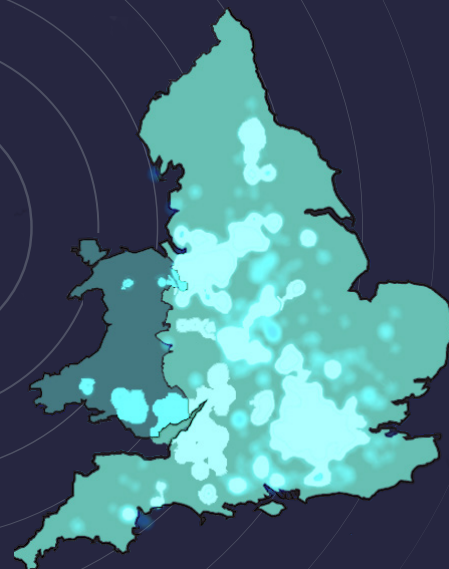


Annual Report 2021-22



We placed **1,962** volunteers
in **1,523** schools
with support to ensure success

10%
increase in
volunteers
appointed

36%
of them are
from ethnic
minority
groups

63%
of them
are under
45

54% are
female and
46% are
male

2,458 eLearning courses completed by governors



Our 3 most popular modules
were:

An introduction to school governance

Wellbeing Governors: children's and young people's mental
health and wellbeing

Driving school improvement



5,140 people attended our training webinars

Our 3 most popular webinars
were:

How do we govern the school curriculum?

Experiences of Ofsted 2021

Safeguarding in 2021



Legal and administrative information

Trustees who served the charitable company during the year

Linda Wilding (Chair)
Ian Armitage
Jane Higgins
Martin Lawrence MBE (resigned: 3rd November 2021)
Anne Punter
David Rowsell
Mark Twigg
Dominic McGonigal
Adrian McLean
Anita Ralli

Company Secretary

Tara Hill

Chief Executive

Hannah Stolton

Registered Office

St Magnus House
3 Lower Thames Street
London
EC3R 6HD

Company Registration number

3879854

Charity Registration Number

1078330

Auditors

AGP
Chartered Accountants
Sutton Quays Business Park
Sutton Weaver
Runcorn
WA7 3EH

Bankers

Lloyds Bank
PO Box 1000
Andover
BX1 1LT

Solicitors

Allen & Overy LLP
One Bishops Square
London

Structure

Governors for Schools is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. The company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents.

Who are we?

Governors for Schools is a national education charity that finds and places skilled people on governing boards across England and Wales. We have over 20 years' experience recruiting high-calibre volunteers from a range of backgrounds, so that they can bring their knowledge to school boards - and make a difference to how schools are run.

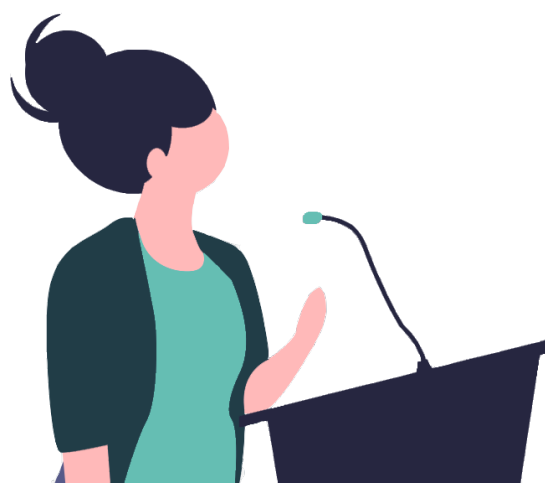
We're part of our volunteers' governor journey and are committed to playing an active role in their development in the role. We believe that placing skilled volunteers from diverse backgrounds on school boards contributes to effective governance. A strong and diverse board enables a school to provide pupils with the best education possible, helping children and young people reach their full potential.

Our mission

We're committed to providing those responsible for appointing governors with the best governor and trustee recruitment service in the sector.

Our vision

We're working to ensure that every school in England and Wales has excellent governance, driving improved educational outcomes for all children and young people.



Our values:

Excellence

- Attention to detail and a desire to continually improve by seeking and using feedback
- A 'can do' attitude and sense of pride in delivering high-quality work at all times

Integrity

- Know when to challenge assumptions and suggest better approaches
- Question actions inconsistent with our values

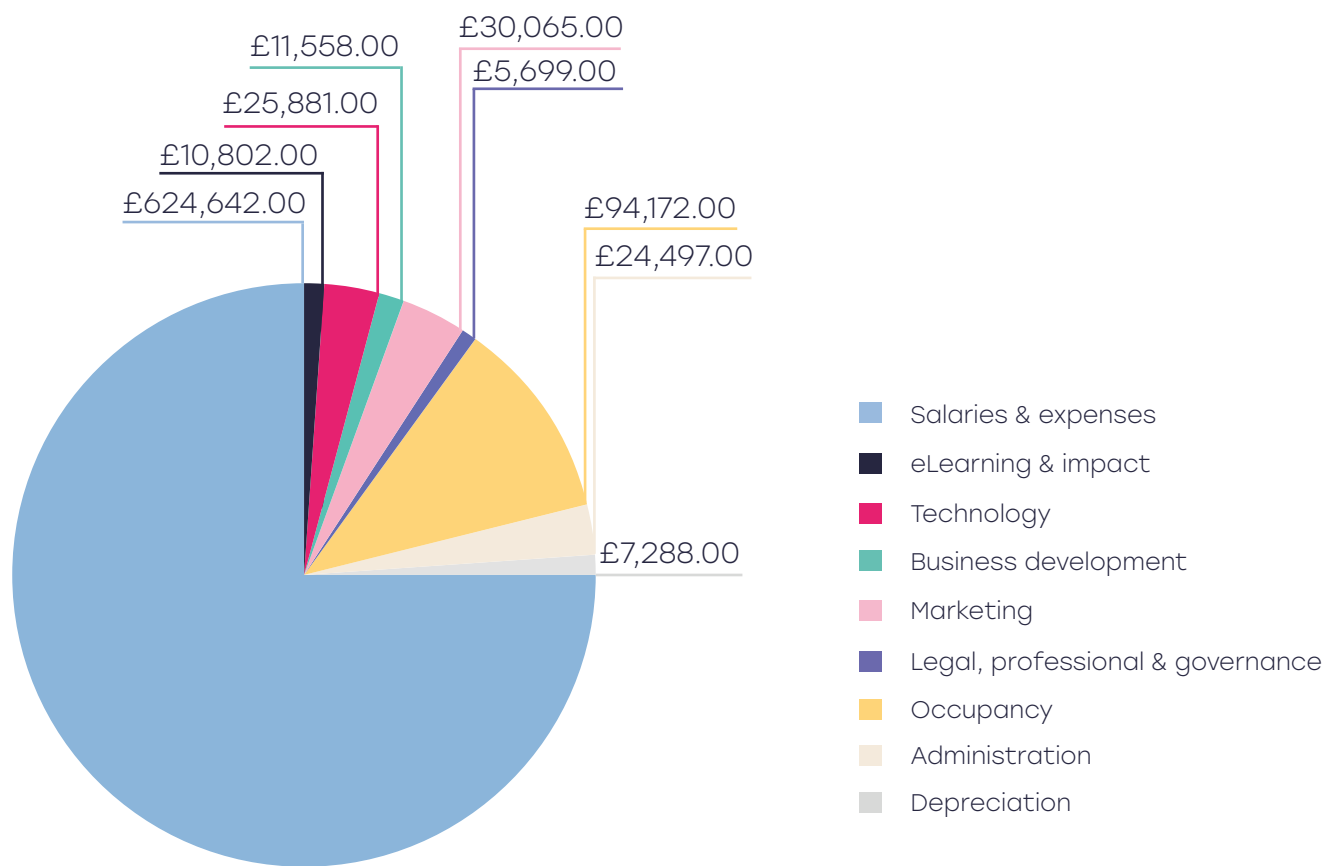
Collaboration

- Work with other organisations to provide the best service possible to all our stakeholders
- Encourage agile, cross-team working to use all available skills and resources

Pioneering

- Take initiative and find creative and effective ways to get things done

Expenditure 2021-22



Why is our work needed?

The past two years have yielded unprecedented challenges for the education system. As schools do their best to support young people in this trying time, the need for skilled and diverse governing boards grows apace.

In March 2022, the Department for Education released a whitepaper stating the need for a stronger and fairer school system offering targeted support for every child. This, combined with the continued drive towards academisation, means that strong governance is vital in supporting schools to deliver such ambitious goals. Governance has a key role to play in ensuring schools are supported in delivering against this vision.

Our links to diverse groups of professionals will play an essential role in ensuring boards recruit the right people to support and challenge school leaders.

Governors for Schools aims to:

- Maintain the number of governors placed and supported in schools to provide effective governance
- Continue to raise our profile within the education and business sectors to support this work
- Share our impact and learning more widely with partners and the sector
- Further broaden the funding base for the charity
- Support our team with effective training and technology enabling them to deliver an excellent service to stakeholders

While it has been another difficult year for schools, we are proud to have supported them by significantly increasing the number of volunteers we have helped appoint. We have also bolstered the number of free training opportunities made available to the governance sector.

Chair of Trustees contribution



Linda Wilding

Chair, Governors for Schools
Member of Learning Partners Academy Trust
Trustee, GEP multi-academy trust, Surrey

The education sector has faced several new challenges this year, with many school leaders describing the autumn term as the toughest to date. Despite such adversity, governing boards have risen to the challenge and continued to deliver outstanding support. I am proud of the role Governors for Schools plays in building and diversifying these boards, reporting a 10% increase in the number of volunteers appointed as governors.

Governing boards across the country have successfully grappled with the “new normal”, consciously tackling the huge challenges associated with “catch up”. It is a testament to the selflessness and resolve of volunteers that we have seen such an increase in appointments. Thank you to all those who have used our service.

Our mission continues to revolve around finding volunteers with a diversity of skills and perspectives, particularly those that school boards currently lack. We are continually delighted by the number of applications both from those under the age of 35 and those from an ethnic minority background.



This year we have significantly developed our learning and development resources for volunteers, producing a range of eLearning modules, webinars, and informative articles. We are pleased to note that these resources have been warmly received and have helped volunteers to thrive in their roles. Furthermore, our first annual conference provided governors with the opportunity to network and learn from a fantastic cohort of speakers.

We continue to make progress against our goal to increase funding from corporate supporters, thereby reducing our reliance on donations and ensuring our long-term sustainability. By working with employers who recognise the ways in which our partnerships benefit both schools and employees, we are reaching a more diverse group of volunteers and engaging those who may not otherwise have considered – or even be aware of – the role.

Our thanks go to all those who support us financially and allow us to continue our work in supporting schools across England and Wales.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the staff at Governors for Schools and the trustees who give their time so freely. We are extremely grateful for the service provided by our trustee Martin Lawrence, who stepped down in November after being involved with the charity for 19 years. Martin provided a wealth of knowledge, experience, and support to the charity, and we wish him a healthy and happy retirement.

Finally, thanks to the thousands of volunteers who give their time to schools supporting the education of pupils. Although your efforts and work often goes unseen, we recognise that your time and expertise encourages schools across England and Wales to be the very best they can be.

CEO report



Hannah Stolton

CEO, Governors for Schools

Chair of governors, Nazeing Primary School, Essex

As an organisation it has been rewarding to see our impact across England and Wales over the past year, having matched volunteers with vacancies and secured 1,962 new appointments across local academy, maintained governor and trustee boards. The positive feedback we've received from both schools and volunteers evidences the vital nature of our service for building strong and diverse boards.

At the beginning of the financial year, we saw record numbers of appointments across all areas. Our North team experienced particularly impressive growth, having made efforts to engage more schools with our service. By the end of the summer term, we had already aided 667 appointments across England and Wales – a fantastic result, albeit one which significantly depleted our pipeline of volunteers. To replenish this pipeline, we spent the following few months reaching out to new partners and volunteer sources.

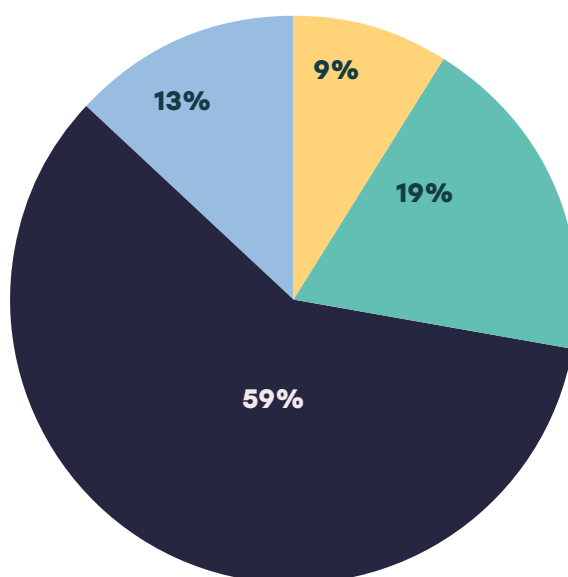
The autumn term saw fewer appointments than we'd have liked, particularly in comparison to 2020, when boards had appointed large numbers after lockdown. Following a period of change within the team, our aim was to be in a good place for the final term of the year. Having established a new setup for our London Team, which was working well, we anticipated many appointments in that area alone. Fortunately, these hopes were realised, and we facilitated the appointment of 319 governors in March – our strongest month in five years.

As a specialist governor recruitment service, we understand the important role we play in boosting diversity amongst the people governing our schools and trusts. Over the year, we maintained a high level of candidate diversity across the demographics that we measured:

age (35% under 35), gender (46% male, 54% female), ethnicity (36% ethnic minority background). For the next financial year, we have implemented systems to review the backgrounds of our volunteers in greater detail.

We continued our programme of monthly support webinars – which are always well-received – with several attracting over 500 attendees on the day and many more watching back afterwards. I'd like to thank Better Governor for having delivered these sessions in such an engaging and informed way. We also continued our regular monthly information session for people interested in learning more about school governance. These continued to prove popular and have been successful in raising awareness and accessibility of the governance role amongst the general population.

Staffing responsibilities



- Executive Team
- Partnership Development
- Recruitment & Placement
- Support & Training of Volunteers

“

The contact with Governors for Schools was superb. Once it had been established what school age group I was most suited to I was very pleased to receive a number of opportunities and pleased that it was not a problem to turn down a school until the right one came along.



Chris Schanshieff,
School governor,
Hitchin Boys' School

Our September conference represented an opportunity to bring together people from across governance to share ideas and best practices. Our 25 sessions were well-attended and covered a great variety of topics. Thanks so much to all those who joined us – it was a pleasure to have the opportunity to showcase the work going on in the sector. We learnt valuable lessons from the week and will be adapting our next conference accordingly.

In September we also launched our new campaign – ‘All pupils, every ambition’. Our aim is to reach new volunteers who want to ensure every pupil is meeting their potential by introducing them to board-level volunteering. Thanks to GovernorHub, The Careers and Enterprise Company, and Allen and Overy for supporting us with this work.

Sadly, a number of team members left us this year. After extensive time working from home, they felt it was time for a new challenge. We were sorry to see them go, but recruited new, experienced team members who quickly acclimatised to their roles. As such, we could continue working towards our goals without too much disruption. As we prepared to move to a remote working model for the future, we were able to recruit staff from a wider pool and are delighted that our new joiners have settled in so well and are already making a significant impact.

Looking ahead to the next year, we are excited to be extending our offer to support trusts with their recruitment needs across all levels of governance, including increasing the number of trustees we place. With the Academy Ambassadors Programme no longer available, we recognise that our support in this area is needed.

We already support many boards in areas of high deprivation, but will be running a pilot project to support their improvement journeys. This will include working with boards to engage parent governors, as well as volunteers from the local community and their school staff.

We're moving to a new Learning Management System, implementing website changes to make sure people can track their training and development easily and effectively. We will also enhance volunteers' awareness of the breadth of support on offer. We will be launching a 12-month induction programme designed to help new governors make a greater impact and gain a better understanding of what the role entails. Coupled with some exciting new partner-led eLearning modules planned for the year, we are supporting governors at every stage.

Finally, as we look to 2022/23, we aim to facilitate the appointment of 2,000 people onto school and trust boards, and thank all of our partners and volunteers who make that possible.

65% of
placements
were in
Primary
schools

12% of
placements
were in Special
schools or Pupil
Referral Units.

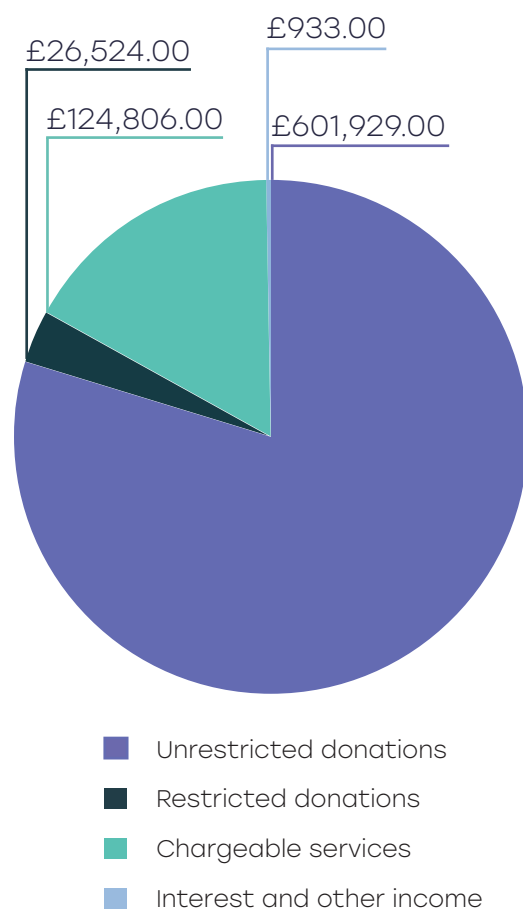
22% of
placements
were in
Secondary
schools

1% of
placements
were in 16+
institutions

Key achievements for the year

- 10% increase in the number of volunteers appointed to governance roles
- Increase in funding from corporate supporters, which has yielded a 7% increase in volunteer applications
- Delivered our first-ever conference, with five days of well-received free sessions for those involved in governance
- ‘All pupils, every ambition’ campaign – supported by a wide range of fantastic collaborators and partners
- Developed resources to support governors in preventing avoidable exclusions alongside Allen & Overy
- 5,140 people attended our training webinars
- 2,458 people completed one of our eLearning modules

Income 2021-22



Our work in Wales

In 2021-22 we have continued to build on the work we started last year within Wales.

Some key highlights from the past twelve months include:

- 76 governors appointed across 16 different local authorities
- 4 university partnerships developed
- 12 partnerships with local authorities secured

The charity has also:

- Secured funding from Cardiff University to co-create Welsh governor eLearning with Governors Cymru
- Held Wales-focused sessions during the September 2021 conference, including speakers from Education Support, Cardiff Council, Chambers Wales and the South East Wales Education Achievement Service
- Strengthened our staffing in Wales to build on these successes in the year ahead

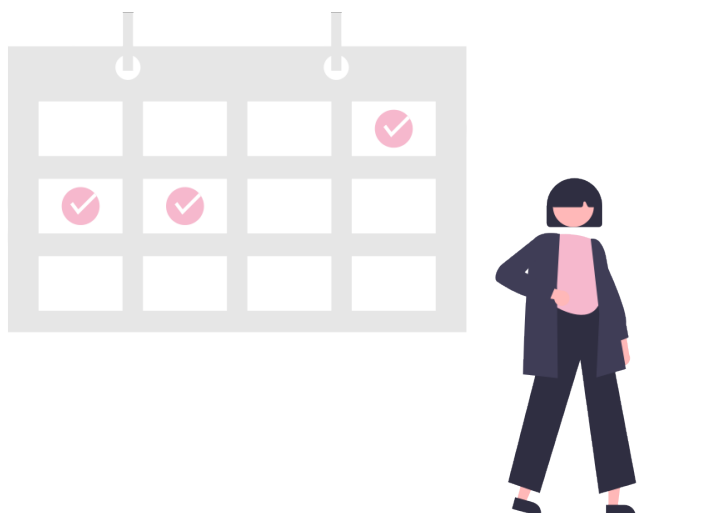


After taking a break from school governance, I had been yearning to get back involved but was intimidated by the process of finding a new role.

Luckily, Governors for Schools were on hand to help! Not only did the team provide me with proactive support, they also encouraged me every step of the way. I was quickly matched with a local school and given the tools I needed to thrive. Thank you, Governors for Schools, for helping me to reconnect with my passion!



Felicia Johnston,
Dulwich Hamlet Junior School,
Southwark



The year ahead

In 2022/23 we aim to:

- Maintain the number of volunteers applying for the role and placed on boards across England and Wales
- Increase the number of companies we work with to access new volunteers and further diversify our funding
- Provide further support to trusts to recruit skilled trustees to their boards
- Continue working towards our Decade of Diversity pledges to support diversity across governing boards
- Further develop our website to provide an excellent user experience for all of our stakeholders and users
- Continue with our 'All pupils, every ambition' campaign, as well as create new, shorter campaigns to encourage more people to consider taking up a governor role
- Hold another conference while further developing our training and support offer for governors
- Provide clear impact reporting for our partners and the wider sector which celebrates the stories behind our work and volunteers
- Effectively use technology to ensure our service is easy to use and access for all stakeholders

Supporters

Our supporters make our work possible. By working with businesses, public sector bodies, charities, professional bodies, and universities, we're able to expand our reach and find more skilled people to become governors.

Thank you to all the organisations we've worked with this year, including:



Business partners

Many of last year's volunteer applications came from our corporate partners – companies who appreciate how their employees can support schools by volunteering their time and skills to drive strategic change. These companies also understand how governance volunteering can develop the skills and experiences of their staff.

These partnerships support us in recruiting volunteers with the skills schools most commonly request:

- 74% of volunteers from these partnerships bring strong finance skills and knowledge
- 40% bring HR skills
- 34% bring prior knowledge and experience of the education sector

2021-22 saw more companies join us to promote school governance, and we were delighted to launch partnerships with JLL, Unilever and Microsoft. With more organisations set to launch governor volunteering initiatives in the months ahead, we are looking forward to another fantastic year working alongside all of our partners.

We worked with Allen & Overy to produce resources to help governors understand their role in reducing avoidable exclusions in school, including webinars, resources, and an eLearning module. They also supported term two of our 'All pupils, every ambition' campaign, which featured resources centred on employability and work-related learning.

“

Governors for Schools have been a wonderful partner to work with again this year. Their expertise and positive attitude have really helped to drive forward our Governance for Better programme. They are very proactive and respond quickly to enquiries. I'm looking forward to our continued journey together.



Paula Rocque,
Corporate Responsibility
Assistant Manager, KPMG

University partners

We have continued to build great relationships with our university partners and are now partnered with over a third of all universities across England & Wales. Over the past year we have seen an increase in engagement opportunities with both staff & alumni.

“

It has been great to grow our partnership with GfS over the past year. They have been so supportive, delivering online sessions for our staff and alumni. These sessions have resulted in more Cardiff University employees becoming governors and we now have over 70 staff in our governor network. They regularly share opportunities for our serving staff governors network. In addition, following feedback from our staff network, GfS have developed a bilingual online learning resource for new governors across Wales. This development is part of the University's civic outreach programme which aims to support leadership and management in Welsh schools. We're really looking forward to continuing to develop our relationship in the year ahead.



Susan Diment,
Education Partnership Manager
Cardiff University



Training

Throughout 2021-22, we've continued creating resources to ensure our volunteers are fully prepared for their roles and can hit the ground running. We have also continued to provide free training and support for the school governance sector in general. For all governors we provide:

- Introductory information about the role, including key information about what they can expect, useful documents, and an overview of the governor position
- An invitation to join our regular webinars where they can learn more about timely governance topics, hear from a range of experts and have their questions answered
- A dedicated point of contact to provide support throughout the application process, matching volunteers with a school in need
- 12 months' free access to the Key for School Governors
- Access to our current eLearning modules, including our Introduction to School Governance
- We've added new eLearning modules on wellbeing in schools and reducing exclusions, and updated our module on work-related learning and careers guidance

We have also continued to provide free training and support for the school governance sector in general, meaning anyone can access our core eLearning modules, as well as attend our webinars and networking sessions.



The support and service provided by Governors for Schools is excellent. The online courses and webinars are valuable, the volunteers we have been put in touch with for our GB have been engaged and proactive. The contacts at GfS have always been helpful and supportive. Thank you.



Penny Edwards,
Chair of Governors,
Squirrels Heath Junior School, Havering



I have been recommending your webinars to all our governors and trustees and those that have joined the training, or watched it later, have commented that it is has been most useful. Thank you for producing these.



Carole Kirby,
Trust Governance Lead, InMAT

Sustainable development goals - our commitments and progress

Responsible consumption and production

Since 2019, we've been hiring people from across the UK, ensuring our Partnership Managers and Coordinators are based in or around the regions for which they are responsible. In moving away from a London-centric hiring strategy, we've reduced the need for travel across the country.

Where extensive journeys are necessary, we encourage employees to travel via public transport, if possible. By the end of May 2022, we'll have given up our office entirely and moved to a completely remote working arrangement, thereby tackling the high energy expenditure associated with running an office space and reducing the need for commuting.

Finally, we continue to use online resources rather than paper, reducing our ecological footprint even further.

Improving education

We're committed to improving educational standards for children across England and Wales through effective governance. As part of this, it is imperative we fill vacancies with governors passionate and knowledgeable about creating a more sustainable world and supporting education about climate change.

Following the recent COP26 in Glasgow, we organised a webinar about how governors can encourage pupils to engage in ongoing debates surrounding ecological issues and build a bright future for younger generations.

Going forward, we aim to produce more insightful webinars and training resources detailing how governors can improve education for young people. Our ongoing 'All pupils, every ambition' campaign, for example, explores how governors can open up exciting opportunities for young people, including those who don't wish to follow traditional academic routes.

Reducing inequality in ethnic representation on boards

We closely monitor ethnic minority data about our volunteers, helping to guide our diversity efforts. To ensure we get it right, we follow government guidelines and include 'White, other' as a category on our monitoring forms.

Over the past year, our placed volunteers were 57% White, 17% Asian/Asian British, 9% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 9% White Other 4% mixed ethnic background, 3% Other or Undefined.

We know there's more work to be done to improve diversity on governing boards and improve outcomes for all children. We're working hard to increase recruitment rates amongst ethnic minorities through our work with partners, professional networks and community groups.

Supporting social mobility

Through initiatives like our 'All pupils, every ambition' campaign, we are exploring how governing boards can support social mobility in schools. We also work to reduce inequality by placing volunteers at schools in area of high disadvantage.

Last year, 36% of our placements in England and 23% of our placements in Wales were in schools serving areas of high disadvantage, figures on which we plan to build in the year ahead.

Good governance

The trustees meet quarterly to monitor progress and to make decisions concerning the strategic direction of the charity. The Chief Executive attends all board meetings. The board approves the annual Business Plan and detailed budget. The staff of Governors for Schools are authorised to work within the framework of the Business Plan and budget under the direction of the Chief Executive. The trustees receive reports from the Chief Executive, comprising financial, statistical and other information to enable them to measure the company's performance against budget, targets and objectives for the year.

New trustees are recruited to the board as required in order to ensure that the board membership has the proper range of skills and competencies. A skills audit is undertaken regularly to identify gaps in expertise.

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity must be disclosed to the full board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported, other than as disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

Reserve policy

The trustees' current policy is to hold sufficient reserves to provide working capital to meet contracted commitments, 3 months operating costs, and an organised winding down of the company should this ever be required. These reserves are reflected in the designated reserve fund shown in the accounts. Donations from supporting organisations are sought early in the financial year to provide working capital for the year ahead.

Risk management

The Company has a comprehensive on-going and up-to-date risk register. The board takes direct responsibility for management of risk in two business critical areas; these areas are cessation or reduction of funding and the performance of the Chief Executive. The other risks are designated as operational and the Chief Executive is responsible for monitoring changes and alerting the board.



Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Governors for Schools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



Effective Governors, Excellent Schools.