



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

## **Governing Body Skills Audit**

### **‘thinking’ not ‘doing’**

#### **Introduction**

This audit is a useful way of assessing the skills, knowledge and experience of your governing body. We use the results of the skills audit to help identify any skills and knowledge they still need to deliver their functions – particularly their core functions – effectively. **No individual is going to have all the skills listed in the audit.** The governing body is a team, and the purpose of the audit is to ensure that each of the skills below are covered by at least one of the governors around the table.. If there are any gaps, these can be filled when recruiting new governors or training existing governors. The way in which this exercise is introduced is crucial – the intention is to enable all members of the governing body to set out their skills and experience whatever their backgrounds, and make clear that the essential and desirable skills for governance can be acquired through a range of life experiences. As such, the experience and skills below may come from either governors’ professional or personal lives.

When considering the skills listed, it is important to understand that governance is a ‘thinking’ not a ‘doing’ role. This means that the skills and knowledge sought are those which enable governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have focussed discussions which create robust accountability for school leaders. For example, a governor might work in the construction industry, but it would not be appropriate for him/her to carry out a health and safety check at the school. Similarly, a lawyer should not be asked to give free legal advice. Governance is a strategic role and governors must not be tempted to do the staff’s job: management must be left to the school leadership team.

In Brighton & Hove we also recognise the need to work towards ensuring our governing bodies reflect the diversity of our community and whilst any individual cannot speak for any particular community they may bring to a governors’ meeting some knowledge and expertise that may not have been considered by a less diverse group. A diverse governing body will also provide positive role models for the children and young people within the educational setting.

<b>Your Name</b>					
<b>Experience, skills and other attributes</b>	Level of experience/skill: rate on scale of <b>1 (none)</b> to <b>5 (extensive)</b> Do remember to think about <b>all</b> the situations in which you may have developed/used these skills and remember that very few governors will score highly in all categories. We are looking for a diversity of skills and backgrounds.				
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Essential for all governors/trustees</b>					
Commitment to improving education for all pupils (groups of pupils are described in the Ofsted School Inspection Framework)					
Ability to work in a professional manner as part of a team and take collective responsibility for decisions					
Willingness to listen (to staff, parents, carers and pupils) and to learn					
Commitment to the school's vision, values and ethos and to the promotion of equality					
Basic literacy and numeracy skills					
Basic IT skills (i.e. word processing and email)					
<b>Understanding and/or experience of governance</b>					
Experience of being a board member in another sector, a governor/trustee in another school, a leader or member of a community or advocacy group					
Experience of chairing a board/ governing body or committee, community group of special interest / voluntary group					
Experience of professional or community leadership					
<b>Vision and strategic planning</b>					
Understanding and experience of strategic planning					
Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively					
Ability to identify problems					
Ability to propose and consider innovative solutions					
Change management (e.g. overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure, changing careers)					
Ability to learn from failure					
Ability to make difficult decisions in the best interests of pupils					
Experience reviewing the impact of new ideas and initiatives					
Understanding of current education policy					
<b>Holding the head to account</b>					
Communication skills, including being able to discuss sensitive issues tactfully					
Ability to analyse data					

Ability to question and challenge					
Experience of project management					
Performance management/appraisal of someone else, management of volunteers					
Experience of being performance managed/appraised yourself including being held to account by a group that you represent					
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Financial oversight</b>					
Financial planning/management (e.g. as part of your job)					
Experience of procurement/purchasing					
Experience of premises and facilities management					
Experience of recruitment and Human resources					
<b>Knowing your school and community</b>					
Knowledge of and links with a group or groups the diverse, wider school community					
Links with local businesses and or community and voluntary sector groups					
Knowledge of the local/regional economy					
Working or volunteering with children and young people (e.g. teaching/social work/youth work/sports coaching/health services for young people faith based organisations)					
Understanding of special educational need and disabilities, social / economic disadvantage (and the needs of other groups of pupils identified in the Ofsted framework and the Equality Act)					