

## News from the Leadership & Governance Team:

### January 2011: Integrating the work of the IP and the Governing Body



**Can you please help us to keep all governors informed by cascading newsletters or directing them to the governor pages on the county council website.**

Don't forget to make full use of the hyperlinks within the newsletter to access more information. This newsletter and all other communications from the Leadership & Governance team are available to read and download on the school governors pages on the Northamptonshire County Council website: [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/schoolgovernors](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/schoolgovernors) if you need any help or advice please contact us on 01604 655087 or e-mail: [governors@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:governors@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

#### Overview

The Improvement Partner (IP) visit scheduled for this term will take place as planned. It is essential that at least one member of your governing body attends the spring meeting your IP will hold with your head teacher.

It is vital that you feel equipped with the knowledge of the main challenges facing your school and to have sufficient understanding of the objectives of the head teacher, to enable you to effectively undertake their Performance Management review in the autumn term.

#### The role of the Governing Body

- To set the strategic direction of the school, taking forward priorities for improvement
- To ensure the school meets its statutory duties
- To understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school through self-evaluation
- To hold the head teacher to account, providing effective support and challenge, so that weaknesses are tackled decisively
- Ofsted judge 51% of Northamptonshire's governing bodies to be good or better

## **The role of the Improvement Partner (IP)**

- To provide professional challenge to schools by acting as a critical professional partner
- To evaluate the school's leadership and governance in its ability and accuracy in evaluating the school's performance
- To evaluate the school's ability and accuracy in identifying its priorities for improvement and to plan effective change
- To provide a copy of the School Performance Review and Progress (SPRPR) to the head teacher, chair of governors and the local authority every visit
- Advise the delegated governors on head teacher Performance Management

## **What governors need to know**

- What information is provided by the IP that enables the governing body to be more effective in carrying out its responsibilities, particularly in relation to support and challenge, holding the head teacher to account?

## **The governing body is responsible for**

- Discussing with the head teacher the SPRPR in a governing body meeting, with the clerk capturing appropriate challenge by governors (these minutes can be viewed as evidence by Ofsted)
- Governors representatives attending the spring IP meeting, where the IP will model challenge to the school leadership to assist the governors to be effective in their role
- Understanding the main judgments in the school's self-evaluation (*effective support*)

- Understand the links between those judgments and the priorities for improvement (*effective support*)
- Monitoring the progress against those priorities and measuring impact (*data needed for challenge*)
- Holding the head teacher to account as a critical friend (*effective challenge*)

## **Preparation for the spring IP visit**

- Review evidence/data produced by the school in advance of the meeting
- Formulate questions to ask about progress towards targets and priorities

## **Questions you may be asked by the IP**

- What contribution does the governing body think it has made to improving provision, especially teaching and outcomes for pupils?
- To what extent is the governing body involved in the school processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning?
- What are the main barriers to learning and what action has been taken to overcome them? How successful have these actions been?
- How do governors monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school improvement plan?
- Can governors give examples of how they have supported and challenged the school?

## **The governing body is also responsible for Head teacher Performance Management**

- Review the Performance Management policy
- Appoint, train and prepare delegated governors



- Meet with the IP to discuss the head teacher's performance and objectives for the coming year
- Review the head teacher's performance and set objectives
- Consider, how as governors, are you effectively carrying out this role?

### **Governor Training in Performance Management**

- In the new governor training package that will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April, there will be Performance Management training sessions. These will be advertised in the training section of the governor's web pages

