leaders ensure relationships education / relationships and sex and health education (RSHE) is appropriate - online and offline. • How leaders ensure pupils' character and pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is secure. • Leaders ensure staff have knowledge to teach PSHE/RSHE - mental health and wellbeing, online safety, PSHE, British values, teaching of protected characteristics. • In secondary schools, how leaders ensure pupils receive effective CEIAG and meet Gatsby benchmarks including the requirements of the Provider Access Legislation (PAL). • The school's wider offer and range of experiences to develop their talents and interests - extra curricular activities, trips, visits. • Leaders effectiveness to track participation in the wider offer so that pupils including DA, SEND, PLAC/LAC, social care and others can participate appropriately. • Effective pastoral support meets needs. • Leaders effectiveness in developing pupils' knowledge to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.	Talk me through your personal development programme and what you cover across the year groups and why. How do you ensure relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education are delivered appropriately and prepare pupils to stay safe both online and offline? How do you ensure pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values? How do you ensure staff have the knowledge and confidence to teach PSHE and RSHE effectively, including mental health and wellbeing, online safety and protected characteristics? (In secondary schools) Talk me through the careers programme and how you are meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks and Provider Access Legislation requirements. What range of enrichment opportunities, including extracurricular activities, trips and wider experiences do you have in place? How do you track participation in the wider offer to ensure disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and those who are looked after or known to social care are able to participate fully? Can you talk me through any data?
Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Early Years	
• Leaders and staff accurately identify children's starting points and use this information to design a curriculum that addresses gaps in knowledge. • Teaching is adapted effectively so that gaps are tackled early. • Leaders ensure there is effective communication between Early Years and Year 1 staff, with clear information shared about children's attainment and any gaps in learning.	How do you accurately assess children's starting points on entry? How is this information used to shape the Early Years curriculum and address gaps? How do you ensure these assessments are reliable and consistent? How do Early Years and Year 1 staff share information about children's attainment and needs?

• Transition arrangements support continuity in learning, so that pupils build securely on what they already know. • Children, including disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, and those known to social care, achieve well from their starting points. • There is a strong and consistent focus on developing children's vocabulary and communication skills. • In Reception, children are systematically taught phonics and apply this knowledge to early reading. • By the end of Reception, most children read accurately and with increasing fluency. • Staff provide effectively for children's personal, social and emotional development. • Children feel safe, secure, and happy, and are well supported to develop confidence and independence. • Children develop appropriate knowledge and skills across all 7 areas of learning, in line with their age and stage of development. • The curriculum is broad, balanced and well sequenced, supporting all-round development. • Children are well prepared to achieve a good level of development (GLD) by the end of Reception. • The proportion achieving GLD is broadly in line with national averages, with a clear focus on continued improvement.	How well are disadvantaged children, those with SEND, and those known to social care achieving from their starting points? Where gaps exist between groups, what actions are being taken? How is vocabulary development prioritised across the Early Years curriculum? How do you support children with weaker communication and language skills? How do you ensure children apply phonics to reading? What proportion of children are reading accurately and fluently by the end of Reception? How do you ensure children feel safe, secure and happy in Early Years? How do you support children with additional emotional or social needs? How do you ensure children develop knowledge and skills across all 7 areas of learning? What proportion of children achieve a good level of development, and how does this compare nationally? Which groups are less likely to achieve GLD, and why?
Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Post 16 Provision	
• Leaders' understanding of the quality and effectiveness of the 16-19 study programmes and how it has been designed and adapted to meet students' needs. • How the curriculum is sequenced and implemented across year groups and any adaptations for DA, SEND, P LAC/LAC, social care and others. • How well students achieve in national tests and examinations in comparison to national averages for attainment and progress. • How leaders prepare students for their next stage of education,	Talk me through the 16–19 study programme. How do you ensure students are on the right courses / pathways to meet the needs of all students? How do you support disadvantaged students, students with SEND and those who are looked after or known to social care in guiding them in their pathways? examinations and national assessments compared with national attainment and progress outcomes? Which subjects are strongest in school? Which ones are underperforming? What actions are

employment or training including CEIAG and support for DA, SEND, LAC/PLAC, social care and others. • Leaders knowledge of destination data so support can be given to all students so they go on to destinations that meet their needs and aspirations. • Leaders ensure there is a range of wider opportunities and non-qualification activities that students have access to and participate in.	effective careers guidance and targeted support for vulnerable groups? Talk me through your destination data. How do you use the data to support students' next steps and ensure all students move on to appropriate and aspirational destinations? What non-qualifications are on offer in the 6th form? What are participation rates?
Key Points from the Evaluation Areas	Questions for Governors to Use
Leadership and Governance	
• Leaders understand the school's strengths, have identified and prioritised actions for improvement. • Governors provide support and challenge and ensure vision, ethos and strategic direction is clear. Leaders ensure governors and staff feel valued and involved in the strategic direction of the school. • Leaders and governors act in the best interests of pupils including DA, SEND, PLAC/ LAC, social care and others. • Leaders have high expectations on what pupils can achieve. • Leaders ensure staff's wellbeing and workload are manageable. • Leaders have ensured all staff have access to a professional learning and expertise programme which is evidence informed. • Leaders work effectively with parents, professionals and other relevant local communities. • Admissions arrangements adhere to the Admissions Code.	What are the strengths and areas for development in school? What actions are in place to address? Impact? How do you ensure staff feel valued and meaningfully involved in shaping the strategic direction of the school? How do you promote and maintain high expectations with staff for what all pupils can achieve? What is staff wellbeing and morale currently? What is in place to support staff wellbeing and workload so it remains manageable? What professional development is in place that can strengthen expertise across the school? How do you work effectively with parents, external professionals and the local community to support pupils' education?



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