Taking the Chair

A Development Programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of Committees of School Governing Bodies

Facilitator Toolkit

Introduction

Foreword

A statement from the Department outlining the importance of the role of the Chair and the general aims of the programme

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Material in Appendix 6 and Activities 1.8 and 3.6 has been adapted from the National Professional Qualification for Headship with the kind permission of the National College for School Leadership.

The school improvement cycle diagram used in Modules Four and Five has been adapted from 'Setting Targets for Pupil Achievement', DfES, 1997.

Activities 3.7, 4.5 and 5.6 contain material adapted from the DfES National Training Programme for New Governors

East Region Partnership

Project Director: Ruth Liss, Eastern Leadership Centre
Project Manager: Amelia Buist, Education Consultant
Assistant Project Director: Jonathan Shiels, Education Consultant
Judith Ogan, Essex LEA
Anne Rowbury, Hertfordshire Children, Schools & Families
Gail Summers, Hertfordshire Children, Schools & Families
Marion Wright, Norfolk LEA
Katharine Smith and Ruvani Whyman, Administrators

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The role of the Chair

The role of the Governing Body
In maintained schools, the role of the Governing Body is to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. The Governing Body does this by:

- Providing a strategic direction for the work and improvement of the school
- Supporting, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school (the 'critical friend' role)
- Ensuring accountability for the standards achieved and the quality of education

The role of the Chair
Ofsted (Making it Better: Improving School Governance, Ofsted 2001) lists the tasks of an effective Chair as:

- Give a clear lead in organising the Governing Body's work
- Delegate roles and ensure other governors are fully involved
- Manage meetings effectively
- Hold regular meetings with the Headteacher
- Keep other governors fully informed
- Co-operate with other agencies to support school improvement

The Chair of governors has a pivotal role to play in helping the Governing Body to work as a team to challenge and support and contribute to the strategic leadership of the school. The Chair is often the governor closest to the Headteacher and the senior leadership group of the school. The Chair can and should build the mutual trust and understanding which enables the whole Governing Body to play its full role.

 When the governors and the senior leadership group in the school work in a real partnership, values and vision are shared and governors have access to the information they need to ask the right questions and make strategic decisions.

The skill the Chair of governors brings to the role enables these relationships and understandings to be maintained and developed. Where relationships are good, governors are motivated, their strengths and individual contributions are effectively used, there is an open dialogue about strengths and weaknesses and the school is effectively challenged and supported.

There are many sources of information which underpin and guide the work of the Governing Body. The focus of this programme is on the particular skills and knowledge needed by Chairs to work in partnership with the Headteacher and to lead and motivate others to achieve the shared vision for the school and contribute to school effectiveness and improved pupil achievement.

This programme has been designed for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees to enable them to better understand the role and carry it out effectively.

Introduction

Programme objectives

This programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees of governing bodies aims to:

- Strengthen and develop the capacity of Chairs to lead the work of the Governing Body
- Deepen their understanding of and prepare them for the role of the Chair
- Enhance Chairs' confidence and skills in managing the role and relationships
- Widen their strategies for developing the partnership between the Governing Body, the Headteacher and the staff
- Encourage shared leadership and making good use of the skills and knowledge of others
- Engage them in a learning process which leads to self-directed change

Lessons from the pilots

Lessons learnt from the national pilots of this toolkit have indicated that it will be helpful to summarise at this point some key features in the design of the programme. Most are expanded in the sections which follow, but your attention is particularly drawn to the following points.

Skill development
This programme has been designed as a set of learning opportunities. By engaging in the activities, Chairs and those who may in the future take on this role, identify, reflect on, practise and consolidate many of the skills required to be effective in the role. The pilots have indicated that the activities are highly effective in enabling this to happen.

Knowledge of governance
All the activities in the programme are grounded in the reality of school governance and the role of the Chair. However, the programme does not set out to provide factual information on governance. This is available from a range of other sources such as the National Development Programme for New Governors, DfES published guidance, web sites for governors and local governor training and updating on specific topics. It is assumed that those leading the programme will point participants in the appropriate direction if they need to know more about legislation and national and local guidance.

Information for participants
On the pilots, participants engaged in the activities and learned a great deal from them. Successful facilitators emphasised effectiveness in the role rather than making participants self-consciously aware of developing skills.

When advertising the programme it will be important to emphasise it as an opportunity to become more effective in the role of chair and not to create an expectation that the sessions are to update participants on procedures and regulations. Chairs of committees who enrol on the programme will need to be aware that it is intended to prepare them for the role of Chair of governors rather than focusing on the role of

committee Chair – although there are obviously opportunities for increasing effectiveness in that role.

Participants will also benefit from being given an overview of the content of all of the modules at the outset so that they appreciate which aspects of the role are covered in each session. A handout has been created for this purpose (Activity 1.1: Handout 1).

Facilitators
Throughout the introduction to the toolkit and the modules, those leading the programme are referred to as facilitators rather than trainers. This is to highlight the fact that the role of the trainer in this programme is not to transmit information, but to facilitate the development of chairing skills. Facilitation requires a different approach to training and the section on facilitation included in this introduction outlines the characteristics of effectiveness in this role.

On some pilots a school improvement adviser and a governor trainer worked together. This might be particularly helpful in the modules dealing with the Governing Body's contributions to school effectiveness (Modules Four and Five).

Good practice
There are ample opportunities for facilitators to bring good practice to the attention of participants by circulating and interacting with groups while they are working, by leading plenary sessions at the end of activities and by handing out relevant local guidance and examples of good practice. Facilitators need not feel that they are prevented from giving participants a strong steer, especially when it is apparent that individuals are suggesting inappropriate practice. In this way the facilitator is able to model being a critical friend, providing challenge and support. The programme design anticipates the active involvement in learning of both the facilitator and the participants.

Joint training of Chairs and Headteachers
On the pilots, Module One was successfully used with a group of Chairs and Headteachers. If you decide to use Module One in this way, you will need to reflect on the experience, perspectives and needs of the Headteachers in the group and adapt the activities accordingly. The programme was not designed for joint training, on the basis that Headteachers and prospective Headteachers have access to other national development opportunities, and other modules are not so readily adaptable for joint training.

Creating your programme
This toolkit should be regarded as a resource from which the facilitator creates a programme. In selecting activities the facilitator may take into account a range of factors including what is already available locally and the needs of the particular group. On the pilots, the facilitators appreciated the programme's flexibility. They also found the toolkit easy to use and liked the variety of activities and the learning approaches. The toolkit has been improved as a result of their many helpful suggestions.

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Learning principles

The activities in this programme have been designed to take account of:

- The variety of participants' preferred learning styles
- The different school contexts within which Chairs operate
- Varying levels of experience in the role

The activities will provide opportunities for:
- The development of leadership and management skills
- Opportunities to draw on existing knowledge and previous experience
- Learning in a variety of ways to cater for different learning preferences
- Active learning based in contexts which reflect the reality of school governance
- Identifying issues and problems and thinking through solutions
- Learning individually and in partnership with others
- Reflection – leading to changes in thinking and action which can improve the effectiveness of the Governing Body

This programme does not set out to impart specific knowledge about school governance in general or about legislation and national initiatives. However, a summary of the current national educational agenda is included in Appendix 6 for your reference.

The programme content makes the following assumptions:

- Participants will have undertaken the National Training Programme for New Governors or an LEA induction programme or have access to the materials if they need to refresh detailed knowledge of governance
- Participants will locate information from other sources about legislation, policy and practice surrounding governance should they wish to follow up topics touched on in the programme – a list of web sites and other references is included in Appendix 8
- Participants will be able to access the Distance Learning version of the programme if they wish to read more widely around the topic or, for example, if they miss a face to face session

The effectiveness with which the Chair carries out the role does depend to some degree on knowledge but the programme assumes that this is gained by the means described above. The primary focus of this programme is on the development of the interpersonal and organisational skills required to be an effective chair.

For this reason, the emphasis in the modules and activities is not on delivery of information by a programme leader or trainer, but on the creation of opportunities for active learning led by a facilitator.

Applying learning

We hope that participants on the programme will see it as a learning opportunity, not only for themselves, but also for the school in which they carry out their role.   If an enhancement of the effectiveness of the Chair is to benefit the leadership partnership in the school, it will be advantageous to involve the Governing Body and the Headteacher in as many ways as possible. For example, you might wish to send a briefing sheet to the Headteachers of participants' schools so that they understand the contents of the programme.   In some activities the guidance encourages discussion of issues before or after the session with both the Governing Body and the Headteacher, but other opportunities could also be taken by the facilitator to encourage this sharing of ideas.

Distance Learning

A Distance Learning version of this development programme is also available. You may find material in it you wish to substitute for activities in these modules, for example where you do not have time to cover a topic but wish to give participants something to take away and read. You may also find it useful to recommend sections to participants who miss face-to-face training sessions or who would like to follow up a topic in more depth on their own.

Sections of the Distance Learning programme might be useful for new Chairs who need some initial support before they attend training on this programme, particularly on the initial meetings with the Headteacher.

Introduction

Programme content

Focus of the programme
The programme focuses on:

- What the Chair uniquely does to assist the Governing Body in carrying out its three key roles
- The development of skills in
    - Managing relationships
    - Leading and managing the work of the Governing Body
    - Supporting and ensuring challenge and support for school improvement

The role of the Chair in supporting the Governing Body in carrying out its 'critical friend' role permeates the programme.

The development of skills
Included in Appendix 5 is an overview of the skills required by chairs. The list is not exhaustive. The activities have been designed to create opportunities for participants to consider these skills and how they are used, to practise some of the skills and to reflect on their impact. The overview of skills and the cross-referencing to skills in the introductions to each module are there to assist the facilitator.

The programme will also enable participants to reflect on their role in ensuring that the Governing Body meets the expectations of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). There are activities which focus on the role of Chairs in ensuring that the Governing Body:

- Helps shape the vision and direction of the school
- Ensures that the school fulfils its statutory duties, including promoting inclusive policies in relation to special educational needs, race equality, disability and sex
- Has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school
- Challenges and supports the senior leadership team

Pre-programme self-evaluation
The programme begins with an optional pre-programme self-evaluation and colleague evaluation task. The self-evaluation is designed to help the participants identify their current strengths and areas for development in the role. The Facilitator has the opportunity to use the outcomes of the self-evaluations to design a programme from this toolkit to meet the needs of a particular group. Full details of how to manage this process are given on page 16.

Modules
The programme is divided into five modules:

Module One: **The Chair and the Headteacher**
Introduction to the programme
The role of the Chair
Managing the relationship between the Chair and the Headteacher

Module Two: **The Chair and the Governors**
The relationship between the Chair and other governors
Team leadership and team effectiveness
Recruiting, inducting and developing governors

Module Three: **Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing Body**
Structuring the Governing Body
Effective meetings and decision-making

Module Four: **The Chair's Role in Supporting Strategic Leadership**
The Chair's role in supporting strategic effectiveness and the strategic use of information

Module Five: **The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability**
The Chair's role in ensuring the school is held to account for standards and in ensuring accountability to stakeholders

Summary of Appendices

Included at the end of the introduction to the toolkit are a number of appendices:

Appendix 1
This is a suggested summary of the programme for inclusion in a flyer or training programme entry

Appendix 2
This is the suggested text for an article or flyer describing the programme in more detail

Appendix 3
Taking the Chair: Self-Evaluation (A)

Appendix 4
Taking the Chair: Colleague Evaluation (B)

Appendix 5
Skills for Chairs: this is included for the Facilitator's reference

Appendix 6
The National Agenda: this highlights the current context in which Chairs and Governing Bodies are working. It may be useful as a handout if questions are asked about national initiatives, particularly during Modules Four or Five. This list will need to be kept under review and updated.

Appendix 7
Learning Record: a proforma on which participants are invited to record their key learning points and intended actions

Appendix 8
Bibliography: included in the Bibliography are publications, documents and web sites which are relevant to this programme. You may wish to use the Bibliography as a reference list for participants, adding other useful material supplied locally.

Organisation of materials

Each module is prefaced by:
- The key themes covered by the module
- An overview of the activities
- A matrix showing the skills addressed by the activities
- Guidance on adapting the module

Each separate activity contains:
- The aims of the activity
- Guidance on approximate overall length of the activity to aid planning
- The resources required for each activity including:
    - OHTs
    - Handouts
    - Background information for the facilitator where required
    - Other equipment and materials
- Key notes for the Facilitator
- The activity tasks with guidance and suggested timings for information only

Introduction

Designing your programme

Flexibility
The Facilitators' Toolkit has been designed to be flexible so that you can select activities and make up sessions of different lengths.

We have built into the introductory activities the opportunity for you to use feedback from participants' self-evaluation as a way of tailoring the programme to the particular needs of your group. Details of how to manage this process are given on page 16.

However, you decide:

- The length of the sessions and the overall programme
- Which activities you will use
- What additional material already in use for Chairs' training fits well with the programme

You will also decide whether you deliver modules as whole days, half days or evenings and the spacing between the sessions. There may, for example, be advantages in covering one module every half term, giving time for participants to try out strategies and ideas. Experience will also tell you when you are likely to have a high demand for the programme from new Chairs.

Creating a programme
Modules have been designed to create a developmental experience for participants by building on learning in previous activities. If you plan to run two-hour sessions covering one module you will need to make a careful selection from the available activities.

Experience on the pilots suggests that it is better to do a few activities in depth. Allowing plenty of time for introducing activities, carrying them out and reflecting on them is more likely to lead to learning. You need to give people time to think and respond to each other and you need time to make sure that participants have understood, by asking questions and challenging comments. When deciding the timing of activities and tasks, leave enough time for the important plenary sessions.

The timings given for tasks are based on groups 10 – 12. If groups are larger than this, adjustments will have to be made in the time required for discussions and feedback.

When selecting a menu of activities from any particular module, care should be taken to achieve a balanced message about the role of the Chair. When you have decided on the activities you plan to use, you will need to think about how to get across the key messages from activities that are being omitted. You could cover the key points in a number of ways:

- Giving out handouts from the activities you are not using
- Copying the relevant corresponding section from the Distance Learning version
- Using material of your own to cover the key points
- Using relevant material from the National Programme for New Governors, which can be adapted and used for different purposes within this programme

Using the OHTs
PowerPoint presentations have been created for each module. They are included in the guidance text for ease of reference and are also on the accompanying CD ROM so that you can customise them. You may wish to use them in a PowerPoint presentation with a digital projector or create OHTs from them for use with an overhead projector.

An OHT has been made to introduce the aims of each activity. Most facilitators find it helps participants to focus if they know what the aims of the activity are at the outset.

Some facilitators like to speak to the OHT in their own words. Information on OHTs has been reduced to a minimum and additional notes are included in the guidance which enlarge on the key points the OHTs are putting across. Where there is a higher degree of information to put across, a handout has been included which can be distributed instead.

You may find it useful to create your own OHTs to introduce sessions in accordance with the activities you have chosen.

It is very much up to you to decide how you wish to use or adapt the OHTs.

Managing sessions

The facilitation role
In a programme such as this, where participants bring their own knowledge and experience and seek to enhance their skills through interaction with others, the role of the trainer becomes that of the Facilitator. We have sought to emphasise this by referring to 'Facilitators' throughout the Toolkit.

The Facilitator's role is an enabling one in which there are no right answers, just as there is no right way to be a Chair. Participants respond to the activities and learn from them according to their current levels of understanding and experience and according to the context in which they carry out their role as Chair and the challenges they face in their individual schools.

The role of the Facilitator is to support participants in:

- Developing an awareness of their own skills as a Chair and what already works for them
- Reflecting on their areas for development and planning how to improve these
- Reflecting on the implications of their learning for the way in which they lead and manage the work of the Governing Body
- Learning collaboratively
- Identifying good practice

Effective Facilitators:
- Remind participants of agreed ground rules
- Check that participants understand the tasks
- Inform participants of the length of time they have for an activity or task

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- Encourage working in silence when individual reflection is required
- Ensure that when working in pairs or small groups, all have equal time to speak
- Check that participants are on task and will complete an activity in the time allowed
- Circulate when groups are working, allowing them to work independently but noting common points to refer to in feedback
- Ensure that all groups have the opportunity to offer ideas during feedback
- Have the confidence to deal with ambiguity and anxiety
- Challenge individuals who dominate
- Offer examples of good practice
- Summarise the main learning points in plenary sessions and relate these back to the aims of the activity
- Encourage participants to reflect on their learning

Further information about the Facilitator role may be found in the introduction to the companion programme 'Leading Together'.

Familiarity with the materials
If you are not facilitating on all the modules in this programme you will need to have a good overview of the programme contents. The modules are organised around key themes in order to focus on different aspects of the Chair's role. However, the Chair's role is wide-ranging and aspects are obviously linked. You may, on occasions, need to keep the participants focused on the topic in hand by referring to previous sessions and informing them about future activities.

Familiarity with the Distance Learning version of 'Taking the Chair' will enable you to:

- Direct participants to sections of the Distance Learning if they seek further information on a particular aspect of the Chair's role
- Use material from the Distance Learning version to supplement your face to face programme and cover issues which you will not be addressing through activities

'Leading Together'
You will also find it helpful to be familiar with the related programme 'Leading Together'. 'Leading Together' is a school based programme for improving teamwork and involves a group of governors and school leaders working together for improvement over a number of months. The programme is different from 'Taking the Chair' in its audience and content but it is closely related in its objectives. A knowledge of 'Leading Together' will enable you to advise Chairs on the objectives of that programme and assist them in making decisions about which of the programmes is most likely to meet their current needs and the needs of the school.

Supporting the needs of individuals
Participants will be working in a variety of contexts and facing different levels of challenge. In order to assist participants in meeting their individual learning needs Facilitators may:

- Use feedback from the self-evaluation to tailor the programme to the needs of participants

- Refer participants to sections of the Distance Learning materials for additional material on a particular topic
- Encourage the use of the Learning Record at the end of each session or module
- Encourage participants to try out ideas and activities in their own schools
- Set appropriate tasks between sessions

Participants on the programme may be new or experienced Chairs, Vice-Chairs or Chairs of committees. In order to meet the needs of all participants it is suggested that participants are carefully grouped for some activities and tasks.   You may vary the composition of groups so that participants are sometimes with:

- Others who are carrying out similar roles
- Others with similar levels of experience
- Others from the same school phase or size

It is also important to vary the groups so that participants have the opportunity to learn with and from a range of the people in the room. Experienced Chairs have much to offer others, but the programme is also an opportunity to extend their skills and challenge accepted practice. There may be occasions when the Facilitator works with a particular group to ensure that learning is extended.

Physical space
Because this is an active learning programme you need to hold sessions in a room with sufficient space for people to be able to get up and change groups and group size comfortably. The Facilitator also needs to be able to move about the room freely.

Newly appointed Chairs
If approached by newly appointed Chairs for guidance on early meetings with the Headteacher before the programme has started, you may want to send them the relevant sections from the Distance Learning programme to support this crucial stage in building relationships.

Ground rules
Some Facilitators begin their sessions by agreeing a set of ground rules with participants. This is particularly important where relationships with individuals are being discussed. Below are some suggested ground rules:

- We observe confidentiality, so that what is said here stays here
- We work in ways which allow everyone to make a contribution
- We respect the views of others even when they differ from our own

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Learning Record

You might wish to encourage participants to keep an informal and personal Learning Record. Completion of a Learning Record creates an opportunity for participants to:

- Draw together and reflect on learning at the end of sessions and at other times
- Consider what actions might be taken as a result of new learning
- Consider what support they might need to implement a change or development

Learning Records are personal and can be kept in any way that suits the participant. A simple proforma is included in Appendix 7, which asks three key questions as a guide to reflection, but they need not restrict participants.

It is suggested that you encourage participants to use their Learning Record by referring to it at the beginning of each session and by giving time at the end of each session for them to complete their Learning Record. The Learning Record can also be used as a note pad for recording as the session progresses.

Participants will be encouraged to keep a Learning Record going if copies of the proforma are available at each session.

Learning Networks

You may wish to encourage participants to set up informal support groups or Learning Networks. These are introduced in Module One, Activity 1.1

Managing the pre-programme self-evaluation

In order to assist participants in thinking about how well they are managing the role of Chair, they could be encouraged to undertake an audit of their current effectiveness and identify their areas for development.   The areas covered by the self-evaluation are linked to the modules in this programme.

This self-evaluation could be undertaken in advance of coming on the programme and sent to you for analysis so that you can determine the experience levels and needs of the group and tailor activities to suit these needs.

There are two forms of the evaluation, which are included in Appendices 3 and 4:

Evaluation A: Self-evaluation
This encourages participants to think about their current effectiveness in managing relationships and supporting the work of the Governing Body. It also highlights the context in which they are working by referring to the Ofsted criteria for judging governance.

Evaluation B: Colleague Evaluation
For more experienced or confident Chairs who would like to ask for feedback from their fellow governors and schools leaders, particularly the Headteacher, we have included a version which they can distribute to colleagues.

Using the self-evaluations for programme construction
If you plan to use the self-evaluations to inform the construction of your programme, you will need to send them out well in advance of the first session. You will also need to complete the instructions on the evaluation forms, adding a return address and return date.

A covering letter should explain the use of the two evaluation forms and request that participants keep a copy of the self-evaluation to refer to during the programme. Alternatively, you could hand back self-evaluations at the first session if you do not think participants will have easy access to a photocopier.

Using the self-evaluations to focus on learning
On the pilots of this programme, some facilitators found the process of reflecting on the whole self-evaluation during the first session took up too much time. As the sections of the self-evaluation are linked to the modules, it might be useful to ask participants to bring their self-evaluations to each session or module. Participants could reflect on their areas for development at the start of sessions and facilitators would then be able to ensure that opportunities were created to discuss areas of particular interest to individuals.

Analysing the self-evaluations
We have included on the programme CD ROM a simple Excel spreadsheet which can be used to analyse the self-evaluations. It will produce a graph showing the number of

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participants who feel they need to develop skills in relation to each of the areas in the self-evaluation. You will be able to identify those areas which need most development and cross-reference to the activities linked to those areas. Full instructions for entering information and producing the graph are included on the CD ROM.

Response Analysis Chart
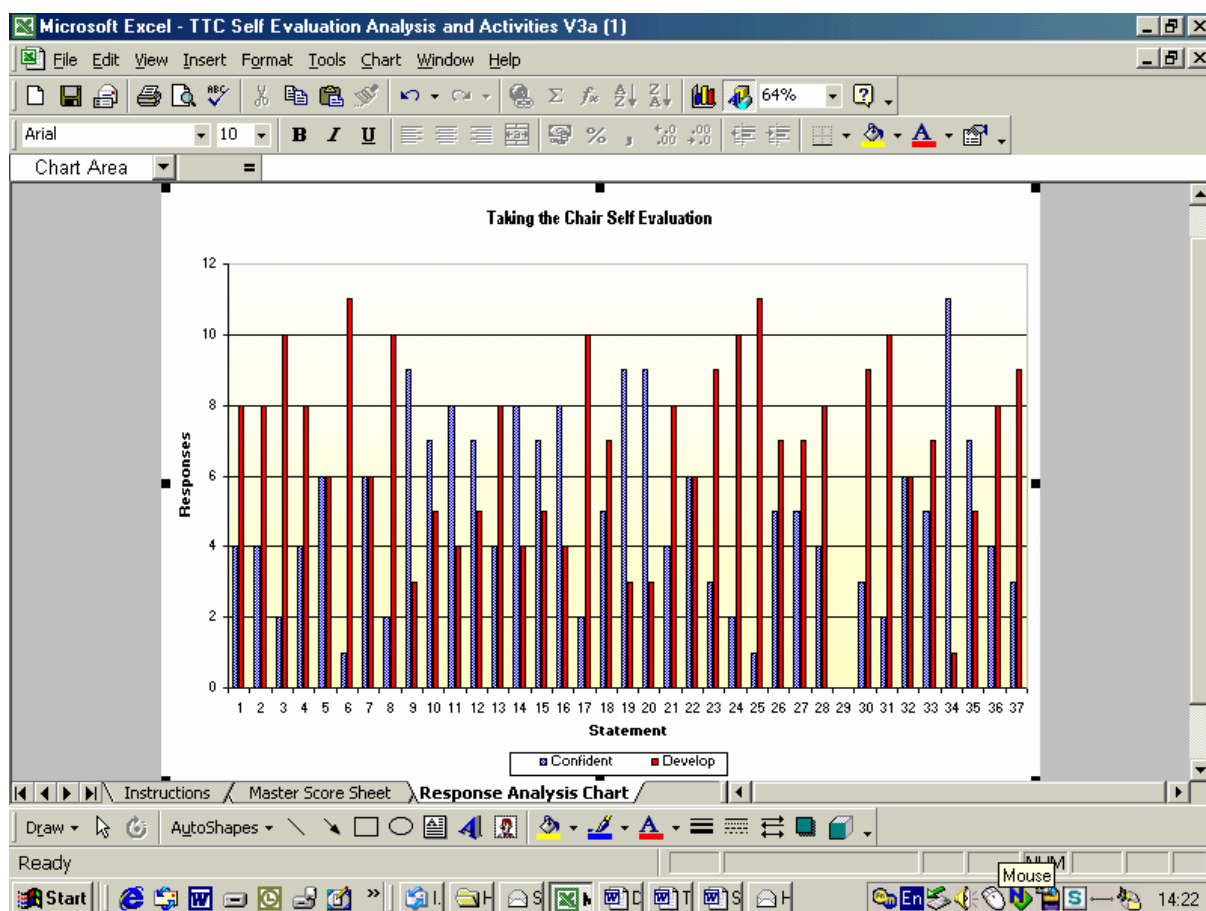
Analysing the colleague evaluations
If resources allow, you may want to offer to analyse the results of Evaluation B for individuals. If you offer this support, you will need to adapt the instructions with a return address and date so that completed evaluations are sent directly to you by the participant Chair's colleagues. The experience of governor trainers managing Governing Body review suggests that feedback is more honest and open if handled in this way.

The CD ROM contains instructions for the analysis of the results for individuals.

Experience on the pilots
The vast majority of participants who undertook the self-evaluation were very positive about it and felt that it was very useful to them in thinking about the role. It provided them with a benchmark of good practice and was well worth undertaking, despite its length. Asking for feedback from the Headteacher and other colleagues was seen as potentially very helpful and many participants planned to do so.

Some new Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees were unsure how to use the self-evaluation.   Although it refers to the role of Chair of Governors, it can be used by others to think about the degree of confidence they have in each area, should they take over as Chair in the near future. A comment to this effect in a covering letter would indicate its value to this group of participants.

You may also want to say something about confidentiality and how you will deal with the information gained from the self-evaluations once the programme has finished.

Advertising and promoting the programme

Advertising and promoting
In addition to advertising 'Taking the Chair' in your training programme you might also wish to promote it through:

- Local governor associations
- LEA advisers and officers
- Headteacher associations
- Your newsletters, website or other publications

Included in the Appendices 1 and 2 are:

- The suggested text for an insert in your training programme for you to amend and add to
- The suggested text for a flyer or article

Who should attend
There might be added value in encouraging more than one participant from a school to attend so that they can support each other's learning and the application of any ideas for developing practice in their school. They will also be able to share and deepen their understanding of the context of their school and the current effectiveness of their support for the work of the Governing Body.

Information in advance
You will need to allow sufficient time for participants to complete the self-evaluation and for it to be returned to you for analysis if you wish to use the information to customize your programme. You might need to allow 4 weeks in all for this process and this might have an effect on your usual booking timescales.

When you have decided on the shape of the programme and the activities you wish to use, any pre-programme preparation and guidance can be included in a letter to participants.

A copy of the letter might also be sent to the school's Headteacher outlining the nature and purpose of the programme and encouraging them to support the training and development, particularly of a new Chair.

Suggested summary of the programme for inclusion in a flyer or training programme entry

Taking the Chair

A new training and development programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills

This 5 module, practical and problem solving programme aims to explore the skills required to lead and manage the work of a school Governing Body.

Module One: The Chair and the Headteacher
Module Two: The Chair and the Governors
Module Three: Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing Body
Module Four: The Chair's Role in Supporting Strategic Leadership
Module Five: The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability

The programme is aimed at prospective and new Chairs who wish to develop their confidence and skills and experienced Chairs who are keen to review their effectiveness in the role. The programme uses a variety of learning approaches and emphasises the practical application of knowledge and skills

Suggested text of an article or flyer

Taking the Chair

The Department for Education and Skills has commissioned a new training and development programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees of school governing bodies (including schools with a religious character)

The Chair of governors has a pivotal role to play in helping the Governing Body work as a team to challenge and support the school and contribute to its strategic leadership. The Chair is often the governor closest to the Headteacher and the senior leadership group in the school. The Chair can, and should, build the mutual trust and understanding which enables the whole Governing Body to play its full role.

When the Governing Body, the Headteacher and the senior leadership group in the school work in a real partnership, values and vision are shared and governors have access to the information they need to ask the right questions and make strategic decisions.

The skill the Chair of governors or a committee Chair brings to the role enables these relationships and understandings to be maintained and developed. Where relationships are good, governors are motivated, their strengths and individual contributions are effectively used, there is an open dialogue about strengths and weaknesses and the school is effectively challenged and supported.

There are many sources of information which underpin and guide the work of the Governing Body. The focus of this new programme is on the particular skills and knowledge needed by Chairs to work with others, to lead and motivate them to achieve the shared vision for the school and contribute to school effectiveness and improved pupil achievement.

The training programme is divided into five modules:

Module One: The Chair and the Headteacher
Module Two: The Chair and the Governors
Module Three: Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing Body
Module Four: The Chair's Role in Supporting Strategic Leadership
Module Five: The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability

The programme is aimed at prospective and new Chairs who wish to develop their confidence and skills and experienced Chairs keen to review their effectiveness in the role. It uses a variety of learning approaches and emphasises the practical application of knowledge and skills.

Taking the Chair: Evaluation A: Self-Evaluation
Effectiveness in leading and managing the work of the Governing Body

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Purpose of the evaluation
We hope that you will want to undertake this optional self-evaluation before starting 'Taking the Chair'. The self-evaluation will give you the opportunity to think about:
- How effective you are, or might be, in the role of Chair
- The areas you might want to develop further

Carrying out the self-evaluation will enable you to:
- Focus your learning on your own development needs
- Focus your learning on the development needs of your Governing Body

When you enrol on the programme your Facilitator will give you information about when to complete and send your self-evaluation to the Facilitator in advance. If you share the results of your evaluation with your Facilitator, he/she can take your needs into account when shaping the programme

Completing the evaluation
Read through the areas of activity and tick the boxes to indicate whether, in the context of your school:
- You are fairly confident in this area
- This is an area you would like develop

In the evidence box make brief notes on:
- The evidence you have that you do this effectively
- Why you think you need to get better at doing this

A health warning!
You should not feel that a Chair requires expertise in all these areas. The particular skills you need in your role depend on the context of your school. The Ofsted descriptors of Governing Body effectiveness overleaf will be helpful in thinking about the context in which you exercise your role as Chair. If you are not the Chair of governors, interpret the statements in the light of your current role. Read through the criteria in each category and take a view on where your Governing Body fits best.

Experienced Chairs
If you are an experienced Chair you may wish to ask your colleagues to give you feedback by giving them the Colleague Evaluation to complete. Keep a copy of the evaluation to use for collating the responses. How many colleagues will you ask? Are they going to be anonymous and who will collect them and collate them? You might want to request the assistance of the governor responsible for training and development.

Ofsted criteria for evaluating governance

Very good - The Governing Body:
- Makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school and its successes
- Is fully involved in strategic planning and formulating policies, and supports staff in implementing them.
- Ensures that governors keep in close touch with the school's work across all stages, cementing the partnership between the Governing Body and the school.
- Has a pattern of work which meshes well with the school's development cycle, so that both are very influential.
- Is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and deals with them openly and frankly, contributing fully to development planning.
- Monitors performance management procedures to ensure that they are very effective

Good - The Governing Body:
- Influences the work of the school and its policies through challenge and support
- Has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- Has a significant, strategic influence in leading the school's development, with a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of provision
- Is prepared to take difficult decisions when necessary
- Is well organised and improves its own performance through appropriate development activities or training

Satisfactory - The Governing Body:
- Ensures that the school meets its statutory responsibilities, and has clear aims and policies. Its performance management policy operates effectively
- Corporately sets an overall direction for the school and formulates policies that reflect the character of the school
- Reviews performance data to monitor the whole school's work and its recommendations for action are followed up
- Ensures that all governors understand their role and any specific responsibilities
- Maintains a businesslike relationship between governors and senior staff in leading the school.

Unsatisfactory - The school fails to meet one or more statutory responsibilities and lacks some statutory policies. There is little corporate agreement about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The Governing Body:
- Relies too heavily on the Headteacher
- Although supportive, plays a slight part in leading the school and does little to hold the school to account
- Works in a way that lacks focus and influence
- Has insufficient knowledge of one or more of the key stages
- Has a limited grasp of the performance of the school and little effect on its development

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Poor- Important statutory responsibilities are not met. Relationships between members of the Governing Body or between it and the senior staff are at best indifferent and may be hostile or acrimonious

The **Governing Body:**

- Is remote from the school
- Works in a disorganised manner and its conduct presents a barrier to school improvement
- Is largely unaware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, in particular, of the effectiveness of its senior managers
- Has a limited influence on the work of the school and presents no challenge. Standards and quality are not assured and it fails to set a clear direction or priorities for the school's work.

Taking the Chair: Self-Evaluation
Effectiveness in leading and managing the work of the Governing Body

Managing the relationship with the Headteacher	I am fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
1. Building a relationship based on trust and mutual respect for each other's roles			
2. Appropriately challenging the Headteacher as well as supporting			
3. Leading without relying entirely on the Headteacher for leadership			
4. Building trust and cooperation between governors and the Headteacher			
Managing relationships with other members of the Governing Body and the community	**I am fairly confident in this area**	**This is an area to develop**	**Evidence**
5. Building trust and cooperation within the Governing Body			
6. Valuing the contributions of all governors and staff and working with and through others			
7. Ensuring that there are effective systems to recruit, welcome and induct new governors			
8. Encouraging all governors to engage in training and development			
9. Ensuring that communications and decision-making are open (except in issues requiring confidentiality such as dismissal and exclusions etc.)			
10. Knowing the limits of the Chair's powers and when and how to act in an emergency			

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Managing the work of the Governing Body	I am fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
11. Preparing for meetings of the Governing Body with the Headteacher and Clerk to ensure that agendas are focused on school improvement issues			
12. Ensuring meeting cycles are in line with the school's development cycle			
13. Conducting meetings so that all governors have an opportunity to contribute			
14. Ensuring that decision making processes are clear			
15. Ensuring that all members of the Governing Body are aware of their collective responsibilities and decisions are corporate			
16. Handling conflict and resolving differences through negotiation			
17. Ensuring governors understand their roles and responsibilities and are appropriately involved in the life of the school			
18. Ensuring the Governing Body delegates effectively to committees and individuals			
19. Ensuring that procedures are established for reporting to the full Governing Body			
20. Ensuring the Governing Body considers options for action based on relevant evidence			

Leading the development of a strategic view	I am fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
21. Ensuring governors take part in developing and keeping under review the school's values, vision and aims			
22. Facilitating open and frank debate about the school's strengths and weaknesses			
23. Enabling the Governing Body to work strategically with school staff			
24. Enabling the Governing Body to play a part in whole school self-evaluation			
25. Ensuring the Governing Body influences strategic planning and has a clear sense of priorities for development in the local and national context			
26. Ensuring that the school's strategic objectives drive Governing Body decisions on resources			
27. Ensuring the Governing Body is involved in agreeing targets for school improvement that are challenging and realistic			
28. Ensuring that there are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate progress towards targets			

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Leading the Governing Body in ensuring accountability	I am fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
29. Ensuring the Governing Body challenges and supports the Headteacher and senior leadership team, holding the school to account for its standards			
30. Ensuring the Governing Body has access to the information it needs about the school and its performance			
31. Ensuring the Governing Body receives information from a variety of sources, including staff, the LEA, Ofsted and other agencies			
32. Ensuring the Governing Body evaluates the implementation and impact of the performance management policy			
33. Ensuring that the appointed governors agree performance objectives with the Headteacher based on school improvement priorities			
34. Ensuring the Governing Body is represented at meetings with others in the school community and beyond			
35. Ensuring the Governing Body evaluates the contribution it makes to school improvement			
36. Ensuring the Governing Body demonstrates accountability to all key stakeholders, for example through the Annual Report to Parents			

My priorities for development are numbers:

Name: Date:
Please print

Taking the Chair: Colleague Evaluation
Effectiveness in leading and managing the work of the Governing Body

For use by participant wishing to involve colleagues in their evaluation

Purpose of the evaluation
Your colleague is about to undertake the National Development Programme 'Taking the Chair'. This is a training programme designed to develop the skills needed to be a Chair, Vice-Chair or Chair of a committee of a school Governing Body. Your colleague is also undertaking a self-evaluation to consider:

- The skills needed to be an effective Chair
- The skills he/she already has and wants to maintain
- Those skills which he/she might want to develop further

How you can help
By completing the evaluation you will enable your colleague to think about the skills he/she:

- Needs to maintain
- Needs to develop

You will also provide valuable feedback by making brief notes in the evidence box on:

- How you think this skill is being effectively used
- Why this is a skill which needs development

You may wish to sign the evaluation and return it to your colleague, or you may wish to complete it anonymously – in which case please give it to the person whom your colleague has nominated to collect and collate the responses.

Thank you for your support

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Taking the Chair

Taking the Chair: Colleague Evaluation
Effectiveness in leading and managing the work of the Governing Body

Managing the relationship with the Headteacher	Fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
1. Building a relationship based on trust and mutual respect for each other's roles			
2. Appropriately challenging the Headteacher as well as supporting			
3. Leading without relying entirely on the Headteacher for leadership			
4. Building trust and cooperation between governors and the Headteacher			
Managing relationships with other members of the Governing Body and the community	**Fairly confident in this area**	**This is an area to develop**	**Evidence**
5. Building trust and cooperation within the Governing Body			
6. Valuing the contributions of all governors and staff and working with and through others			
7. Ensuring that there are effective systems to recruit, welcome and induct new governors			
8. Encouraging all governors to engage in training and development			
9. Ensuring that communications and decision-making are open (except in issues requiring confidentiality such as dismissal and exclusions etc.)			
10. Knowing the limits of the Chair's powers and when and how to act in an emergency			

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Appendix 4

Managing the work of the Governing Body	Fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
11. Preparing for meetings of the Governing Body with the Headteacher and Clerk to ensure that agendas are focused on school improvement issues			
12. Ensuring meeting cycles are in line with the school's development cycle			
13. Conducting meetings so that all governors have an opportunity to contribute			
14. Ensuring that decision making processes are clear			
15. Ensuring that all members of the Governing Body are aware of their collective responsibilities and decisions are corporate			
16. Handling conflict and resolving differences through negotiation			
17. Ensuring governors understand their roles and responsibilities and are appropriately involved in the life of the school			
18. Ensuring the Governing Body delegates effectively to committees and individuals			
19. Ensuring that procedures are established for reporting to the full Governing Body			
20. Ensuring the Governing Body considers options for action based on relevant evidence			

Leading the development of a strategic view	Fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
21. Ensuring governors take part in developing and keeping under review the school's values, vision and aims			
22. Facilitating open and frank debate about the school's strengths and weaknesses			
23. Enabling the Governing Body to work strategically with school staff			
24. Enabling the Governing Body to play a part in whole school self-evaluation			
25. Ensuring the Governing Body influences strategic planning and has a clear sense of priorities for development in the local and national context			
26. Ensuring that the school's strategic objectives drive Governing Body decisions on resources			
27. Ensuring the Governing Body is involved in setting targets for school improvement that are challenging and realistic			
28. Ensuring that there are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate progress towards targets			

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Appendix 4

Leading the Governing Body in ensuring accountability	Fairly confident in this area	This is an area to develop	Evidence
29. Ensuring the Governing Body challenges and supports the Headteacher and senior leadership team, holding the school to account for its standards			
30. Ensuring the Governing Body has access to the information it needs about the school and its performance			
31. Ensuring the Governing Body receives information from a variety of sources, including staff, the LEA, Ofsted and other agencies			
32. Ensuring the Governing Body evaluates the implementation and impact of the performance management policy			
33. Ensuring that the appointed governors agree performance objectives with the Headteacher based on school improvement priorities			
34. Ensuring the Governing Body is represented at meetings with others in the school community and beyond			
35. Ensuring the Governing Body evaluates the contribution it makes to school improvement			
36. Ensuring the Governing Body demonstrates accountability to all key stakeholders, for example through the Annual Report to Parents			

Name of colleague: Your Name (Optional):

Date: Please return to: By:

Skills for Chairs

The table below sets out many of the skills used by effective Chairs in leading and managing the work of the Governing Body. This list is not definitive and the skills could be ordered in any number of ways. The table provides facilitators with an overview of the skills being developed through this programme. The predominant skills used and required by individual Chairs will depend on the context of their schools. To some Chairs this list would be daunting and we do not recommend that you share this list with participants unless is it carefully adapted and integrated with the programme. In the introduction to the individual modules you will find an overview of the principal skills being developed through the activities in that module.

TEAM BUILDING SKILLS
Understanding others • Creating opportunities for inclusive discussion • Valuing contributions and enabling others to fully contribute to the team
Motivating • Showing and creating commitment and enthusiasm to achieve goals • Ensuring clear understanding of what is required and fostering cooperation
Challenging • Using constructive and open questions
Negotiating • Using interpersonal skills to resolve conflict, build consensus and encourage others to commit to agreements or reach compromises
Showing flexibility • Taking views of others into account • Changing position or mind when appropriate
ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS
Organising • Ensuring appropriate Governing Body structures • Coordinating collaborative working
Planning • Managing time effectively • Establishing priorities and courses of action for the Governing Body, taking relevant factors into account
Delegating • Ensuring decision making and other tasks are allocated to appropriate committees and individuals • Distinguishing what can or should be done by others

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Appendix 5

Being assertive • Knowing when to take charge of situations • Knowing when and how to challenge • Guiding the Governing Body towards achieving tasks
Developing others • Encouraging the development of governors' skills and empowering them to make a contribution • Ensuring development for all in line with current and future needs of the Governing Body
Evaluating • Monitoring and evaluating performance of the Governing Body • Encouraging feedback
COMMUNICATION SKILLS
Communicating orally and in writing • Speaking and writing clearly and concisely, avoiding jargon • Showing awareness of different audiences and inspiring confidence
Listening • Paying attention • Recalling and summarising key points
Being diplomatic • Showing awareness of situations and audience • Acting as an ambassador for the Governing Body and the school
STRATEGIC SKILLS
Vision • Enabling the development of shared values and vision for the school • Having clear and consistent picture of long term goals • Focusing on educational achievement through school priorities
Understanding change • Being flexible and open to change • Recognising when change is not negotiable • Showing awareness of the impact of change on the school and on individuals • Prioritising change and ensuring the monitoring and evaluation of its impact
Showing awareness • Showing strategic awareness of and responding to stakeholders' needs • Taking account of legislation and local and national initiatives when making decisions
Demonstrating perspective • Seeing wider issues and implications of actions • Planning the steps needed to achieve long term goals

ANALYTICAL SKILLS
Investigating   • Identifying issues   • Seeking and using information from different sources   • Identifying possible causes and exploring alternatives
Attending to detail   • Ensuring reliability of information   • Reporting all relevant information   • Ensuring discussions are thorough
Interpreting   • Analysing statistical and other information   • Accurately interpreting   • Making information accessible to all stakeholders
Being critical   • Ensuring that information is probed and challenged   • Summing up advantages and disadvantages of proposals
Using judgement   • Ensuring sound decisions based on factual evidence
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
Determination   • Continues until desired objective achieved   • Is not driven off the course of agreed action in difficult or uncomfortable circumstances
Flexibility   • Takes views of others into account   • Prepared to change position or mind when appropriate
Integrity   • Deals openly and honestly with others   • Acts impartially
Sensitivity   • Takes the interests and feelings of others into account
Enthusiasm and commitment   • Remains positive in the face of difficulties   • Shows energy and conviction
Independence   • Bases decisions on law, agreed policy or objective arguments, rather than the influence of individuals
Decisiveness   • Remains focused on goals   • Willing to make decisions

The National Agenda

The priorities for schools are influenced by their own improvement objectives and current local and national initiatives. The following digest highlights national initiatives at the time of writing this programme which are of relevance to governors. These issues are not directly used as the focus of activities in the programme but they do influence the work of the Governing Body and should be referred to where appropriate as the context for decision-making. The list will need to be kept under review and updated.

Ofsted Inspection Framework 2003
- The role of governors in school self-evaluation
- Providing evidence for the evaluation of governance during inspection
- Governors' role in supporting and challenging school management teams
- The leadership partnership between the Governing Body and the Headteacher and senior managers

Performance Management
- The responsibility of governors to monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of the performance management policy
- The responsibility of appointed governors to agree objectives for the Headteacher

School Workforce Reform
- The governors' role in supporting the school in implementing the national agreement on workload

Power to Innovate
- The opportunity to seek exemption from education legislation in order to test out new ideas for raising standards

London Challenge
- An initiative to create a world-class system of secondary education in London

Extended Schools
- An initiative to encourage schools to become hubs for services for children, families and other members of the community, including the provision of learning activities outside normal lesson times (Study Support) and motivating underachievers at Key Stage 2 and 3 through links with football and sports clubs (Playing for Success)

Foundation Stage
- Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to assist children in progress towards the Early Learning Goals

Key Stage 3 National Strategy
- A strategy for strengthening teaching and learning across the curriculum for all 11-14 years olds

Leadership Incentive Grant
- A grant for schools in inner cities with high levels of disadvantage or low performance to accelerate improvements in standards, strengthen leadership and develop capacity for sustained improvement

Leading Edge Partnership Programme
- Replaces the Beacon School programme and provides funds for schools at the leading edge to set up collaborative learning communities and promote innovation, research and development

Primary Strategy
- Builds on the lessons from the literacy and numeracy strategies and includes a leadership programme to train Headteachers to become Primary Strategy Consultant Leaders and work with others to raise standards in English and mathematics

Special Educational Needs Action Programme
- A programme of measures to improve support for children with Special Educational Needs, including building parental confidence in the education service to meet their children's special educational needs

Parental Involvement in Children's Learning
- Support and guidance for schools on ways of engaging parents more closely with their children's education

National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy
- A strategy to reduce unauthorised absence, improve attendance and tackle bad behaviour

Children at Risk
- Guidance on child protection and options for improving services for children and young people at risk

Information and Communications Technology in Schools
- A strategy to improve Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning, ICT capacity and capability in schools and to support effective delivery

Other elements of the national agenda for raising standards in education include:
- The importance of shared or distributed leadership and the development of leadership capacity and capability across the school
- Continuing professional development opportunities for school leaders available through the National College for School Leadership

Learning Record

Session: **Date:**

What have I learned from this session?

What am I going to do as a result?

What help do I need?

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www.nagm.org.uk	National Association of Governors and Managers
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www.ngc.org.uk	National Governors' Council
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Module One:
The Chair and the Headteacher

Key themes

This module focuses on the Chair's relationship with the Headteacher. It explores Headteachers' expectations of Chairs and Chairs' expectations of Headteachers, the importance of establishing a positive working relationship and managing that relationship for the benefit of the Governing Body and the school.

This module contains activities covering:

- An introduction to the programme, the Learning Record and Learning Networks
- Feedback from the pre-programme evaluation and identification of learning needs
- An overview of the role of the Chair
- The Chair's relationship with the Headteacher
- Headteachers' expectations
- How to get off to a good start in the relationship
- How to strengthen relationships
- A framework for the Chair and Headteacher in working together
- Scenario for the application of key skills in strategic and critical friend situations

Adapting the module

All activities and their related handouts and overheads are numbered. You can tailor this module to the needs of the participants and to the amount of time available by:

- Omitting some activities altogether
- Changing the order of the activities
- Shortening activities by transferring information to handouts
- Supplementing activities with your own material

Timings, appropriate for groups of 10 – 12, have been included to give an indication of the approximate length of each activity.

Introductory Activities

A number of introductory activities have been included in this module which, if all of them are used, will take up at least one hour. They are a valuable introduction to the whole programme, but if time is at a premium you will need to compromise and reduce them. Some of the information, for example on the content of the programme, Learning Records and Learning Networks, could be sent out in advance. In which case you may only need to allow a few minutes at the beginning of the session to answer any questions that participants have about them.

Module One: Overview

Activity	Topics	Approx Time
	Pre-programme self-evaluation	30 min

1.1	**Introduction to the programme**
	    Feedback from pre-programme evaluation
	    Overview of the programme
	    Learning Record and Learning Networks
		1 hr 10 min

1.2	**The role of the Chair** Group activity establishing a shared understanding of the role of the Chair	40 min
1.3	**Chair's relationship with the Headteacher** Facilitator presentation	20 min
1.4	**Headteachers' expectations** Outside speaker and discussion or individual work and discussion	30 min or 50 min

1.5	**Getting off to a good start**
	    Group work on strategies for establishing relationships with the Headteacher
	    Extension activity practising questioning skills
		35 min
		
		20 min

1.6	**Strengthening relationships** Individual and paired work using force field analysis to look at current working relationships, Chair's expectations and possible action	40 min
1.7	**A framework for working together** Whole group and small group work on frameworks and their potential uses	15 min or 30 min
1.8	**How would you deal with this?** A scenario exploring the key skills used by Chairs in discussion with the Headteacher on strategic and day to day issues	40 mins
1.9	**Plenary session** Summarising learning and preparing for next session	15 min

Skills and attributes

Skills and Attributes Activity	Team building skills	Organisational skills	Communication skills	Strategic skills	Analytical skills	Sensitivity	Enthusiasm/commitment	Integrity
1.1								
1.2		√	√		√		√	
1.3	√		√			√	√	√
1.4	√		√			√	√	√
1.5	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
1.6	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
1.7	√	√	√					
1.8	√		√	√	√	√		√
1.9								

Module One

Activity 1.1: Introduction to the programme

Aims

- To make introductions and discuss and agree protocols
- To reflect on the pre-programme evaluation and share learning objectives
- To introduce the Learning Record and Learning Networks

Overall length

- 1 hr 10 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.1 OHTs 1-5
- Activity 1.1: Handout 1
- Flip chart, Blu-Tack and pens
- Participants completed self-evaluations
- Analysis of evaluations
- Distance Learning Programme
- LEA Training Programme
- Guide to the Law
- Copies of Learning Record proforma (Appendix 7)
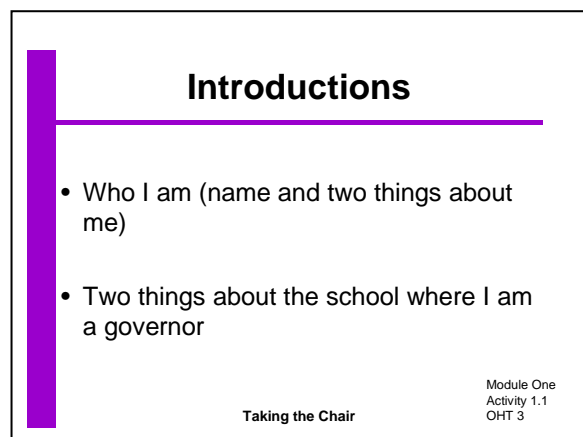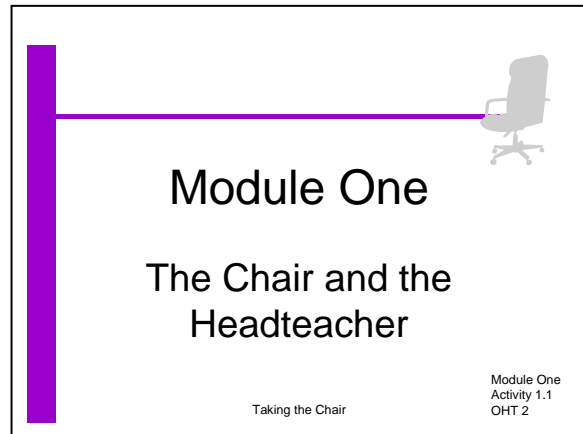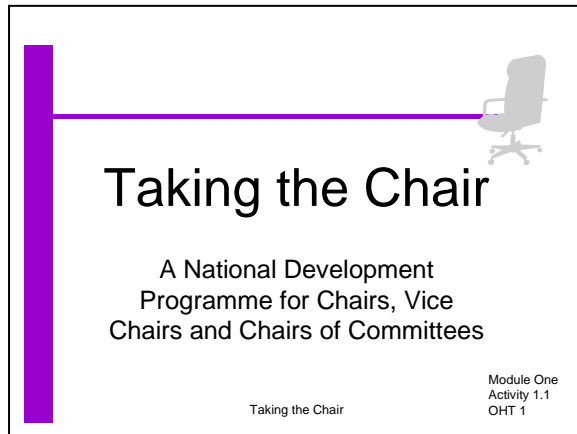- Contact details grid for Learning Networks

Key notes for facilitators

- This session provides you with the opportunity to identify learning needs and shape the programme if you have not already planned to do this using the evaluations
- You may wish to include an ice-breaking activity before going on to the feedback on the pre-programme evaluation. One is suggested below and you will know of others that work well.
- After the introductions would be a good time to discuss the suggested ground rules outlined in the Managing Sessions sections of the Toolkit Introduction. It will be important at the outset of this programme for the group to agree decisions about confidentiality.
- The module assumes an understanding of the role of the Governing Body. You may wish to refer participants to the Programme for New Governors if they need to refresh their understanding
- New Chairs may have completed the self-evaluation and experienced Chairs may have feedback from members of the Governing Body. You might want to pair them so that new Chairs are paired and experienced Chairs work with other experienced Chairs
- You may wish to record the points made by the participants on a flip chart and use this at subsequent sessions to demonstrate that you are meeting their needs and as a way of logging the learning that is taking place
- This activity can be shortened by sending some of the information out in advance

Task 1: Introductions

Use OHTs 1 and 2 to introduce the programme and the module

Taking the Chair

A National Development
Programme for Chairs, Vice
Chairs and Chairs of Committees

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.1
OHT 1

Module One

The Chair and the
Headteacher

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.1
OHT 2

Introductions

• Who I am (name and two things about me)

• Two things about the school where I am a governor

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.1
OHT 3

- Invite participants to work in pairs and exchange the information outlined on OHT 3. Comment on the importance of good listening and communication skills.
- Ask participants to very briefly introduce each other using the information they have gathered about their partner – stress the need to be brief, i.e. name, two personal details and two school details only in about 30 seconds each
- Suggest that others listen out for participants who share some of their own issues as they might wish to work with them in a Learning Network
- Alternatively, use an introductory activity of your own

Introductions (12 minutes)

Task 2: Ground rules

- Ask participants to suggest grounds rules. Have a few suggestions ready on a flip chart if suggestions are not made readily. Be prepared to add or subtract from your list so that the participants 'own' the ground rules and agree to abide by them. It will be important to discuss confidentiality and comments remaining in the room.

Agreement of ground rules (10 minutes)

Task 3: Feedback from pre-programme self-evaluation

The way in which you manage this task will depend on whether participants have returned self-evaluations or colleague evaluations to you for analysis. If you have an analysis of the development needs of the group, you might still want to give individuals the opportunity to reflect with a partner before discussing the needs of the whole group.   Participants will need copies of their self-evaluations. You may need to return any sent to you if you think they may not have had access to a photocopier.

If you have made an analysis of the returns from colleagues for an individual participant, you may wish to make arrangements to talk to them during a break or after the session on a one-to-one basis.

- Invite participants to work in the same pairs as before and discuss the outcomes of their self-evaluation if they have completed it.

- Run through OHT 4 and encourage them to share these key points in their pairs. They will not have time to go through the whole evaluation and will need to very briefly discuss key learning and development points only.

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Feedback from self-evaluation

- Two key learning points from this evaluation about strengths
- Two key challenges faced
- What I want to get out of this programme to develop my knowledge and skills as a Chair

<div align="right">Module One
Activity 1.1
OHT 4</div>

Taking the Chair
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- You may want to limit them to discussing only the first section of the self-evaluation at this point and use the self-evaluation as a way of introducing each successive module. This will save time in the first session and will help participants to reflect on their development points in each module.

Ten minutes each (20 minutes)

- Take feedback from participants and write up on a flip chart what they want to get out of the training, explaining that you will use this information to shape the training.
- Alternatively ask participants to share their key challenges before giving out copies of the group analysis and discuss with them where the emphasis of the programme will lie in order to meet their needs.

Feedback and recording of learning needs (10 minutes)

Task 4: Programme overview

- Now would be a good point to talk through the content of the programme, using Activity 1.1: Handout 1 so that participants are clear about what will be covered in each module and when the topics on the flip chart you have just created are likely to be covered.

- Also draw attention to sources of information to which participants can refer if they wish to refresh their understanding of background policies and procedures, including:
    - The Distance Learning Programme
    - Other LEA training and guidance
    - The National Programme for New Governors
    - The Guide to the Law
    - Ofsted Handbook for Inspection
    - Copies of the Bibliography (Appendix 8)

Facilitator input (5 minutes)

Task 5: Introduction to the Learning Record

- If you have decided to encourage the use of a Learning Record it could be introduced here

- Use OHT 5 to outline the purpose of the Learning Record which may be unfamiliar to some participants

Keeping a Learning Record

- Reflect on thoughts and feelings

- Reflect on new ideas

- Consider the implications for your role

- Record future actions you might take

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.1
OHT 5

- Give out copies of the Learning Record proforma from the Facilitator Toolkit Introduction as a guide to a possible format
- Encourage participants to record what they hope to gain from the programme in their Learning Record

Key points to make are:
- Keeping a record of learning and planned action is optional
- It provides an opportunity to draw together and organise what has been learned
- Reflection gives time for planning new approaches and actions
- The Learning Record is a personal document and can be kept in any way that the participant finds helpful. Questions on the Learning Record are provided for guidance only
- The Learning Record will be an evolving document, added to throughout the programme. Participants may want to jot down ideas that they would like to try out between sessions

Facilitator input (5 minutes)

Task 6: Introduction to Learning Networks

A Learning Network is an informal support group organised to suit the needs of its members. Learning collaboratively, from others within the same school or across schools and LEAs, is an important developing educational theme and may already be happening in the schools where your Chairs serve. It would be good to encourage collaboration and support for learning by offering participants the opportunity to form themselves into Learning Networks.

Learning Networks are:
- Optional and voluntary
- Managed by the participants themselves in any way they find helpful, including:
    - Exchanging telephone numbers or email addresses
    - Agreeing to be available to each other to discuss issues of common concern
    - Arranging informal meetings
- Often most successful if someone agrees to be the social secretary and take the initiative to arrange meetings if that is the wish of the group

Have ready grids for names and contact details and copy and distribute the list to its members after the session.

Facilitator input (5 minutes) Formation of Learning Networks (10 minutes)

Taking the Chair: Programme Overview

Module One: **The Chair and the Headteacher**
Introduction to the programme
The role of the Chair
Managing the relationship between the Chair and the
Headteacher

Module Two: **The Chair and the Governors**
The relationship between the Chair and other governors
Team leadership and team effectiveness
Recruiting, inducting and developing governors

Module Three: **Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing
Body**
Structuring the Governing Body
Effective meetings and decision-making

Module Four: **The Chair's Role in Supporting Strategic Leadership**
The Chair's role in supporting strategic effectiveness and the
strategic use of information

Module Five: **The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability**
The Chair's role in ensuring the school is held to account for
standards and in ensuring accountability to stakeholders

Activity 1.2: The role of the Chair

Aims

- To develop a group view of the role of the Chair
- To explore how the role of the Chair relates to and supports the work of the Governing Body

Overall length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.2: OHT 1
- 5 flip chart sheets, Blu-Tack and pens
- Post-it notes (large)

Key notes for facilitators

- The activity provides the springboard for later exploration during the programme of **how** the Chair effectively carries out the various roles
- The tasks carried out by Chairs are related back to the self-evaluation
- This activity creates the opportunity for exploring the delicate balancing act that characterises the role of the Chair – given that the Chair has few specific powers
- A key task for the Chair is to effectively organise the work and manage the relationships which enable the Governing Body to carry out its three key roles of providing strategic direction, being a critical friend and ensuring accountability for standards
- The modules have been arranged to emphasise the importance of relationships and supporting the Governing Body in its strategic role and its accountability role. The critical friend's role is emphasised throughout the programme
- It will be important to stress that the Chair is 'first amongst equals' but has a key leadership and management role in creating the conditions for partnership and for effective governance
- If you do not use this activity it could be replaced by handing out copies of Unit 1, Section 1: The Role of the Chair, in the Distance Learning Programme

Module One
Activity 1.2

Task 1: The role of the Chair

Introduce the aims of the activity using Activity
1.2: OHT 1

- Divide the participants into groups of 4

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The role of the Chair

The aims of the activity are to:

• Develop a group view of the role of the
Chair
• Explore how the Chair relates to and
supports the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.2
OHT 1
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- Give each group black felt tip pens and packs of large Post-its
- Ask participants to discuss in their group and then to write on Post-its, the aspects of the role of the Chair they think are important e.g. What the Chair does…'Chairs meetings', ' Represents the GB', 'Keeps up to date'
- Remind them to write only one aspect of the role on each Post-it in a maximum of 5 words. Writing should be as large and clear as possible.
- Challenge the group to describe what they do as Chairs rather than what they do as governors and ask them to refer back to their self-evaluation

Setting up and explaining task (5 minutes)

- Give each group about 15 minutes to discuss and write their Post-its

Group discussion and writing of Post-its (15 minutes)

- Put up 5 flip charts around the room headed 'Managing Relationships with the Headteacher', 'Managing relationships with Governors'
'Managing the Work of the Governing Body', 'Supporting Strategic Leadership', 'Ensuring Accountability'
- Ask participants to place their Post-its on the most appropriate chart

Organising Post-its on to flip charts (10 minutes)

- Divide the participants into 5 groups and assign each to a flip chart
- Ask them to sort the Post-its into order of importance, with the three most important tasks for Chairs at the top of the chart

Putting Post-its in priority order (5 minutes)

- Invite groups in turn to justify their choice of three most important tasks in each category, giving individuals from other groups an opportunity to comment
- If you feel that any have been overlooked, the self-evaluation highlights essential tasks for Chairs. Emphasise the importance of relationships.
- Draw attention to the way the programme has been organised around the flipchart headings.

Feedback from groups and Facilitator comments (10 minutes)

Activity 1.3: Chair's relationship with the Headteacher

Aims

- To explore the nature of the relationship between the Chair and the Headteacher
- To explore some of the conditions required for an effective relationship
- To create an opportunity for participants to begin to think about their own relationship with their Headteacher in preparation for the activities which follow

Overall length

- 20 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.3: OHTs 1-4
- Activity 1.3 Handout 1
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for facilitators

- Keep the Facilitator input brief to allow maximum time for the activities which follow
- Restrict discussion to points for clarification only at this stage
- Produce handouts of this presentation with space for notes so that participants can begin to collect issues for discussion following the presentation
- An important point to raise here is that when the Headteacher is using the Chair as a sounding board, the discussions are confidential. However, when the Chair gains information that relates to the role of the Governing Body and on issues for which the Governing Body ultimately has responsibility, this information must be shared with the Governing Body, even if it is uncomfortable – for example the school improvement adviser's report
- Activity 1.3: Handout 1 contains additional background information which you may find helpful when giving the presentation.
- If you are not using this activity, the Activity 1.3: Handout 1 could be used after Activity 1.2.
- This activity could be replaced by Unit 1, Section 2: The Chair's Relationship with the Headteacher, in the Distance Learning Programme

Task 1: The relationship between Chair and Headteacher

Use Activity 1.3: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

- Explain that you are going to outline some of the key features of the relationship between the Chair and the Headteacher and that you will be asking them to talk in pairs about their expectations of the Headteacher in a later activity

The Chair and the Headteacher

The aims of the activity are to:
- Explore the relationship between Chair and Headteacher
- Ask what makes an effective relationship
- Think about your own relationship with your Headteacher

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.3
OHT 1

Use Activity 1.3: OHT 2 to make the key points about the powers of a Chair:

- The Chair has few powers as an individual
- The Chair can only act without permission if urgent action is required (draw out one or two examples)
- The Chair is not the Headteacher's line manager
- These points underline the fact that with few powers, the Chair's role is to support and enable

The Chair's Powers

- Few powers are given to the Chair
- Only rarely can the Chair act without Governing Body permission
- The Chair is accountable to the Governing Body
- The Headteacher is not accountable to the Chair but to the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.3
OHT 2

Use Activity 1.3 OHT 3 to make the following point:

- The relationship between the Chair and the Head serves the Governing Body and should not become so personal that it excludes others or discourages frankness

An effective relationship…

- Facilitates the work of the Governing Body and does not exclude it
- Influences the climate in which Headteacher works with Governing Body
- Provides personal support to the Headteacher but is not 'cosy'

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.3
OHT 3

Use Activity 1.3: OHT 4 to emphasise the fact that relationships will differ according to a range of factors.

- Reassure participants that they will hear about a range of practice from other schools during the programme, some of which they will want to consider and some of which would not be transferable to their school.

The relationship…

- May differ depending on
  – Personalities
  – Size and phase of school
  – Issues facing the school
  – Time commitments
- There are no rules or blueprints
- The purpose of the relationship is to enhance school improvement

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.3
OHT 4

Facilitator presentation (5 minutes)

- Give out Activity 1.3: Handout 1

- Ask the group to give you any examples of information that the Chair might receive from the Headteacher that he/she should not share with others. The list should be a very short one, but it is important to draw from the group the type of information they consider to be confidential and the importance of respecting confidentiality in order to build trust and openness
- Examples might include:
  o Personal information about the Headteacher which the Headteacher has confided to the Chair
  o Ideas that the Headteacher has shared which are at an early stage of development
  o Confidential information about pupils, parents or staff which the Headteacher has shared, using the Chair as a sounding board
- Incorporate at this point any recent national guidance on confidentiality

Group discussion (5 minutes)

The Chair's relationship with the Headteacher

In developing a relationship with the Headteacher, Chairs need to be mindful of the limits of their powers and must not be drawn into decision-making at the expense of the corporate nature of the Governing Body.

Guidance on Governing Body Procedures from 1 September 2003 tells us that the Chair has a key role on the Governing Body. It is the Chair's responsibility to establish and foster an effective relationship with the Headteacher based on trust and mutual respect for each other's roles. The Chair has an important role in ensuring the Governing Body acts as a sounding board to the Headteacher and provides strategic direction.

Normally, the Chair of the Governing Body has no greater powers than those of any other governor. Like any governor, Chairs may only take decisions on their own if the Governing Body has delegated that decision to them.

Neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair can take decisions on behalf of the Governing Body on matters relating to alteration and closure of schools, change of category, approval of budget, discipline policies, and admissions.

It may sometimes be tempting for the Headteacher and Chair to sort things out on their own. All good Chairs resist the temptation to make decisions outside the Governing Body and in contradiction of agreed procedures. Careful thought should be given to which information is confidential to the Headteacher and the Chair and which should properly be shared with the Governing Body. The Governing Body should not feel that sides have been taken or decisions made behind their backs.

The Chair's relationship with the Headteacher and the frequency of their meetings may differ depending on personalities, the size and phase of the school, the issues facing the school and the time commitments of both the Headteacher and the Chair. It is likely that the frequency of meetings will increase where there is a newly appointed Headteacher, or a new Chair. There are no blueprints.

Some issues discussed by the Chair and the Headteacher should remain confidential. These might include: personal confidences, ideas shared at an early stage of development, confidential issues about pupils, parents or staff where the Headteacher is using the Chair as a sounding board.

Activity 1.4: Headteachers' expectations

Aims

- To explore the relationship between Chair and Headteacher from the perspective of a Headteacher
- To share good practice
- To develop empathy and understanding of the Headteacher's perspective
- To reflect on the participants' relationships with their Headteachers

Overall length

- 25 to 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.4: OHT 1
- Activity 1.4: Handout 1
- Activity 1.4: Speaker's Brief (sent in advance)
- Activity 1.3: Handout 1 (for speaker, sent in advance)
- Activity 1.5: Handout 5 (for speaker, sent in advance)
- Flip chart with questions prepared

Key notes for facilitators

- Many Headteachers and Chairs share similar concerns about establishing relationships
- There are two ways to manage this activity:

A) Invite a Headteacher to speak who is an effective leader and manager and who now has a good relationship with their Chair and Governing Body. If you can find a Headteacher who has had to overcome difficulties in the relationship and has worked these out with the Chair, the activity will be further improved. You will need to invite a Headteacher whose Chair of Governors is not a participant. Decide which school phase the Headteacher should come from, based on the composition of your group.

Ask the Headteacher to speak for 15 minutes on 'My Chair of Governors' using the brief provided (Activity 1.4: Speaker's Brief).

You will need to talk the Headteacher through the brief very carefully to make sure they address the learning you want to get out of the activity. You will need to add your contact details to the brief.

Provide the Headteacher with a copy of Activity 1.3: Handout 1 from the previous activity and Activity 1.5: Handout 5 as background

You could give out Activity 1.4: Handout 1 (for alternative activity B) as the points made on it will stimulate questioning of the Headteacher after their talk.

B) The alternative approach, if a speaker is not available, is to give participants a copy of Activity 1.4: Handout 1 as the starting point for the activity.

Task A: Understanding the expectations of Headteachers

Introduce the aims of the activity using Activity 1.4: OHT 1

- Introduce the Headteacher and invite them to speak for 15 minutes to the brief provided
  Speaker (15 minutes)

- Give out Activity 1.4: Handout 1 to stimulate ideas for questions

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Headteachers' expectations

The aims of the activity are to:
- Explore the relationship between Chair and Headteacher
- Share good practice
- Develop empathy and understanding of the Headteacher's perspective
- Reflect on your contribution to the relationship with your Headteacher

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.4
OHT 1
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- Ask participants to talk in pairs for 2 or 3 minutes about their reactions to the Headteacher's talk and to agree one question they would like to ask or one comment they would like to make
- It is important to give time for this reflection and framing of questions
- Give each pair an opportunity to put their question or comment to the Headteacher and encourage any further comments or discussion
- Draw out from the discussion key points about expectations and behaviours that make for a successful relationship

Discussion and feedback (15 minutes)

Task B: Exploring the expectations of Headteachers

Use Activity 1.4: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity
- Give out Activity 1.4: Handout 1 which lists the expectations Headteachers expressed of Chairs at a workshop for Heads and Chairs
- Ask participants to read through the list and tick items if they feel their Headteacher would agree that they meet these expectations

Individual reading and reflection (5 minutes)

- Put the following questions on a flip chart and ask participants to talk in pairs for 5 minutes about their reactions to these expectations:
  - Are they reasonable expectations?
  - Are any particularly difficult to fulfil?
  - What is meant by 'the loneliness of the Headteacher'?

Paired discussion (10 minutes)

- Hold a short plenary discussion taking answers from around the room to the questions above. Encourage participants to take Activity 1.4 Handout 1 to discuss with their Headteacher.

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Headteachers' expectations: Speaker's Brief

My Chair of Governors and I

Your audience are Chairs of Governors, Vice-Chairs or Chairs of committees. The programme they are undertaking is a development programme aimed at examining the skills needed to be an effective Chair.

Module 1 looks at the role of the Chair and the relationship between the Chair and the Headteacher. Your input is the opportunity for them to consider the relationship from the standpoint of the Headteacher.

In your talk please include reference to the following:

- Your understanding of the role of Chair
- What you expect from your Chair of Governors
- What skills your Chair brings to the relationship that makes it work

Please speak for no more than 15 minutes and answer questions for 10 minutes

If you would like to discuss the programme or your input, please contact:

Module One
Activity 1.4: Handout 1

Headteachers' expectations

Headteachers' expectations of Chairs, taken from a workshop on 'Sharing Strategic Leadership'

Tick 'Yes' if you think your Headteacher would agree that you meet the expectation. Tick 'No' if this is an area to develop	Yes	No
To act as a sounding board for new ideas; kite flying, blue skies thinking and the off loading of problems or concerns		
To respect confidentiality		
To understand the loneliness of headship		
To be a true, critical friend – prepared to challenge		
To have humour		
To be committed to the school in every respect		
To be knowledgeable about the school, but be able to ask the naïve questions		
To keep the Governing Body on track		
To be a leader of the Governing Body and to run effective meetings		
To be knowledgeable about the different roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher, the staff and the governors both individually and collectively		
To be trained and keep abreast of current issues		
To get the best out of the Governing Body as a whole and of the individual governors by using their skills and attributes fully		
To share both the good and the bad		
To ensure that all types of monitoring are focused and properly planned		
To ensure that the results of the evaluations inform future decisions and plans		
To ensure that meetings are properly clerked and have a focus on learning and not just procedural matters		

Activity 1.5: Getting off to a good start

Aims

- To practise the skills required to establish a relationship with the Headteacher
- To explore the type of questions which will help to establish the relationship
- To explore the type of information new Chairs need linked to the key roles of the Governing Body
- To consider how to frame questions

Overall length

- 60 minutes

Resources
- Activity 1.5: OHT 1
- Activity 1.5: Handouts 1-5
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for facilitators

- This activity will be particularly suitable for new Chairs in the early stages of developing a relationship with the Headteacher, or an experienced Chair with a newly appointed Headteacher
- If participants are not in either position, they might plan how they would approach the early stages of a relationship if a new Headteacher was appointed in the future, incorporating any lessons learnt from the past
- When constructing their topics for discussion and questions to ask, remind participants that Headteachers are often just as concerned as they are to start off on the right foot and often welcome the Chair taking the initiative in raising issues
- The way in which questions are phrased can be very powerful. Activity 1.5: Handout 2 provides a quick guide which will encourage participants to think about how they are phrasing questions
- Building a relationship is a two-way process and Headteachers also have expectations of how this first meeting will go. At the end of the activity give out Activity 1.5: Handout 4 and Activity 1.5: Handout 5 for participants to take away. They might find it useful to think about how they would respond to these questions and issues.
- If you have not used Activity 1.4, it would be useful to include reference to Activity 1.4: Handout 1 in this activity

Module One
Activity 1.5

Task 1: Getting off to a good start

Introduce the aims of the activity using Activity
1.5: OHT 1

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Getting off to a good start

The aims of the activity are to:
• Practise the skills required to establish a relationship with the Headteacher
• Explore the type of questions which will help to establish the relationship
• Explore the type of information new Chairs need linked to the key roles of the Governing Body
• Consider how to frame questions

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.5
OHT 1
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• Organise the participants into an even number of groups of 3 or 4, grouping new Chairs or more experienced Chairs together (including participants who are not Chairs of Governors with new Chairs)
• Give them out Activity 1.5: Handout 1 'Getting off to a Good Start', which explains the task, and talk them through it
• Give out Activity 1.5: Handout 2 'Questioning Skills' and ask them to skim read it before they start framing their questions
• Ask them to think about how they will approach topics and ask questions as well as what they will ask
• Give out Activity 1.5: Handout 3 'Recording Sheet' and ask them to record their ideas, questions and the documents they would need

Facilitator introduction (5 minutes)
Small group discussion (20 minutes)

• Draw the groups together and, asking each group in turn, collect the topics they would want to cover on a flip chart. Ask the group about the documents they would need and why. Ask the group whether anything important has been omitted.

Whole group feedback (10 minutes)

Task 2: Asking the right questions

• Ask each group to join another group (making 2 groups of 6 or 8).
• Groups take turns to pose 4 of their prepared questions from the Recording Sheet to the other group, as though they were asking them of the Headteacher.
• The other group acts as the 'critical friend' and gives them feedback on how the question is coming across (open, closed, probing, reflective, building, summarising, friendly, neutral, hostile etc.) Groups then swap roles.

Group work 8 minutes each group (16 minutes)

• Hold a brief closing discussion, asking participants for a quick list of dos and don'ts they would recommend to each other from their experience of holding such meetings.

- Give out Activity 1.5: Handouts 4 and 5 which reinforce the issues that should have emerged from the discussions. Give out Activity 1.4: Handout 1 for further reflection if not previously used.

Plenary discussion (5 minutes)

Getting off to a good start

Task (choose A or B)

A. You are planning your first meeting with the Headteacher as the new Chair

B. You are planning your first meeting with the newly appointed Headteacher

You want to:

- Get to know them as a person

- Explore your expectations of them

- Explore their expectations of you

- Identify the priorities for the coming school year

- Establish a pattern of working for the Governing Body over the coming year

Record on the Record Sheet

- The topics you want to raise

- The questions you would ask

- The documents you would want to have with you during the discussion

Think about **how** you are going to phrase the questions.

You have 20 minutes for this task

Getting off to a good start
Types of questions

Listening skills and questioning skills are important for all governors and Chairs from appointing staff to challenging attainment and achievement. These skills are particularly important for the Chair in their relationships with the Headteacher.

Question	Useful for	Not useful for
• **Open** **'Tell me about…'** **'What about…?'**	• **Opening discussions and exploring new information** • **Encouraging people to talk**	• **Talkative people** • **When specific information is needed**
• **Closed** **'How many children were playing in the playground?'**	• **Clarifying single facts** • **Narrowing the context**	• **Getting people to talk** • **Opening up new areas**
• **Probing** **'How do our results compare overall and by subject with those of previous years?'**	• **Making statements more specific** • **Clarifying where something seems unclear**	• **Getting a general view of a situation**
• **Reflective** **'You feel concerned about what happened…'**	• **Reflecting back what is heard, seen and felt – often using the same words** • **Establishing empathy**	• **Establishing facts**
• **Building/ linking** **'Earlier you spoke about…'**	• **Maintaining a flow of information** • **Enabling the interview to move forward**	• **Checking specific information**
• **Summarising** **'You seem to be saying…'** **'Can I make sure that I have understood you?'**	• **Clarifying and checking** • **Trying to reach a conclusion**	• **Talkative people**

Getting off to a good start

Recording Sheet

The topics you want to raise

The questions you would ask

The documents you would want to have with you during the discussion

Getting off to a good start

A group of new headteachers compiled this list of topics they would want to discuss at their first meeting with the Chair of Governors. How would you respond to them?

- What do you see as your role?

- What is your understanding of the aims and ethos of the school?

- When are you available and how much time can you give?

- Where do you go for advice and support?

- What is your view on confidentiality?

- What's in it for you?

- What other roles do you play in the community?

- What skills do you have?

- What's your commitment to this role?

- How are you going to act as a critical friend?

- What do you want from me?

Getting off to a good start

The Chair as critical friend of the Headteacher

The relationship between the Chair and Headteacher is of great importance to the successful operation of the Governing Body and the School.

The Headteacher needs to feel that any discussions with a Chair of Governors are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. At the same time a Headteacher must be aware that the Chair of Governors, along with the Governing Body, is accountable for overall school improvement and will therefore need to ask challenging as well as supportive questions. As an effective Chair, you will be able to listen and ask appropriate questions as well as acting as a sounding board for the Headteacher. For this to work well there must be an understanding that some conversations will be treated as confidential, but that all conversations must be carried out with regard for the Chair's responsibility to the school.

You and the Headteacher should make the opportunity to discuss mutual expectations at the earliest opportunity. This should be done whether you are new to your role or the Headteacher is new to the school.

You might wish to discuss how you and the Headteacher will:

- Share the responsibility and the workload

- Accept one another's strengths and weaknesses

- Be discreet and not break confidences

- Be honest with one another

- Be loyal to the school

- Respect one another

- Trust one another

You may find that the booklet ' Roles of Governing Bodies and the Headteacher' (ref: DfEE 0168/2000) is helpful both in generating discussion and establishing a pattern of work and focus for the whole Governing Body. See also the latest version of the Decision Planner www.governornet.co.uk

Activity 1.6: Strengthening relationships

Aims

- To explore the positive and negative influences affecting individual's relationships with their Headteachers
- To begin to identify how participants might strengthen the relationship by increasing positive aspects and reducing any barriers to an effective relationship

Overall length

35 minutes

Resources:
- Activity 1.6: OHT 1
- Activity 1.6: Handouts 1-3
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for facilitators

- This activity requires participants to reflect honestly and carefully about their own relationship with their Headteacher
- Remind participants about the need for confidentiality
- Refer participants back to any notes they made during your initial presentation (if used) on relationships with Headteachers (Activity 1.3) and to the flip charts of topics they would want to discuss with the Headteacher written at the end of the previous activity (if used)
- There are unlikely to be any participants with relationships that could not be strengthened in some way, but if there are, ask them to focus on what skills and attributes they bring to the relationship which makes them so effective
- Activity 1.6: Handout 1 lists Chairs' expectations of Headteachers drawn up by a group of Chairs at a recent conference. You may want to refer to this when talking to individuals if you think they are not taking all aspects of the relationship into account. However, you will probably not share the list until the participants have completed the session.
- You may need to draw an example of how to use the force field analysis tool on a flip chart to get people started (Activity 1.6: Handout 3 provides an example – the longer the line in any direction, the stronger the force)

Task 1: Chairs' analysis of their relationship

Introduce the aims of the activity using Activity
1.6: OHT 1

> ### Strengthening relationships
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> • Explore the positive and negative influences affecting individuals' relationships with their Headteachers
> • Begin to identify how they might strengthen the relationship by increasing the positive and reducing any barriers to the relationship
>
> Taking the Chair
>
> Module One
> Activity 1.6
> OHT 1

- Ask people to work individually, making two lists:
    - o The positive aspects of their relationship with their Headteacher and
    - o The barriers to an effective relationship

Introduction to activity (5 minutes), Individual list making (10 minutes)

- Give out the force field analysis, Activity 1.6: Handout 2 and ask participants to plot the positives and barriers, drawing lines to indicate the relative strength or importance of the issue
- Give out the example, Activity 1.6: Handout 3, if needed or draw an example on a flip chart
- Circulate while participants are working and suggest issues from Activity 1.6: Handout 1 if some of these common expectations are not being considered

Plotting positives and barriers (10 minutes)

Task 2: Reflecting on improving relationships

- Now ask people to work in groups of 4 or larger (from the same school phase if appropriate),
- Ask participants to discuss what practical action they might take to improve aspects of the relationship and remove barriers

Group discussions (10 minutes)

- Ask for one or two comments from the group, reminding them about ground rules on confidentiality

Plenary discussion (5 minutes)

Strengthening Relationships

Chairs' expectations of Headteachers:

- A commitment to the Governing Body, a recognition of the role of governors and particularly its difficulty and complexity
- Valuing the Governing Body's contribution and the individual contribution of each governor
- To have a shared vision
- To have a good working relationship with the Chair
- To bring ideas and proposals to the Governing Body for discussion and evaluation
- To be properly prepared for meetings and not produce surprises
- Information flow and effective communication
- To have a professional commitment
- To have good interpersonal skills
- To be accountable, particularly with regard to difficult decisions
- Openness and honesty
- To recognise that governors have a life outside school
- To be less defensive and more open to challenge
- To respect and understand confidentiality

Strengthening Relationships: Force Field Analysis

Factors influencing an effective relationship between Chair and Headteacher

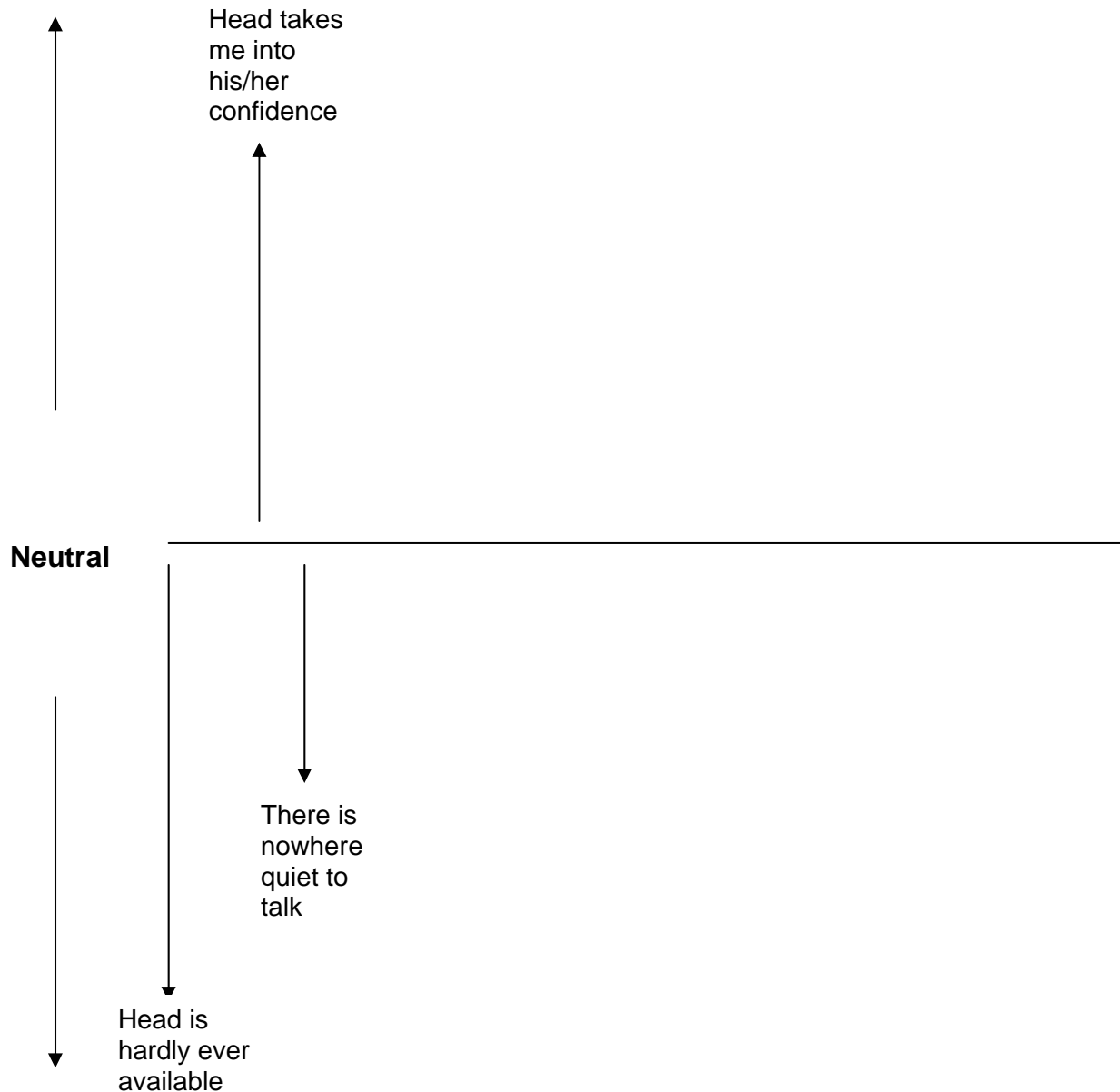**Positive influences/Strengths**

Neutral

Negative influences/Barriers

Strengthening Relationships: Force Field Analysis

Factors influencing an effective relationship between Chair and Headteacher-example

Positive influences/Strengths

Head takes me into his/her confidence

Neutral

There is nowhere quiet to talk

Head is hardly ever available

Negative influences/Barriers

Module One

Activity 1.7: A framework for working together

Aims

- To consider the advantages of an agreed framework for working together drawn up by the Chair and the Headteacher
- To consider the possible outline of a framework

Overall length

- 15 to 25 minutes

Resources
- Activity 1.7: OHT 1
- Flip chart and pens
- Local examples of frameworks for the Chair and Headteacher in working together

Key notes for facilitators

- If you have examples of such frameworks you may want to have some copies for reference
- You may wish to lead a discussion first on the pros and cons of drawing up a framework before deciding whether to go on to group work on a possible outline
- The advantage of a Chair and Headteacher working together to draw up a framework is that they have the opportunity to bring into the open issues that have been concerning them
- Developing a joint framework would be a useful activity for a new Headteacher and a Chair or a new Chair and a Headteacher– or a Headteacher and Chair where the relationship is not progressing as well as hoped
- Unit One: Section 4: 'A Framework for Working Together' from the Distance Learning Programme could be used as a substitute for this activity

Task 1: To consider the use of a framework for working together

Use Activity 1.7: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

A framework for working together

The aims of the activity are to:
- Consider the use of an agreed framework for working together drawn up by the Chair and the Headteacher
- Consider the possible outline of a framework

Taking the Chair

Module One
Activity 1.7
OHT 1

Module One
Activity 1.7

- Lead a whole group discussion on the pros and cons of having a written agreed framework for working together
- Write up the pros and cons on a flip chart
- If the consensus is that it would be useful ask people to suggest headings and write these up. These might include issues that have been raised earlier as barriers and also include:
    - Frequency of meetings
    - Records of meetings
    - Confidentiality
    - Feedback to staff and the Governing Body
    - Contact protocols etc.

Facilitator introduction and whole group discussion (15 minutes)

- Now ask people to work in groups of 4 and make their own list of issues and what agreements they would like to see under the headings.
- Collect these and copy for distribution at the next session.
- Encourage participants to share the ideas they have developed with their Headteachers

Small group work (10 minutes)

Activity 1.8: How would you deal with this?

Aims

- To explore the shared leadership role of the Chair and the Headteacher
- To use strategic issues to consider how to achieve a positive working relationship with the Headteacher

Overall Length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.8: OHT 1
- Activity 1.8: Handouts 1-6

Key notes for facilitators

General points:
- The participants work in groups of three with one of the trio taking the role of the Headteacher – encourage them to do this by emphasising the importance of being able to see a situation from the other point of view – the scenario is quite straight forward and it will not be difficult to imagine oneself in this role
- Remind the participants not to get too concerned about the detail of the scenario – the important learning is about use of skills (such as understanding others, listening and being diplomatic) and thinking about the underlying issues
- Stress the importance of aiming for an amicable resolution of the situation

The main issues are:
- The Headteacher has only been in post two terms
- The school has serious weaknesses and having a set of agreed values could make a contribution to improvement
- The Headteacher and the Chair have a good working relationship
- Has the Governing Body been appropriately involved in reviewing values? It seems reasonable that the Headteacher would start the discussion with the staff.
- Was the Governing Body appropriately prepared for the discussion at the meeting?
- Could more have been done to make them feel they had a part to play in shaping the values?
- The Governor concerned and the Headteacher will probably be upset about what has happened. The Chair will want to do what he/she can to mend fences and ensure that a reasonable discussion about the values takes place at the next meeting of the Governing Body
- What might have been done differently?
- How might a Chair ensure that all views are heard?

- What support could the Chair give the Headteacher in this situation?
- What steps could the Chair take before the next meeting?
- What skills does the Chair need in dealing with this sort of situation?
- What are the responsibilities of the Chair in this situation? – This is a key point. The Chair can act as a diplomatic go-between but the Headteacher is not accountable to the Chair and the Chair is not responsible for the actions of a governor. Nevertheless the Chair has a role to play in moving the situation forward.

Task 1: Preparation

Use Activity 1.8: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

How would you deal with this?

The aims of the activity are to:
- Explore the shared leadership role of the Chair and the Headteacher
- Consider how to maintain positive working relationships
- Practise a range of useful skills

Module One
Activity 1.8
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

- Divide the participants into three equal groups: A, B and C (if you have an odd number, create an additional observer) and give out the relevant handouts (see below)

- Give 10 minutes for reading and planning (each person needs an action plan to refer to if necessary in the next part of the activity). Stress the importance of planning how to improve relationships and working practices for the future.

Group A: Chair of Governors

Participants in Group A will each take the role of Chair of Governors. They each need

- **Activity 1.8: Handout 1 (Role Briefing for Chair of Governors)**
- **Activity 1.8: Handout 3 (Planning Sheet)**

The group reads through the Role Briefing and after a brief discussion each person records their individual plans on a Planning Sheet.

Group B: Headteachers

Participants in Group B will each take the role of Headteacher. They each need:

- **Activity 1.8: Handout 2 (Role Briefing for Headteacher)**
- **Activity 1.8: Handout 3 (Planning Sheet)**

The group reads through the Role Briefing and after a brief discussion each person records their individual plans on a Planning Sheet.

Just before the end of this planning session, give out **Activity 1.8: Handout 4 (Task Sheet for Chair and Headteacher)** to groups A and B.

Group C: Observers

Participants in Group C will each take the role of Observer. They need:

- **Activity 1.8: Handout 5 (Observer's Task Sheet)**
- **Activity 1.8: Handout 6 (Observation schedule)**

Facilitator works with Observers for 10 minutes:

- Talk the Observers through the task sheet and the observation schedule
- Make a few key points about writing down examples of the skills in action and about the way in which they need to manage the feedback – this should be very light touch.
- Make the point that Observers have the opportunity to practise skills of listening, understanding others and sensitivity
- Ask if they have any questions and recap and reassure – this role may be a new one for some participants

Preparation (10 minutes)

Task 2: Trio activity

- Now organise the participants into trios consisting of one person from each of groups A, B and C. If you have an additional observer assign them to one of the trios and ask them to share the feedback. Remind groups of the timing for the activity.

Trio discussions (10 minutes)

- Observer-led feedback and discussion

Observer-led feedback in trios (10 minutes)

- Facilitator led whole group discussion on key learning points. Ensure coverage of the main issues listed in' Key notes for facilitators'

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

How would you deal with this?

Role Briefing – Chair of Governors

The school has been identified as having serious weaknesses. Two terms ago, the governors appointed a new Headteacher and you have established a good working relationship with him/her – taking on the role of critical friend. The Headteacher has spent some time working with the Leadership Group on the core values he/she thinks should underpin the life and work of the school. These values have been identified as *Improvement, Achievement, Self-reliance and Teamwork*. You are pleased at the development, as the previous values were vague and had little or no impact.

The Headteacher has told you that the draft statement was presented to a staff meeting two weeks ago and it was well received. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

At last night's meeting the Headteacher presented the draft statement to the Governing Body. One of the parent governors was outspoken and aggressive in his response. First of all, he said, the governors had not been consulted up until now, and they should have been involved at an earlier stage. Secondly, he was very concerned at the omission of morality. He said, "These so-called values are all about doing better. You could become a better vandal or car thief. They say nothing about how individuals should behave towards each other."

At this point the Headteacher became upset. The parent governor, you remembered, had been very direct with him/her in the past. The Headteacher became involved in a tense exchange with the parent governor and challenged his arguments. Other governors joined in the discussion seeking to calm things down.

You proposed that the draft statement be considered at the next governors' meeting. Afterwards you had a quiet word with the Headteacher and suggested a meeting the following morning to discuss the situation.

How would you deal with this?

Role Briefing – Headteacher

You are into your second term of headship at a school that has been identified as having serious weaknesses. You have a good relationship with the Chair who takes on the role of critical friend. You have spent some time working with the Leadership Group on the core values that you think should underpin the life and work of the school. You have identified these as being *Improvement, Achievement, Self-reliance and Teamwork.* Until now the school had a series of vaguely expressed aims that had little or no impact.

You presented a draft statement at a staff meeting two weeks ago and it was very well received.

Last night, you presented the draft statement to the meeting of the Governing Body. One of the parent governors was outspoken and aggressive in his response. First of all, he said, the governors had not been consulted up until now, and they should have been involved at an earlier stage. Second, he was very concerned at the omission of morality. "These so-called values are all about doing better. You could become a vandal or car thief. They say nothing about how individuals should behave towards each other."

This upset you. This governor's behaviour towards you had been rude on previous occasions. You challenged his arguments and refused to give any ground. Other governors joined in the discussion, anxious to calm things down. You got the impression that they were embarrassed by the governor's rudeness, whilst having some sympathy for what he was actually saying.

The Chair then proposed that the draft statement be reconsidered at the next governors' meeting. Afterwards he/she suggested that you meet him/her the following morning to discuss the situation.

How would you deal with this? Planning Sheet

Identify the issues in the scenario your group is considering. If you were the Chair/Headteacher:

- ▪ What actions would you take and why?

- ▪ How would you implement the actions?

- ▪ What outcomes do you hope to achieve?

You may find it useful to think about this in terms of short, medium and long term actions.

Identify:	
Priority issues to deal with	
Short term action required	Expected outcomes
Medium term action required	Expected outcomes
Long term action required	Expected outcomes
Issues to discuss/raise with Headteacher/Chair	

How would you deal with this?

Task Sheet for Chair and Headteacher

Hold a meeting between the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher.

Within the group there are three roles: the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher and an Observer.

The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors have 10 minutes for a discussion about what happened at the Governing Body meeting.

The Chair can expect to use a range of skills in this situation including:

- Teambuilding skills
- Strategic skills
- Communication skills

The Headteacher should respond and carry out their role in a way they think is realistic.

10 minutes discussion

The Observer is looking at the way in which the Chair goes about the discussion with the Headteacher. After the discussion, the Observer will give feedback to the Chair on the skills he/she was using. The Headteacher will also comment on how the discussion went from his/her point of view.

10 minutes feedback

How would you deal with this?

Observer's Task Sheet

Yesterday evening there was a heated discussion at the Governing Body meeting and the Headteacher and a parent governor became involved in a tense exchange of views. The Chair postponed the discussion until the next meeting of the Governing Body and arranged to meet the Headteacher in the morning.

You are going to observe the discussion between the Chair and the Headteacher on the following morning.

The Chair's objective is to mend fences and pave the way forward for a productive discussion at the next meeting.

Using the observation schedule

The observation schedule lists some of the skills that a chair might be using in these circumstances.

Write down what you **hear** and **see** the Chair saying or doing. Try and record good examples of the chair demonstrating the skills rather than writing down, for example, "You did that well". You want to be able to report back actual examples…Body language "You smiled a lot and nodded to show you agreed", Teambuilding skills "When you said ….you showed that you understood how the Head felt".

Giving feedback

The purpose of the feedback is to help the person taking the role of Chair think about:

- How they handled the situation
- How they came across
- How the other person (the Headteacher) responded

The activity gives all the participants the opportunity to think about using skills in practical situations

1. Start by asking the Chair how they felt the conversation had gone. (It is much easier to identify where we could improve when we have identified our own areas for development).
2. Be positive – give examples of what went well and why, using the evidence you have collected
3. Ask the Chair if there is anything they would do differently next time
4. Ask the Headteacher how it felt from their point of view
5. Use comments from questions 3 and 4 to diplomatically highlight any major shortcomings although they will probably already have emerged. Don't make the Chair feel you are rating their performance!

Observation Schedule

In the Evidence box write what you **see and hear** that shows the skills being used. Use this evidence to feed back to the Chair

Teambuilding skills	Evidence
Understanding others	
Motivating	
Showing flexibility	

Strategic skills	Evidence
Having long term goals	
Understanding change	
Seeing wider issues and implications of actions	

Communication skills	Evidence
Communicating effectively	
Listening	
Being diplomatic	

Personal Attributes	Evidence
Takes the views of others into account	
Takes the interests and feelings of others into account	
Acts impartially	

Body language	Evidence
Tone of voice	
Eye contact	
Gestures	

Module One

Activity 1.9: Plenary session

Aims
- To reflect on learning
- To evaluate the session
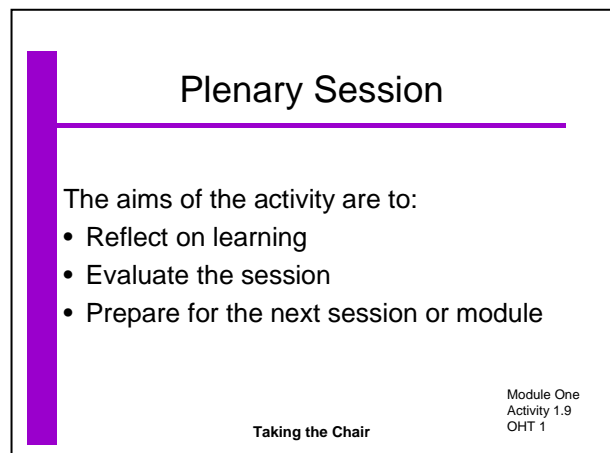- To prepare for the next session

Overall length

- 15 minutes

Resources
- Activity 1.9: OHTs 1-2
- Handouts from previous activities if not already distributed
- Flip chart and pens
- Copies of Learning Record proforma (Appendix 7) from Activity 1.1
- Handouts required in preparation for Module Two (see Task 2)

Task 1: Plenary discussion

Introduce the Plenary Session using Activity 1.9: OHT 1

Plenary Session
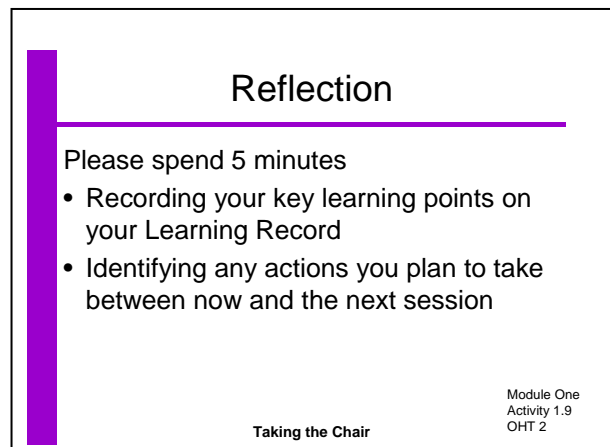
The aims of the activity are to:
- Reflect on learning
- Evaluate the session
- Prepare for the next session or module

Module One
Activity 1.9
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

- Use Activity 1.9: OHT 2 to outline a 5 minute task for the participants – to record their key learning points and any actions identified in this session, using the Learning Record if they wish.

- Remind participants that they are thinking about what they have learnt – they are not evaluating the session, there will be an opportunity for that at the end.

Reflection

Please spend 5 minutes
- Recording your key learning points on your Learning Record
- Identifying any actions you plan to take between now and the next session

Module One
Activity 1.9
OHT 2

Taking the Chair

- Ask participants to share one key learning point
- Record the learning points on a flip chart

Reflection and recording (5 minutes)

- Insert here a reminder to complete any evaluation sheets you may be using

- Distribute any remaining related fact sheets and learning network contact details if these have been used and if you have been able to photocopy them during the session. Otherwise they could be sent.
- Discuss the objectives of the next session and distribute any preparatory tasks
- Ask for any questions or comments

(15 minutes)

Task 2: Preparation for Module Two

Activity 2.2

- If you decide to use Activity 2.2 Team Effectiveness in Module Two, this could be given as a between session task. You will need:

    o Copies of Activity 2.2: Handout 1 (Team Health Check)
    o A briefing sheet for participants – suggested wording is given below

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Team Health Check: Suggested wording for briefing for participants

In Module Two you will be exploring your role as leader of the team of governors in your school. Although Governing Bodies, made up of volunteers who come together at intervals, differ in many respects from teams in the work place, they also share many characteristics. All teams need purpose and direction, a leader, an understanding of their roles, effective team processes and communications and good relationships. How does your Governing Body feel about itself as a team? Try this health check with some governors.   If you have used the colleague evaluation in preparation for Module One, select another small group of colleagues to help you. The health check should only take about 10 minutes to complete.

When you have collected together the responses ask yourself whether there are any issues that need addressing and how, as Chair, you might go about this. You might find it useful to discuss your responses with the Headteacher

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Activity 2.6

- If you plan to use Activity 2.6 in Module Two you may wish to ask participants to bring their own induction policies, if they have them.

Module Two:
The Chair and the Governors

Key themes

This module focuses on the relationship between the Chair and the other members of the Governing Body. Although the Chair is 'first amongst equals' and has very few powers as Chair, he/she does much to create the climate in which the Governing Body works as a team.

This module contains activities which explore:

- The Chair's role as team leader
- The conditions for effective teamwork
- The different types of leadership the Chair needs to show
- The role the Chair can play in ensuring effective recruitment, induction and development of governors

Adapting the module

All activities and their related handouts and overheads are numbered but you can tailor this module to the needs of the participants and to the amount of time available by:

- Omitting some activities altogether
- Changing the order of the activities
- Shortening activities by transferring information to handouts
- Supplementing activities with your own material

Timings, appropriate for groups of 10 – 12, have been included to give an indication of the approximate length of each activity.

Learning Record

You may want to re-introduce the Learning Record before your first activity, in which case you may need spare copies.

Module Two: Overview

Activity	Topics	Approx Time
2.1	**Team Leadership** The Chair's role in leading the Governing Body	20 min
2.2	**Team effectiveness** The characteristics of effective teams	30 mins
2.3a	**Leadership** An exploration of leadership styles and their uses in different situations	55 mins
2.3b	**Leadership** An alternative activity exploring how the Chair's leadership style can affect corporate decision making	40 mins
2.4	**Knowing your team** Exploring the value of auditing skills and experience on the Governing Body	50 mins
2.5	**Managing a recruitment problem** An activity on recruitment stressing the Chair's strategic management role	35 mins
2.6	**Inducting new governors** The role of the Chair in ensuring appropriate induction for new governors	70 mins
2.7	**Supporting governor development** Exploring strategies for encouraging the development of others	25 mins
2.8	**Supporting governor development** A case study about deployment of governors to committees	30 mins
2.9	**Plenary session**	15 mins

Skills addressed in this module

Skills and Attributes Activity	Team building	Negotiating	Understanding others	Challenging	Being assertive	Organisational	Developing others	Communication	Listening	Strategic skills	Analytical skills	Flexibility	Sensitivity	Enthusiasm/commitment	Integrity
2.1															
2.2	√		√					√	√		√	√	√		√
2.3a/b	√	√	√					√	√		√	√	√	√	√
2.4	√		√				√	√	√	√	√			√	√
2.5	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√			√	
2.6	√		√			√	√	√	√				√	√	
2.7	√		√				√	√	√					√	
2.8	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√				√		√
2.9															

Module Two

Activity 2.1: Team leadership

Aims

- To provide an introduction to the module
- To develop an awareness of the Chair's role in leading the Governing Body
- To prepare for the activities which follow

Overall length

- 20 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.1: OHTs 1-7
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This short input by the Facilitator raises awareness of the contribution the Chair makes to the effectiveness of the Governing Body as a team
- The Chair increases the effectiveness of the team so that it can play a full role as a partner in the leadership of the school
- Although the Chair has a team leadership role, he/she is an equal member of the Governing Body – in other words Chairs have influence but little power and this is sometimes uncomfortable. Participants may want to discuss how they handle this
- The Chair acts as a facilitator ensuring that all members of the Governing Body contribute to school effectiveness and improvement
- In carrying out this role, the Chair exercises a number of key organisational and interpersonal skills
- How the Chair carries out this role affects the involvement and motivation of other governors and might also impact on the Headteacher's view of the Governing Body
- Elements of the role highlighted in the presentation are explored through the activities

Task 1: Welcome and introductions

- If the group has new members or you are new to the group, start the session with the usual introductions, housekeeping and ground rules
- Encourage reflection by putting a question on the flip chart such as 'What were your key learning points from the last session?' or 'Have you changed/or planned to change anything in the way you work since the last session?' for participants to mull over as they come in
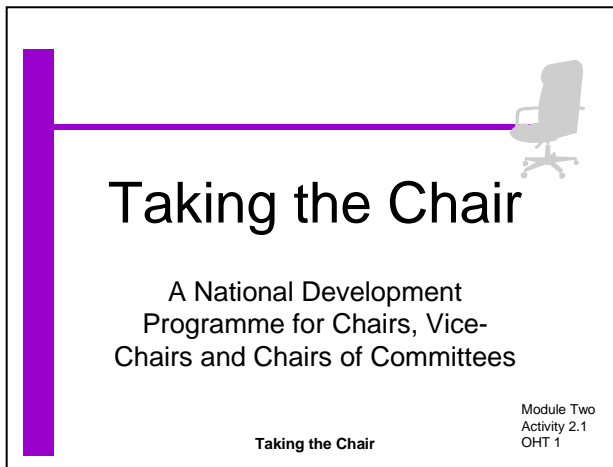- Recap on the previous session by asking for responses to your questions

Introductions and recap (10 minutes)

Task 2: Facilitator presentation

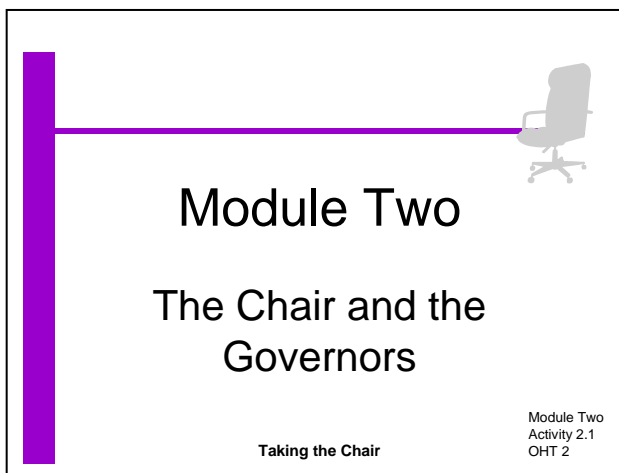Activity 2.1: OHTs 1 and 2 can be used at the start of the session

Taking the Chair

A National Development Programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of Committees

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 1

Module Two

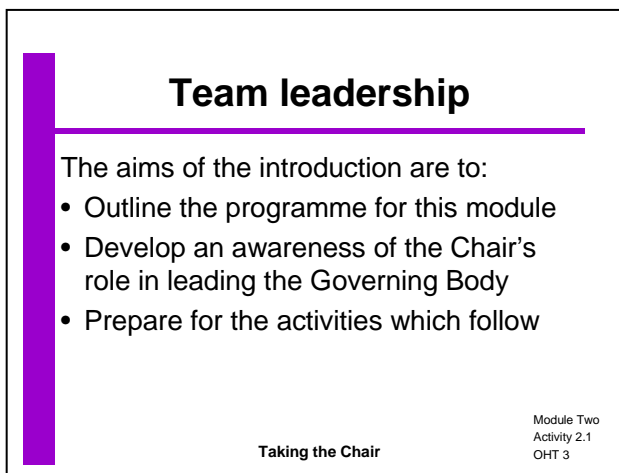The Chair and the Governors

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 2

• Use Activity 2.1: OHT 3 to introduce the aims of the activity

Team leadership

The aims of the introduction are to:
• Outline the programme for this module
• Develop an awareness of the Chair's role in leading the Governing Body
• Prepare for the activities which follow

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 3

- Activity 2.1: OHTs 4 –7 form the basis of a presentation on the role of the Chair as a team leader.

- As you use the slides, ask the participants to comment on some of the key statements or provide examples – but keep comments brief

- Explain that aspects of the team leadership role will be explored during this session. At this point you might want to run through the programme for the session

- Remind participants of the content of future sessions or modules by referring them back to Activity 1.1: Handout 1 (If new people have joined the group you will need some additional copies of this handout)

The Chair as team leader

- The Governing Body is a team
- Every team needs a leader
- The Chair is elected to carry out this role
- The leader ensures effectiveness in carrying out roles and responsibilities
- The Chair is 'first among equals'
- How the Chair leads the team affects everyone

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 4

Looking after the team

The Chair
- Leads
- Coordinates
- Includes
- Motivates
- Develops
- Represents

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 5

To be an effective leader, a Chair…

- Remembers they have influence but little power
- Is committed to the interests of the school
- Is open to the views of others
- Values the contribution of all
- Takes advice and feedback from colleagues

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 6

Module Two
Activity 2.1

The most effective Chair…

"The most effective Chair of Governors
galvanises the rest of the Governing Body
into action, delegating responsibilities to
make the most of the expertise that exists,
and reforming ways in which governors
conduct their business so that the needs of
the school are most efficiently met"

Making it Better: Improving School Governance,
Ofsted 2001

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.1
OHT 7

Presentation (10 minutes)

Activity 2.2: Team effectiveness

Aims

- To identify the characteristics of effective teams
- To explore current team effectiveness
- To identify ways in which Chairs can foster team spirit

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.1: OHTs 1-2
- Activity 2.1: Handout 1 (Team Health Check)
- Flip chart and pens
- Examples of local/LEA self evaluation models

Key notes for facilitators

- This activity explores the understandings and relationships that form the basis for successful team work
- Governing bodies are unlike many teams in that they include people who have been elected and nominated by stakeholder groups
- In other contexts team members are often chosen for their complementary skills and attributes
- The composition of a governing body changes from time to time and the Chair does not have control over who is in the team
- This means that sometimes governing bodies have a balance of skills and experience and at other times the team may be less balanced
- The participants will think about the characteristics of effective teams and how well their governing body fits the picture of a healthy team
- NB Activity 2.2 (Team Health Check) could be set as a pre-session task, in which case you could go straight into paired discussion and feedback. Suggestions for managing the pre-session task are to be found in Activity 1.9 in Module One.

Task 1: Team Health Check

Use Activity 2.2: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

- Hand out the Team Health Check Activity 2.1: Handout 1

Team effectiveness

The aims of the activity are to:
- Identify the characteristics of effective teams
- Explore current team effectiveness
- Identify ways in which Chairs can foster team spirit

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.2
OHT 1

- Use Activity 2.2: OHT 2 to talk participants through their task

- Ask participants to work for 5 minutes answering the questions and scoring their team

---

Team effectiveness task

- Working on your own, complete the team health check and score your team
- With a partner discuss
  - Which areas of team work you think are most successful
  - Which areas of team work present you with most challenges as Chair
- Agree two key challenges for participants to bring back to the group

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.2
OHT 2

Introduction and individual scoring (10 minutes)

- After 5 minutes ask participants to move into pairs and take turns to discuss
  - Which areas of team work they think are most successful
  - Which areas of team work present them with most challenges as Chair, and
  - Agree two key challenges to bring back to the group

Paired work (10 minutes)

- Bring the group back together and ask pairs to give you their two key challenges and put them on a flip chart. You will probably find some duplication – in which case you could put a tick beside any existing challenges to show that this was mentioned by more than one pair
- Find out whether any participants have experience of working in other teams (at work, or in another capacity). Ask about the key similarities and differences between the Governing Body and other teams
- Ask participants what actions they have taken, or could take, to improve areas of team work which they have rated low on the Team Health Check

- Ask participants whether they have explored their team effectiveness as part of their own self-evaluation. You may want to stress the importance of governing bodies challenging themselves:
    - o Have examples of your LEA Governing Body self-evaluation model, if one is used
    - o Refer them to other sources of information if your LEA does not have a preferred model
    - o Remind them that many LEA websites have pages for governors with downloadable resources where they might find a self-evaluation tool to use
- If you have not used the Team Health Check as a between session task, suggest that participants might want to check their perceptions with those of their colleague governors and the Headteacher and have ready some blank health checks for them to take away.

Feedback and Facilitator led discussion (10 to 15 minutes)

Team Health Check

Think of your Governing Body as a team of people who work together for a common purpose, with leadership provided by the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of committees. Does it share these characteristics of effective teams?

Purpose and Direction	Yes	Could be better	No
The team has a clear mission/purpose, known by all team members			
The team has a vision and success criteria which are challenging, meaningful and exciting to the team			
The team understands how their work fits into the whole school perspective			
Team Leadership (by Chairs and Vice-Chairs)			
Leaders balance appropriate direction with support and openness			
Leaders discuss key issues with the team			
Leaders delegate responsibility and leadership to individuals in their area of expertise			
Understanding Differences			
Team members understand what their roles are, and where they overlap with other team members			
Team members are clear about what is expected of them individually by the rest of the team			
Team members are clear about what individual strengths each member of the team brings			
Processes			
Team meetings are effective			
The team has found and implemented better ways of working			
The team has an effective process to solve problems and take decisions			
The team has sufficient resources (people and time) to do its work			
Communication			
Everyone feels their ideas and input are listened to by the rest of the team			
Differences and conflicts are resolved openly and constructively			
Members' interaction is open and honest			
Relationships			
The team's different experiences and skills are accepted and used			
There is trust and openness between team members			
New members feel valued and quickly become productive members of the team			
The team takes responsibility for its successes and failures, and avoids blaming other people or groups			

Activity 2.3a: Leadership

Aims

- To identify a range of leadership styles and their appropriate use
- To apply the styles to a range of situations and consider their effectiveness
- To encourage individuals to consider the leadership style they use most frequently and the value of changing styles to suit different situations

Overall length

- 55 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.3a: OHTs 1 – 5
- Activity 2.3a: Handout 1
- Activity 2.3a: Handout 2

Key notes for Facilitators

- Anyone in the role of Chair will be exercising leadership, even if they do not think of themselves as a leader
- Chairs do not have authority over other governors but they have been elected to the role for qualities that others have recognized in them
- The Chair will be called upon to exercise leadership in a number of ways – mainly to do with managing situations and relationships
- In most situations we adopt a range of leadership styles and no one style is better than another
- The leadership style adopted by Chairs in different situations affects the outcomes of those situations
- It will be important to stress that no style is a bad one
- Chairs need to think about how they deal with situations in order to get the best out of individuals and situations
- The scenarios are situations that might become apparent during meetings of the Governing Body. The way in which the Chair handles them will have an effect on the motivation and involvement of individuals, the development of governors' confidence in the role, the quality of corporate decision-making and the efficiency and effectiveness of the Governing Body

Module Two
Activity 2.3a

Task 1: Using a variety of leadership styles

Use Activity 2.3a: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

> ## Leadership
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> • Identify a range of leadership styles and their appropriate use
> • Apply the styles to a variety of situations and consider their effectiveness
> • Encourage individuals to consider the leadership style they use most frequently
>
> **Taking the Chair**
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.3a
> OHT 1

- Use Activity 2.3a:OHT 2 to put across these key messages:

- The Chair facilitates the work of the Governing Body

- An effective Chair does not do this by dominating others but by creating a climate in which the governors feel they have done it all themselves

> ## Lao Tzu
>
> A leader is best
> When people barely know he exists;
> Not so good when people obey and acclaim him;
> Worst when they despise him.
> Fail to honour people,
> They fail to honour you.
> But of a good leader who talks little,
> When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
> They will all say, 'We did this ourselves'
>
> **Taking the Chair**
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.3a
> OHT 2

- Use Activity 2.3a: OHT 3 to illustrate that Chairs need to be alert to situations, particularly during meetings, and may need to show leadership when situations require it – for example when individuals are being excluded, when discussions are not constructive. Participants may be asked to provide other examples.

> ## An effective Chair
>
> • An effective Chair works with others to ensure:
> – Everyone participates
> – Views are heard
> – Evidence is evaluated
> – Decisions are corporate
> • An effective Chair needs to:
> – Be aware of situations and individuals
> – Take initiative
> – Show leadership
>
> **Taking the Chair**
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.3a
> OHT 3

Facilitator input (10 minutes)

- Give out Activity 2.3a: Handout 1 (Leadership Styles) and explain:
  - Much research has been done on leadership styles
  - Understanding leadership styles helps in analysing the way in which people work with others
  - Leaders need to be aware of their styles and how they affect others
  - Some styles work in some situations and with some people, others don't
  - Most people use a combination of styles

- Using the questions on Activity 2.3a: OHT 4 work through 'Visionary Leadership Style' together asking for responses to the first 4 questions

Leadership styles

- Have you ever used this style?
- Was it effective?
- Has this style been used on you?
- How did it make you feel?
- Which style or styles do you use most in your role as Chair?

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.3a
OHT 4

Group discussion around the first 4 questions (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to work in pairs and go through at least two of the leadership styles and discuss their responses to the 5 questions on Activity 2.3a: OHT 4 above

Paired discussion (15 minutes)

Task 2: Leadership Scenarios

- Give out Activity 2.3a: Handout 2 (Leadership scenarios) and ask participants to work in groups of 4 or 5

- Use Activity 2.3a: OHT 5 to explain that these are situations that Chairs might become aware of during meetings and that the way in which they choose to handle them affects others

Leadership scenarios

- The scenarios are situations that might occur during meetings of the Governing Body
- The way in which the Chair handles them will have an effect on:
  - The motivation and involvement of individuals
  - The contribution that individuals make
  - The development of governors' confidence in the role
  - The quality of corporate decision-making
  - The efficiency and effectiveness of the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.3a
OHT 5

Module Two
Activity 2.3a

- Ask groups to discuss scenarios (you might want to allocate a number of scenarios to each group) and to note in the boxes provided:
    - What style of leadership seems called for
    - What action a Chair should take

Group work (15 minutes)

Hold a plenary discussion:
- Ask for responses from the group to the scenarios – you may want to limit the number of scenarios discussed
- Ask for examples of when Chairs have used a particular style to good effect to deal with a situation on their Governing Body

Plenary (10 minutes)

Leadership styles

Below are examples of leadership styles identified by Daniel Goleman ('The New Leaders: Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results', Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, *Little,Brown* 2002). You will notice that some leadership styles appear to have a negative impact on others. This does not mean that the style should never be used; it may be a necessary one on occasions. Remember, however, that the Chair is an equal member of the Governing Body, which is made up of volunteers, and a Chair who is over-assertive is unlikely to be wholly effective

Visionary leadership style

What the leader wants:	To take people with them towards a vision
What the leader says:	"Come with me"
Leader's characteristics:	Self-confidence, empathy, catalyst for change
When the style works best:	When changes require a new vision or a clear direction is needed
Overall impact on others:	Strongly positive

Coaching leadership style

What the leader wants:	To develop people for the future
What the leader says:	"Try this"
Leader's characteristics:	Develops others, has empathy, is self-aware
When the style works best:	To help others improve performance or to develop long-term strengths
Overall impact on others:	Positive

Affiliative leadership style

What the leader wants:	To create harmony and build bonds between people
What the leader says:	"People come first"
Leader's characteristics:	Empathy, good at building relationships and communication
When the style works best:	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances
Overall impact on others:	Positive

Democratic leadership style

What the leader wants:	To create agreement through participation in decision making
What the leader says:	"What do you think"
Leader's characteristics:	Collaborative, a team leader, good communicator
When the style works best:	To build agreement and commitment, to get an input from team members
Overall impact on others:	Positive

Pacesetting leadership style

What the leader wants:	To set high standards of performance
What the leader says:	"Do as I do, now"
Leader's characteristics:	Conscientious, driven to achieve, take the initiative
When the style works best:	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent group
Overall impact on others:	Negative

Commanding leadership style

What the leader wants:	To give clear direction and stimulate action
What the leader says:	"Do what I tell you"
Leader's characteristics:	Drive to achieve, get things going, be in control
When the style works best:	In a crisis, when something needs to be done without argument, when someone is difficult
Overall impact on others:	Negative, because often misused

Leadership scenarios
Which leadership style or combination of styles would you use to deal with these issues and what would you do?

1. One of your governors runs his own, successful business but never says anything in meetings when the budget is being discussed.	2. One of the governors has been serving for many years and is very experienced. He/she gets very impatient when new governors hold up the discussion with questions.
1.	2.
3. You have several new members of the Governing Body. They are very unsure and leave the decisions to others.	4. Some of the governors could talk all night. You sometimes do not cover all the agenda items.
3.	4.
5. The Headteacher wants a decision on something that must be put into place as soon as possible. The Governing Body can't make up its mind and wants more time to think.	6. There are a number of strong characters on the Governing Body and sometimes discussions can become quite heated.
5.	6.

7. You prepare very carefully for meetings and read all the paperwork. It is clear that some governors have not done any reading before the meeting, although all the papers are sent in advance.	8. You all get on well with the Headteacher, but he/she writes very short reports for the Governing Body and they are often not ready before the meeting.
7.	8.
9. When you chair meetings you like to keep to time. You think there has been enough discussion and want a decision. One of the governors accuses you of trying to rush a decision through.	10. A small group of parents has a lot of influence on the Governing Body. It looks as though a decision they want to make is not in line with the agreed values and vision of the school.
9.	10.
11. You have looked at the PANDA data. Standards should be higher in a particular key stage. The Governing Body is not concerned because the Headteacher doesn't seem to be worried about it.	12. The Governing Body has talked a lot about attendance, which needs to be improved. They can't agree on what the school should do about it.
11.	12.

Activity 2.3b: Leadership

Aims

- To identify ways in which the Chair's leadership style can affect corporate decision making processes
- To consider leadership styles and their appropriate uses

Overall Length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.3b: OHT 1
- Activity 2.3b: Handouts 1-3
- Activity 2.3a: Handout 1
- Activity 2.3b: Crib sheet

Key notes for facilitators

- This is an alternative activity to Activity 2.3a
- We are not always aware of the leadership styles we adopt and their impact
- The leadership style of the Chair can enhance or get in the way of corporate decision making
- Chairs need to be aware of their dominant leadership style and when they might need to adopt other approaches
- None of the styles in the scenarios is very effective – the disadvantages identified in the activity should outweigh the advantages
- By identifying three pieces of advice they would offer the Chairs in question, participants should be identifying good practice
- A crib sheet has been included for this activity, which you may want to use to help you structure the discussion at the end of the activity.   Alternatively, you could give it out to the participants to take away and consider.
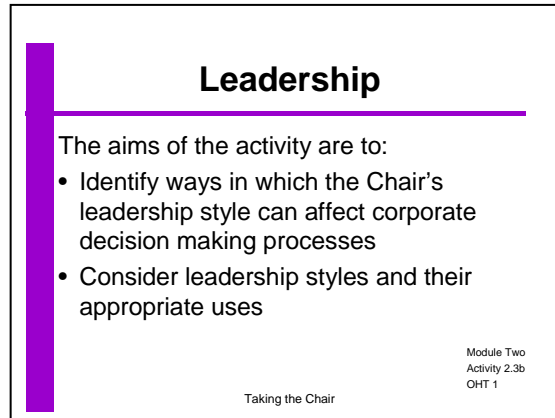
Module Two
Activity 2.3b

Task1: Exploring leadership styles

Use Activity 2.3b: OHT 1 to introduce the
activity

- Organise participants into 3 groups

Leadership

The aims of the activity are to:
• Identify ways in which the Chair's
  leadership style can affect corporate
  decision making processes
• Consider leadership styles and their
  appropriate uses

Module Two
Activity 2.3b
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

- Using Activity 2.3b: Handouts 1-3, allocate a scenario to each group ensuring that all three
  scenarios are covered
- Give out Activity 2.3a: Handout 1 (Leadership styles)

- Ask participants to:
    o Read through the Leadership Styles handout
    o Consider the scenario
    o Identify and write in the box below the scenario which leadership style or styles are
      being used
    o Think about the impact each leadership style has on the ability of the Governing
      Body to work as a team and make corporate decisions
    o Think about the impact of the Chair's leadership on individual governors
    o Write up brief notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches
    o Think of three key pieces of advice they would offer to the Chairs in the scenarios

Facilitator introduction and group work (25 minutes)

- Bring the groups back together.
- Ask groups to identify the three pieces of advice they would offer and why
- After each scenario has been discussed, ask participants if they have anything to add
- While participants are working and feeding back, observe how they are working as a
  team…is one person dominating, how have they shared tasks, are they all participating, how
  effectively have they listened to each other? Feed back your general observations, without
  drawing attention to individuals or particular groups…just make people aware!
- At the end of the activity suggest that participants might like to use their Learning Record to
  consider which leadership style they use most often and why and which other styles they
  plan to try.

Feedback and discussion (15 minutes)

Scenario 1

- Read the description of a Chair below
- Identify and write in the box below the scenario which leadership style or styles are being used
- Think about the impact each leadership style has on the ability of the Governing Body to work as a team and make corporate decisions
- Think about the impact of the Chair's leadership on individual governors
- Write up brief notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches
- Think of three key pieces of advice you would offer to the Chair in this scenario

> Chair A is very committed to the school and takes his/her position very seriously. He/she runs very tightly controlled meetings, laying out the issues and advising on the actions to be taken. He/she has clearly done his/her homework and a considerable amount of the meeting time is spent listening to him/her. Other governors appear to be happy. Few put forward their own views. Meetings never overrun. The Chair feels that people respect his/her firm leadership.

1. What leadership style or styles are being used here?

2. What are the:

Advantages of this style	Disadvantages of this style

3. What 3 pieces of advice would you offer this Chair and why?

Scenario 2

- Read the description of a Chair below
- Identify and write in the box below the scenario which leadership style or styles are being used
- Think about the impact each leadership style has on the ability of the Governing Body to work as a team and make corporate decisions
- Think about the impact of the Chair's leadership on individual governors
- Write up brief notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches
- Think of three key pieces of advice you would offer to the Chair in this scenario

> Chair B is very committed to the school and takes his/her position very seriously. He/she encourages a full and lengthy debate on the issue under discussion. The Chair sums up the debate by giving his/her views. These do not always reflect the full range of views given. The final decision reflects the judgement of the Chair. Governors leave the meeting feeling that they have been listened to, but later they feel frustrated at having gone through the motions without being really heard.

1. What leadership style or styles are being used here?

2. What are the:

Advantages of this style	Disadvantages of this style

3. What 3 pieces of advice would you offer this Chair and why?

Scenario 3

- Read the description of a Chair below
- Identify and write in the box below the scenario which leadership style or styles are being used
- Think about the impact each leadership style has on the ability of the Governing Body to work as a team and make corporate decisions
- Think about the impact of the Chair's leadership on individual governors
- Write up brief notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches
- Think of three key pieces of advice you would offer to the Chair in this scenario

> Chair C is very committed to supporting the school. He/she sees their role as a facilitator. He/she is very well informed about each agenda item, but he/she rarely gives any direction to the discussion or gives his/her own opinion when summarising. Governors are encouraged to contribute to the debate, but without a steer from the Chair, the decisions usually reflect the opinions of the most confident and outspoken of the governors.

1. What leadership style or styles are being used here?

2. What are the:

Advantages of this style	Disadvantages of this style

3. What 3 pieces of advice would you offer this Chair and why?

Module Two
Activity 2.3b: Crib sheet

Exploring Leadership Styles

Scenario 1

Chair A favours a commanding leadership style. He/she likes to feel in control and doesn't see the need to delegate to other governors. Although this style is ideal in a crisis when action must be taken swiftly, it is generally one of the least effective forms of leadership in the long term. As the Chair does not show interest in others' views, they will not feel part of the decision making process. It is likely they will not feel very committed and their skills will not be used. Their ability to act corporately is weakened. When this Chair leaves the Governing Body, other governors are unlikely to have developed the skills they need to take over the role of Chair.

He/she is also using a pace-setting style. Again, while this can be very effective if trying to get quick results with a very committed, competent and motivated team, it is unlikely to work well on a regular basis in a Governing Body setting. Morale is likely to suffer if governors feel they are being pushed too hard, without their opinions being taken into account.

This Chair would do well to consider developing a coaching or democratic style. Coaching boosts people's confidence by helping them to do a better job. It shows that the leader believes in their abilities, and would be helpful in preparing governors to take on further responsibility. By delegating more to other governors and listening to their views, using a democratic style, the Chair could create a very positive climate where everyone is encouraged to make a useful contribution. Democratic leaders are very good listeners.

Scenario 2

In this scenario the combination of affiliative and commanding styles leaves governors feeling very confused. Establishing strong relationships and a collaborative approach are hallmarks of the affiliative approach and are very important on a Governing Body. Chair B should continue to develop this style but needs to think carefully about the outcomes of meetings. Slipping in to the commanding style leaves governors feeling that their views have not been valued and a truly corporate decision is not reached.

The Chair would do well to develop a more democratic style that would take greater account of the contribution that all governors are making. This would work more effectively with the affiliative approach to create a climate where all governors feel that their views are valued and would result in raised morale.

A visionary approach would also be helpful to ensure that governors feel decisions are based on shared values and aims, rather than on the personal views of the Chair.

Scenario 3

This Chair is over-using the coaching and affiliative styles of leadership. He/she has a lot of empathy with individual governors and is probably very good at delegating. Governors will benefit from opportunities to develop their skills and morale will be high as long as governors feel they are reaching sound corporate decisions. The danger is that without an effective steer the views of the most confident members will tend to override those of the more timid.

If Chair C could develop his/her use of the visionary approach it would make an ideal combination with the existing styles. Visionary leaders need to be very good at understanding other people in order to inspire them to follow a shared set of values and aims. A visionary leader has to have a strong belief in their own abilities as well as the abilities of others. They need to share knowledge so that everyone feels included and able to make the best possible decisions.

Module Two

Activity 2.4: Knowing Your Team

Aims of the activity

- To develop an understanding of the value of a Governing Body representing a range of skills and experience
- To share ideas on the purpose and design of a skills audit
- To consider how to fill any gaps in skills and experience on the Governing Body

Overall length

- 50 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.4: OHTs 1-3
- Activity 2.4: Handout 1
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity serves to encourage Chairs to:
  - Reflect on the balance of skills and experience on their Governing Body
  - Lead the Governing Body in being more proactive in filling gaps in skills and experience
  - Consider the development needs of their Governing Body
- It is important that a Governing Body represents a variety of views and can bring a variety of outside influences to bear on their work.
- A breadth of experience is an added resource to the school and the Headteacher who may often be so close to issues that they cannot 'see the wood for the trees'
- A range of expertise is also a practical resource, particularly in areas such as finance and management of contracts, but it is also important to recognise the value of life experience and common sense
- Some governing bodies undertake a skills audit. Apart from being useful to know what expertise is on the Governing Body, it is also an indication that what people bring to the role is valued. You may have examples of skills audits to share.
- There are many ways of carrying out an audit. They can be informal or very structured. They can be managed in different ways, such as:
  - to frame a discussion at a meeting
  - completed individually and then collated
  - filled in as part of a short development session
- Before embarking on an audit, it is important to be clear about the reason for doing it, how it will be carried out and how it will help improve the effectiveness of individual governors and the whole Governing Body.

Module Two
Activity 2.4

- Some governors may feel intimidated by the idea of an audit, or may feel that their experience is less significant than others. It will be important to check that their confidence is not dented.
- You may wish to raise the possibility of using associate members of the Governing Body to broaden the skills and experience base, particularly on committees.

Task 1: Identifying gaps in expertise

Introduce the activity using Activity 2.4: OHT 1

- Put participants in groups of 5 or 6

Knowing your team

The aims of the activity are to:
- Develop an understanding of the value of a Governing Body representing a range of skills and experience
- Share ideas on the purpose and design of a skills audit
- Consider how to fill any gaps in skills and experience on the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.4
OHT 1

- Introduce the discussion by showing Activity 2.4: OHT 2

Using expertise

- How have you used the expertise of individual governors?
- What skills and expertise do you have on your Governing Body?
- What are the gaps?

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.4
OHT 2

- Ask participants to discuss examples of how they have used particular expertise to good effect
- Ask them to reflect on the balance of expertise and skills on their current Governing Body and whether there are any particular gaps they might want to fill if the opportunity arose – what do they think is the impact of any gap?

Introduction and Group Discussion (10 minutes)

- Ask for 2 or 3 responses from each group on using expertise and the impact of any gaps.

Plenary Discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Devising a skills audit

- Discuss the variety of possible approaches to an audit. Ask whether any participants have undertaken a skills audit of their Governing Body and what value they found it. Flip chart their responses. Ideas might include:
  - o Shows that people are seen as individuals with something to offer
  - o Values previous experience
  - o Helps target recruitment
  - o Encourages retention of governors
  - o Identifies training and development needs for individuals and the whole Governing Body
  - o Helps in the formation of committees
  - o Helps to identify those who might take an interest in particular aspects of the school
  - o Helps with succession planning

- Put participants in groups of 4 or 5 and, using Activity 2.4:OHT 3, ask them to plan a skills audit which they could use with their Governing Body. Ask them to think about the four questions on the OHT.

> **Planning a skills audit**
>
> Work in groups of 4 or 5
> • How would you gather the information?
> • What questions would you ask?
> • How would you use the information?
> • Who else might use the information?
>
> Taking the Chair
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.4
> OHT 3

Facilitator introduction and group work (20 minutes)

- Ask for feedback on questions and uses.   Useful questions might include:

  - What aspects of the work of the school are you most interested in?
  - What areas of the work of the school do you have experience or expertise in?
  - Have you any specific ideas about how you could support the work of the Governing Body?
  - What further information and support would you welcome in order to become even more effective?

- You may wish to distribute Activity 2.4: Handout 1 as an example of one type of audit or you may have other examples locally that you wish to share.

Feedback (10 minutes)

Governing Body Audit

The purpose of this audit is to discover the range of skills and experience already existing on our Governing Body, so that we can make the most of everyone's abilities and plan for future development. Please answer each question as fully as possible and return the sheet to the Chair two weeks before the next full meeting of the Governing Body. Thank you for your help.

1. Why did you join this Governing Body?

2. From your background, experience and interests, what are the particular skills you bring?

3. Which aspects of your work as a governor have been:

    - Most rewarding?

    - Most frustrating?

    - Most demanding?

4. What opportunities can you see for individual governors to take on new roles?

5. Are there any particular skills or experience that you feel the Governing Body lacks at the moment?

6. What do you see as the key tasks for the coming year to support the school's improvement plan?

7. What do you consider will be your key development needs over the next 12 months?

8. What do you consider will be the key development priorities for the whole Governing Body over the next 12 months?

Module Two

Activity 2.5: Managing a recruitment problem

Aims

- To explore the issues raised by a sudden turnover in the Governing Body
- To consider the Chair's role in managing the situation
- To consider approaches to strategic decision making

Overall length

- 35 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.5: OHT 1
- Activity 2.5: Handout 1 (Task Briefing: 1 per participant)
- Activity 2.5: Handout 2 (Dilemma Board. 1 per group) These should be copied on to A3 paper or drawn on flip chart paper
- Felt tip pens

Key notes for facilitators

- In this scenario the Chair is made aware of the imminent departure of nearly half the governors at the end of the summer term
- As the groups discuss the issue, ensure that they keep a focus on the Chair's role in the process of recruitment
- Draw attention to when the Chair might need to act as a spokesperson and 'advertise' vacancies
- Encourage the development of a variety of strategies to deal with the situation
- Encourage them to think about pros and cons in terms of cost, time, likely outcome etc.
- Have some recruitment literature ready and remind participants of the DfES recruitment pack
- You may also wish to brief participants on strategies to aid governor recruitment in your own authority
- The School Governors' One-Stop Shop may be able to help with recruitment of business governors

Some of the actions that Chairs might take are:

Short term:
- Delegate actions to members of the Governing Body
- Hold a meeting to ask for suggestions
- Encourage all governors to recruit volunteers and actively contribute to the process of 'marketing the school'
- Ask the Clerk to chase up the relevant LEA officers

Module Two
Activity 2.5

Medium term:
- Set aside a time to review the terms of office regularly with the Clerk
- Think ahead to ensure that processes are instigated in good time, e.g. for the election of parent governors
- Be aware of the spread of skills across the Governing Body and keep in mind the possibility that some will leave
- Establish links with the community and be on the lookout for possible 'volunteers'.
- Develop a programme to allow individuals to share skills with others to enable succession planning

Task 1: A recruitment problem

- Organise participants into groups of 4

- Introduce the aims of the activity using Activity 2.5: OHT 1

> **Managing a recruitment problem**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Explore the issues raised by a sudden turnover in the Governing Body
> - Consider the Chair's role in managing the situation
> - Consider approaches to strategic decision making
>
> **Taking the Chair**
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.5
> OHT 1

- Give out Activity 2.5:Handout 1 (Managing a Recruitment Crisis: Task Briefing)
- Give out Activity 2.5: Handout 2 (Dilemma Board) (one per group)
- Talk people through the task and the use of the Dilemma Board

Facilitator input (5 minutes)
Group work (20 minutes)

- Lead plenary discussion, asking each group in turn to explain their options and why they chose them.
- Focus discussion on the Chair's role and what the Chair could do in the future to make recruitment easier
- Emphasise the value of planning ahead so that such a situation does not develop
- If you have not used Activity 2.4, you might wish to include here a discussion about the importance of knowing the balance of skills on the Governing Body so that recruitment can be targeted to fill any gaps in skills and experience.

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Managing a recruitment problem

Task briefing

It is early July and the Governing Body of your school is currently running with 2 vacancies out of a possible 14. One of the vacancies is an LEA governor; the other is a member of the support staff. At the last meeting of the academic year, the Clerk points out to you that the terms of office of three other governors (two parents and one community governor) are about to expire and they have indicated that they will not be standing again.

At the meeting, the other community governor arrives a little late and announces that she has just sold her house and will probably be moving away in early October. Although you are pleased for her, you realise that there is now a big crisis for your Governing Body.
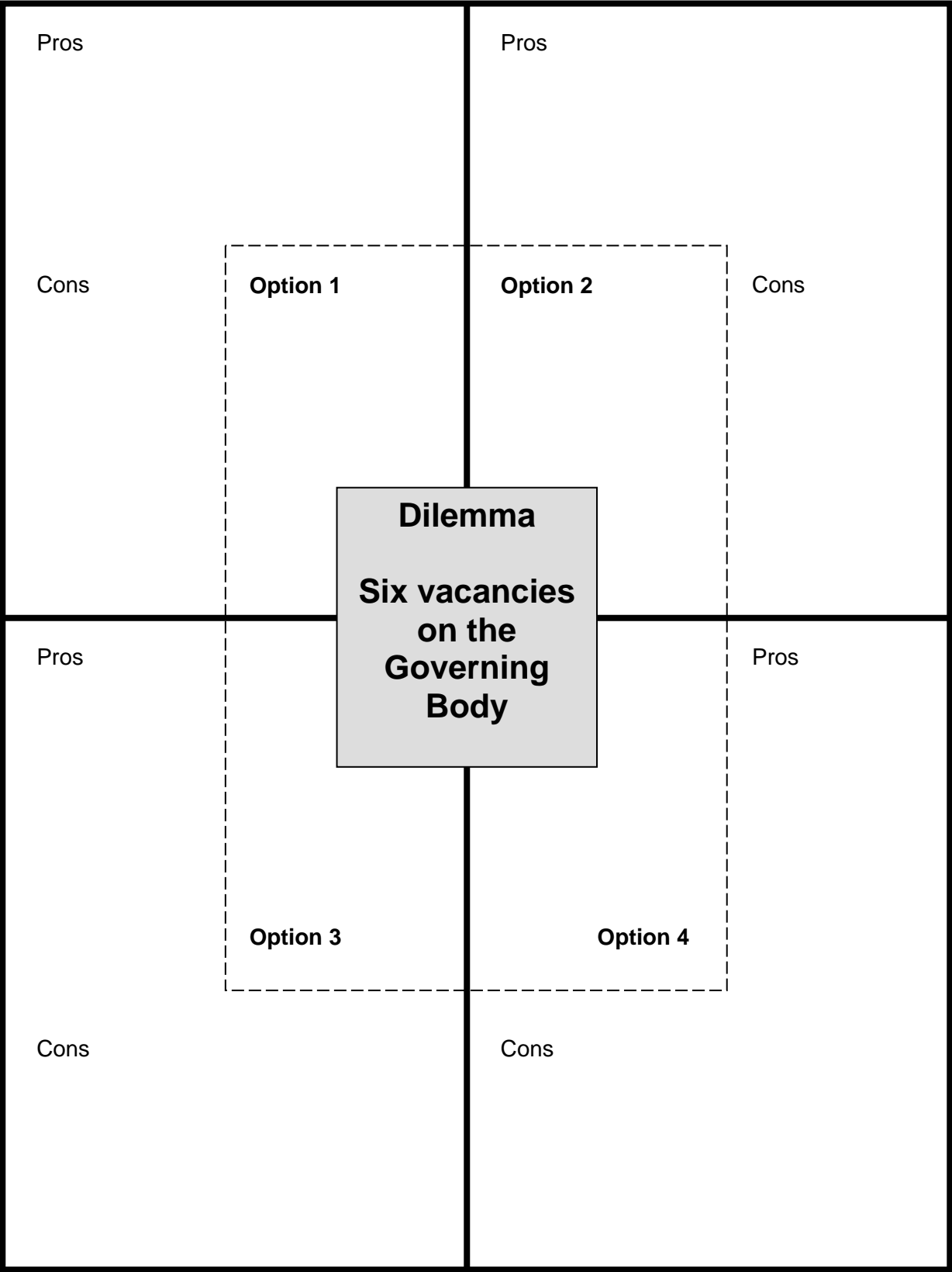
One of the governors leaving is currently Chair of the Personnel Committee, who has valuable selection interviewing experience and works in Human Resources. Another is on the Finance Committee and is very good at analysing data - and the parent governor who no longer wishes to stand has a good rapport with the local community and is a keen member of the PTA. Not only will you be losing 6 governors, but you will also be losing some clearly developed skills which it will be difficult to replace in a hurry.

If the Governing Body is going to start the new academic year in good health, this dilemma needs resolving as soon as possible.

Using the Dilemma Board

1. Discuss your approach to the recruitment crisis and decide on the 4 best options for dealing with it

2. Write your options in the spaces on the Dilemma Board

3. Now discuss the pros and cons of each option in turn and write them in the boxes

4. Come to an agreement on which options seem most likely to succeed and the order in which you will try them

5. Appoint a spokesperson to explain your decisions to the other groups

Dilemma Board

Pros	Pros
Cons	**Option 1** **Option 2** Cons

Dilemma

Six vacancies on the Governing Body

Pros	Pros
Option 3 **Option 4**	
Cons	Cons

Activity 2.6: Inducting new governors

Aims

- To develop an understanding of the Chair's role in the induction process
- To reflect on the needs of new governors and how to support their induction
- To share ideas about effective induction and consider a model induction policy

Overall length

- 70 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.6: OHTs 1-3
- Activity 2.6: Handouts 1-2
- DfES Guidance for Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors on the National Training Programme for New Governors. Ref. DfES/0736/2001
- Copies of model induction policies
- Flip chart paper and pens

Key notes for facilitators

- There are several suggested tasks in this activity. You may wish to introduce only one or two into your programme
- In advance, ask participants to bring their own school's induction policy or pack, if they have one, or have ready one or two examples of induction policies or packs
- Keep the initial discussion focused on what it feels like to be a new governor
- Use the experience of the most recently appointed governor if appropriate
- Draw out an understanding of the importance of good induction to motivation, involvement and retention
- At the end of the activity, draw participants attention to Activity 2.6: Handout 2 (Governor Induction Policy) or your own model
- Remind participants of the National Programme for New Governors and any other LEA governor induction training on offer
- You may wish to make reference to 'Guidance for Headteachers and Chairs of Governors on the National Training Programme for New Governors' DfES/0736/2001

Module Two
Activity 2.6

Task 1: The needs of new governors

Introduce the activity using Activity 2.6:
OHT 1

> ## Inducting new governors
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Develop an understanding of the Chair's role in the induction process
> - Reflect on the needs of new governors and how to support their induction
> - Share ideas about effective induction and consider a model induction policy
>
> **Taking the Chair** Module Two / Activity 2.6 / OHT 1

- Ask participants to cast their minds back to their early days as a governor and reflect on the questions on Activity 2.6: OHT 2

> ## Inducting new governors
>
> - What did I find difficult when I joined the Governing Body?
> - What help or information did I find most useful?
> - What was missing from my induction?
>
> **Taking the Chair** Module Two / Activity 2.6 / OHT 2

Individual reflection (5 minutes)

- In groups of 3 or 4 participants share experiences around the three questions. Ask the participants to be ready to feedback to the group on similarities and differences in their experiences as new governors.

Group discussion (10 minutes)

- Take about 3 or 4 key points from each group and put them on a flip chart. Ensure that there is reference to the importance of good induction for motivation, involvement and retention.
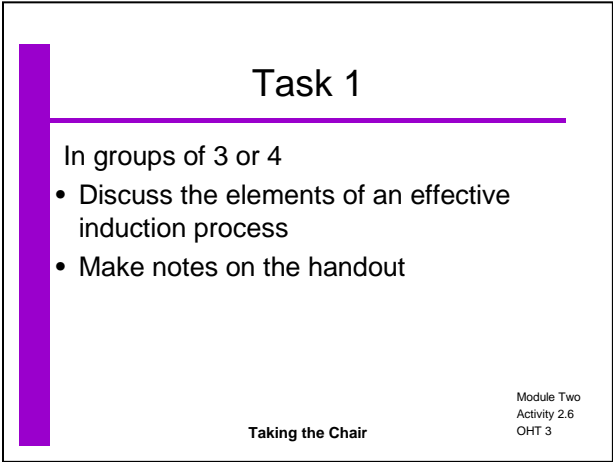
Facilitator facilitated feedback (5 minutes)

Task 2: An ideal induction – creative exercise

The task is to work in groups and consider the elements of an ideal induction for new governors, which could form the basis of a policy or welcome pack.

- Give out Activity 2.6: Handout 1 (Creating an ideal induction policy)
- Encourage participants to form different groups of 3 or 4

- Talk through the purpose of the activity using Activity 2.6: OHT 3 and give the time allocation

> ## Task 1
> In groups of 3 or 4
> • Discuss the elements of an effective induction process
> • Make notes on the handout
>
> **Taking the Chair**
>
> Module Two
> Activity 2.6
> OHT 3

- Suggest that each participant fills in the handout so that they can take away the ideas
- Ensure that groups think about the best person to take responsibility for any actions. Delegation is an important skill for Chairs.

Facilitator Introduction and Group work (20 minutes)

- Take one or two comments from each group

Facilitator Feedback (5 minutes)

Task 3: Drafting a Chair's welcome letter

- In the same groups, draft a welcome letter from the Chair to a new governor. Consider what the letter should contain and the tone of the letter.   What essential enclosures would the groups send with their letter?
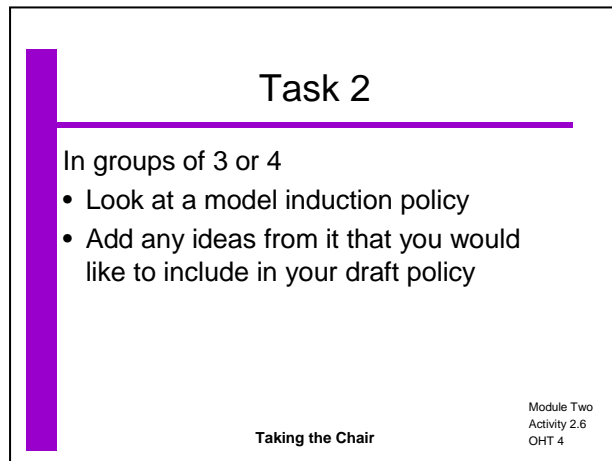
Group work (10 minutes)

Task 4: Reviewing a model policy and the Chair's role

- Give out Activity 2.6:Handout 2 (Governor Induction Policy) or use your own model. If participants have brought their own induction policies encourage them to share them with their group.

- Using Activity 2.6: OHT 4 explain the activity and the time allowed.

Task 2

In groups of 3 or 4
- Look at a model induction policy
- Add any ideas from it that you would like to include in your draft policy

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.6
OHT 4

- Ask participants to briefly review their own ideas against a model policy, noting any additions or alterations they might want to make
- After 10 minutes recap on the purpose of the activity and ask - "apart from providing a new governor with information and the sort of welcome outlined in the policy, what can the Chair do to support a new governor – for example in the new governors first meeting?"

Facilitator introduction and Group work (10 minutes)
Plenary (5 minutes)

Creating an induction policy

What is the policy trying to achieve?

What activities and events would you include?

Activity   **Person responsible**

What essential information does a new governor need?

Information   **Person responsible**

What optional information would you include?

Induction policy

The Governing Body and Headteacher believe it is essential that all new governors receive a comprehensive induction package covering a broad range of issues and topics. There is a commitment to ensure that the new governors are given the necessary information and support to fulfil their role with confidence. The process is seen as an investment, leading to more effective governance and retention of governors.

PURPOSE

- To welcome new governors to the Governing Body and enable them to meet other members
- To encourage new governors to visit the school to experience its atmosphere and understand its ethos
- To meet the Headteacher, staff and children
- To explain the partnership between the Headteacher, school and Governing Body
- To explain the role and responsibilities of governors
- To give background material on the school and current issues
- To allow new governors to ask questions about their role and/or the school
- To explain how the Governing Body and its committees work
- To allow new governors to join the committee(s) of their choice

New governors will:
- Be welcomed to the Governing Body by the Chair
- Be invited by the Headteacher to visit the school
- Have the opportunity to tour the school and meet staff and children
- Receive an informal briefing on the school from the Headteacher
- Have the opportunity to meet informally with an existing governor who will then act as their mentor
- Be accompanied by their mentor to their first full Governing Body meeting (if required)
- Have the opportunity to review their first meeting with the mentor

New governors will receive:
- The Department for Education and Skill's "Guide to the Law for Governors"
- The school's "Guidelines for Governors"
- The school prospectus
- The Education Authority's governor training programme
- Details of the Governing Body committees including their terms of reference
- Dates for future governors' meetings including committees
- Details of how to contact the other governors
- Details of how to contact the school including the e-mail address
- A calendar of school events
- Recent school newsletters

New governors are also recommended to read:
- The School Improvement Plan
- The latest Ofsted report and action plan
- Policy documents relevant to committee membership
- The latest Annual Report to parents

Module Two
Activity 2.6: Handout 2

- The monitoring performance and evaluation policy
- The school visits policy

Areas that the Headteacher will cover include:
- Background to the school
- Current issues facing the school
- Visiting the school
- The relationship between the Headteacher and Governing Body

Areas that the mentor will cover include:
- An overview of the governor's role
- How the full Governing Body and committee meetings are conducted
- How to propose agenda items
- Governor training

New governor checklist
(Governor please sign once actioned)

Welcomed to the Governing Body by the Chair	(…………..)
Invited by the Headteacher to visit the school	(…………..)
Toured the school and met staff and children	(…………..)
Received an informal briefing on the school from the Head	(…………..)
Met informally with an existing governor (who will act as mentor)	(…………..)
Reviewed first meeting with the mentor	(…………..)
Have you received:	
DfES "Guide to the Law for Governors"	(…………..)
School's "Guidelines for Governors"	(…………..)
School prospectus	(…………..)
Education Authority's governor training and development programme	(…………..)
Details of the Governing Body committees (including their terms of reference)	(…………..)
Dates for future governors' meetings including committees	(…………..)
Details of how to contact the other governors	(…………..)
Details of how to contact the school (including the e-mail addresses)	(…………..)
Calendar of school events	(…………..)

School newsletters (…………..)

School Improvement Plan (…………..)

Latest Ofsted report and action plan (…………..)

Policy documents relevant to committee membership (…………..)

Latest Annual Report to parents (…………..)

Performance and evaluation policy (…………..)

School visits policy (…………..)

Has Headteacher covered:

Background to the school (…………..)

Current issues facing the school (…………..)

Visiting the school (…………..)

Overview of the governor's role (…………..)

Relationship between the Headteacher and Governing Body (…………..)

Name:

(Print FULL name of governor)

Signed:

Date:

Please retain original signed copy for your own records and forward a copy to the Chair of Governors

Module Two

Taking the Chair

Activity 2.7: Supporting governor development

Aims

- To consider the Chair's role in developing the contribution of individual governors
- To consider the benefits to Governing Body effectiveness
- To explore the benefits of delegation

Overall length

- 25 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.7:OHTs 1-3
- Activity 2.7: Handout 1

Key notes for Facilitators

- The checklist (Activity 2.7: Handout 1) sets out some of the ways in which Chairs can assist in developing individual governors and increase the effectiveness of the Governing Body
- There are links to succession planning as the development of knowledge and confidence in individuals increases the pool of potential Chairs of committees and the Governing Body itself
- The Chair should bring new initiatives to the attention of governors – you may wish to draw participants' attention to the list of national initiatives in Appendix 6, adding initiatives that are taking place locally
- Governor development also ensures that governors are well informed and confident to contribute to corporate decision making
- Motivation is increased when Chairs delegate responsibility and demonstrate trust
- Participants may want to share successful strategies for encouraging people to undertake briefing and training – this is sometimes an issue for volunteers with other commitments
- Encourage participants to think about strategies for making the most of training through reporting back to the Governing Body
- Going on training is only one method of development. How are Chairs encouraging the development of future Chairs?

Module Two
Activity 2.7

Task 1: How well am I doing?

- Introduce the activity by raising some of the points above and drawing participants attention to the importance of governors keeping up to date and informed

- Use Activity 2.7: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity and raise some of the points outlined in the key notes

> **Supporting governor development**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Consider the Chair's role in developing the contribution of individual governors
> - Consider the benefits to Governing Body effectiveness
> - Explore the benefits of delegation
>
> **Taking the Chair**
> Module Two
> Activity 2.7
> OHT 1

- Using Activity 2.7: OHT 2, talk the participants through the task

> **How well am I doing? 1**
>
> - Work individually
> - Complete the checklist by ticking the items you do well
> - Add to the list any good strategies you use for encouraging development of others
> - How could the impact of training and development be improved?
>
> **Taking the Chair**
> Module Two
> Activity 2.7
> OHT 2

Individual work (10 minutes)

- Using Activity 2.7: OHT 3 explain the second part of the task to the groups. Discussions and solutions to problems are shared within the group.

> **How well am I doing? 2**
>
> - Discuss one successful strategy for developing others
> - Invite solutions from your group to any problems you have encountered
>
> **Taking the Chair**
> Module Two
> Activity 2.7
> OHT 3

Group work (15 minutes)

Supporting governor development

Tick the box if you feel you are successful in supporting governor development in the following ways:

❑ I encourage governors to attend training

❑ I have succeeded in making attendance at training the norm

❑ We sometimes have school-based training which is attended by most governors

❑ We sometimes attend training and development with school leaders

❑ I create opportunities for feeding back from training to enable others to benefit

❑ I ensure the Governing Body regularly reviews its development needs

❑ We have appointed a governor responsible for training and development

❑ I ensure that at least one governor attends briefings on new initiatives

❑ I keep myself well informed to act as a role model for others

❑ I encourage others to share responsibility for briefing the Governing Body

❑ I know the skills and expertise of the Governing Body and when we need external advice

❑ I use my awareness of people's knowledge and expertise to draw them out at meetings

❑ I ensure that newly appointed Chairs of committees are well briefed

❑ Governors, including new governors, feel well supported

I also:

❑

❑

❑

Module Two

Activity 2.8: Making the most of individuals

Aims

- To explore the role of the Chair in encouraging individual development
- To consider how to ensure that all contributions are valued
- To practise skills in managing difficult situations

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 2.8: OHT 1
- Activity 2.8: Handout 1
- Activity 2.2: Handout 1 (Team Health Check) if not used previously
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This case study provides the opportunity for participants to put into practice some of the skills developed in Module 1
- In this case study, the Chair has a role to play in making the most of the commitment of both the experienced governor and the new governor
- It may be beneficial for governors to change committees to broaden their understanding of school issues
- The Chair needs to be aware of the skills of individuals
- The Chair also has a role to play in ensuring a climate of teamwork where the contributions of all are valued
- In this situation a Chair might need to be assertive

Task 1: Making the most of individuals

Use Activity 2.8: OHT 1 to introduce the activity and remind participants of the some of the important conditions for teamwork (see Activity 2.2: Handout 1, Team Health Check)

Making the most of individuals

The aims of the activity are to:
- Explore the role of the Chair in encouraging individual development
- Consider how to ensure that all contributions are valued
- Practise skills in managing difficult situations

Taking the Chair
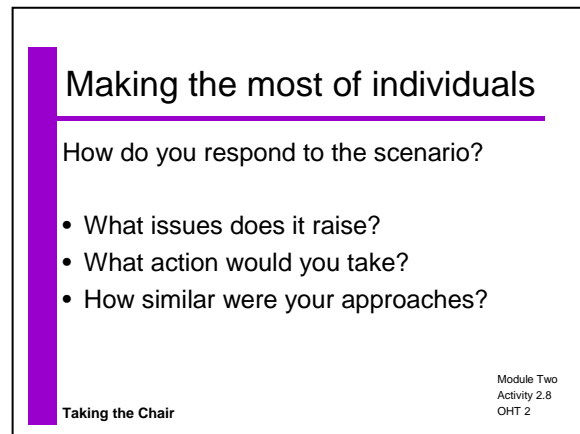
Module Two
Activity 2.8
OHT 1

Module Two
Activity 2.8

- Give out Activity 2.8: Handout 1 (one per participant)
- Ask participants to work individually, reading the Case Study and then making notes in response to the questions on the Case Study

Facilitator introduction and individual work (15 minutes)

- Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4
- Use Activity 2.8: OHT 2 to provide prompts for a discussion with the groups.

Making the most of individuals

How do you respond to the scenario?

- What issues does it raise?
- What action would you take?
- How similar were your approaches?

Taking the Chair

Module Two
Activity 2.8
OHT 2

Group discussion (10 minutes)

- Lead plenary discussion asking if participants have faced similar situations. Is it a good idea for there to be changes in the make up of committees and if so, how can they be managed?

Plenary discussion (5 minutes)

Making the most of individuals

You have been re-elected Chair of Governors for another year. At the first meeting of the Autumn Term, you asked governors which committees they would like to serve on. You did this rather tentatively as many governors have served on the same committees for a number of years but to your surprise a number expressed a desire for a change.

After the meeting the current and, therefore, the likely Chair of the Finance Committee approaches you. She has chaired this committee for a number of years and prefers to work with certain members of the Governing Body.

A relatively new parent governor chose to go on the Finance Committee. You welcomed this, as parent governors have often been reluctant to become members of the Finance Committee.

The Chair of the Finance Committee asks you if you think it is appropriate for this governor to be on the committee. It deals with a lot of detailed information and she doesn't want any passengers. She wouldn't want this governor to feel out of her depth and she has been at home with small children for a number of years.

1.   What are the issues that this raises?

2.   How will you respond to this?

3.   What questions do you need to ask?

4.   What skills will you need to resolve the situation?

Module Two

Activity 2.9: Plenary session

Aim

- To reflect on learning
- To evaluate the session
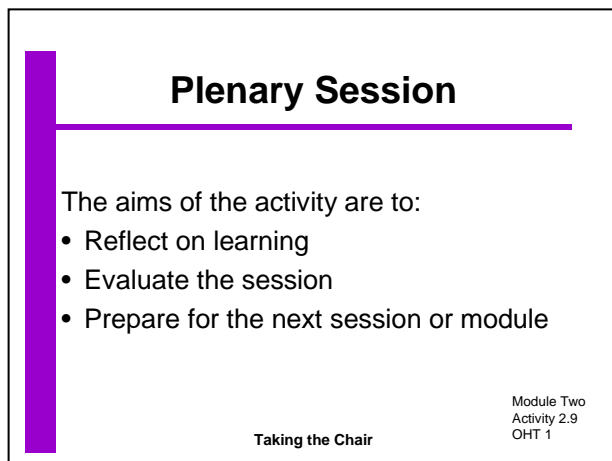- To prepare for the next session or module

Overall length

- 15 minutes

Resources
- Activity 2.9: OHTs 1-2
- See also Preparation for Module Three below

Task 1: Plenary discussion

Introduce the plenary session using
Activity 2.9: OHT 1

Plenary Session

The aims of the activity are to:
- Reflect on learning
- Evaluate the session
- Prepare for the next session or module

Module Two
Activity 2.9
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

- Encourage participants to spend 5 minutes recording any actions for the future identified in this session on their Learning Record using Activity 2.9: OHT 2
- Take one point from each participant and record it on a flip chart
- Distribute any remaining related handouts
- Discuss the objectives of the next session and distribute any preparatory tasks
- Ask for any questions or comments

Reflection

Please spend 5 minutes
- Recording your key learning points on your Learning Record
- Identifying any actions you plan to take between now and the next session

Module Two
Activity 2.9
OHT 2

Taking the Chair

Plenary session (15 minutes)

Task 2: Preparation for Module Three

Activity 3.3

- If you are planning to use Activity 3.3 in Module Three you will need to prepare the participants at this point
- Give out Activity 3.3: Handout 1 (Pre-session task)
- Give out Activity 3.3: Handout 2 (Recording sheet)
- Briefly ensure that participants are clear about the nature of the task
- Ask them to read the chapter on Governing Body Procedures in the latest version of the Guide to the Law
- Recommend that in addition to talking to fellow governors, the participants also seek the views of the Headteacher

Activity 3.7

- If you are planning to use Activity 3.7, you may wish to send Activity 3.7: Handouts 1 and 2 to participants in advance of the session.

Activity 3.8

- If you are planning to use Activity 3.8, you may wish to adapt it as a pre-session task and introduce it here
- Give out Activity 3.8: Handout 1 (Checklist) and ask participants to fill it in. It should only take a few minutes
- Encourage them to check their perceptions with colleagues and the Headteacher
- Encourage them also to consider what actions or support are needed to improve

Preparation (5 minutes)

Module Three: Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing Body

Key themes

This module focuses on the Chair's leadership role in enabling the Governing Body to organise itself and its work efficiently and effectively.

This module contains activities which explore:
- Pre-session task – collecting information on committee structure
- The Chair's planning role – overview
- Membership of the Governing Body
- Structuring the Governing Body
- Planning a strategic framework
- Working with the Clerk to plan meetings
- Active listening
- Managing conflict
- Managing meetings
- How the Chair can share out work to good effect
- How the Chair ensures effective minutes are taken

Adapting the module

All activities and their related handouts and overheads are numbered but you can tailor this module to the needs of the participants and to the amount of time available by:
- Omitting some activities altogether
- Changing the order of the activities
- Shortening activities by transferring information to handouts
- Supplementing activities with your own material

Timings, appropriate for groups of 10 – 12, have been included to give an indication of the approximate length of each activity

Whole governing body development

Some of the activities in this module are suitable for adapting for whole governing body development

Learning Record

You may want to re-introduce the Learning Record before your first activity, in which case you may need spare copies.

Module Three: Overview

Activity	Topics	Approx Time
3.1	**The Chair's Role in planning the work of the Governing Body** An introduction to the module outlining the Chair's role in planning the work of the Governing Body	20 mins
3.2	**How many members?** A debate about the pros and cons of varying sizes of Governing Bodies	30 mins
3.3	**How many committees?** An exploration of options for the organisation of the Governing Body and their impact on efficiency and effectiveness	50 mins
3.4	**Planning a strategic framework** Participants consider when, during the annual cycle, to tackle a number of priorities and regular agenda items	40 mins
3.5	**Working with the Clerk** The role of the Clerk and how the Clerk and the Chair work together	50 mins
3.6	**Active listening** A paired activity exploring communication skills	30 mins
3.7	**Dealing with challenging situations** An exploration of the skills required to manage conflict and support other governors	60 mins
3.8	**Managing an effective meeting** An activity based on a self-evaluation of individual skills in managing meetings	20 mins
3.9	**Chairing meetings** An opportunity to practise and reflect on chairing skills and the management of decision making	40 mins
3.10	**Does it have to be the Chair?** An enquiry into strategies for ensuring that the Chair does not take on too much	30 mins
3.11	**Is this a good minute?** An activity outlining the importance of accurate minutes and the Chair's role in ensuring that the work of the Governing Body is adequately reported	30 mins
3.12	**Plenary session** Summarising learning and preparing for the next session	15 mins

Skills addressed in this module

Skills and Attributes Activity	Team building skills	Organisational skills	Communication skills	Strategic skills	Analytical skills
3.1					
3.2	√	√	√		
3.3		√	√	√	√
3.4		√	√	√	√
3.5	√	√	√		
3.6			√		
3.7			√		
3.8	√	√	√		
3.9	√	√	√		
3.10	√	√	√		
3.11	√	√	√		√
3.12					

Module Three

Activity 3.1: The Chair's role in planning the work of the Governing Body

Aims

- To provide an overview of the Chair's role in planning the work of the Governing Body
- To consider the planning role in the context of the three key roles of the Governing Body
- To consider the impact of the Chair's effective planning on the Governing Body's contribution to school improvement

Overall length

- 20 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.1: OHTs 1-6
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This is a short introductory activity to introduce participants to each other, to recap on the previous session and to introduce the module

Task 1: Welcome and introductions

- If the group has new members or you are new to the group, you may wish to start the session with the usual introductions, housekeeping and ground rules
- Encourage reflection by putting a question on the flip chart such as "What were your key learning points from the last session" or "Have you changed/or planned to change anything in the way you work since the last session?" and ask participants to reflect on this as they come in
- Recap on the previous session by asking for responses to your questions
- Suggest that the participants use their Learning Record to record key learning points during the course of this session
- The remainder of the activity is to introduce the participants to the module and to make some key points about the role of the Chair in planning the work of the Governing Body
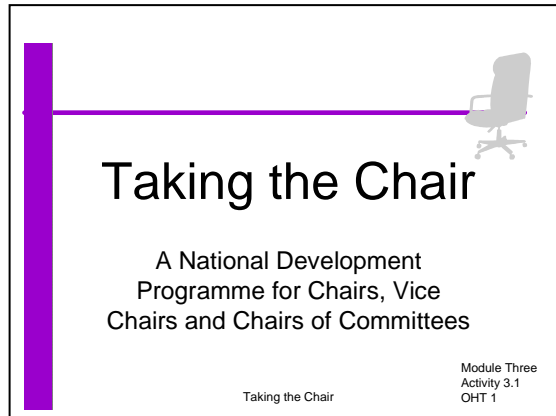
Facilitator introduction (5 minutes)

Module Three
Activity 3.1

Task 2: Introducing the module and the role of the Chair

Use the Activity 3.1: OHTs 1-3 to introduce the module. It might be helpful to remind participants of what has already been covered and the general contents of Modules 4 and 5
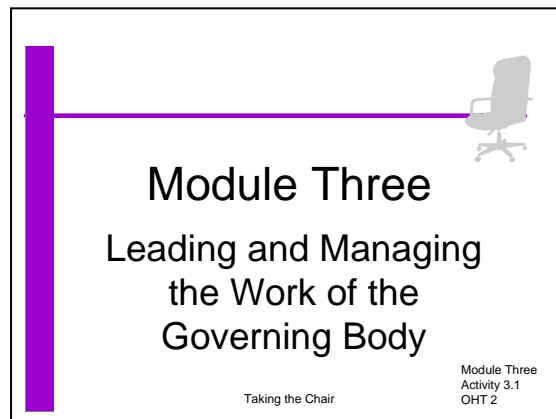
Taking the Chair

A National Development Programme for Chairs, Vice Chairs and Chairs of Committees

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 1
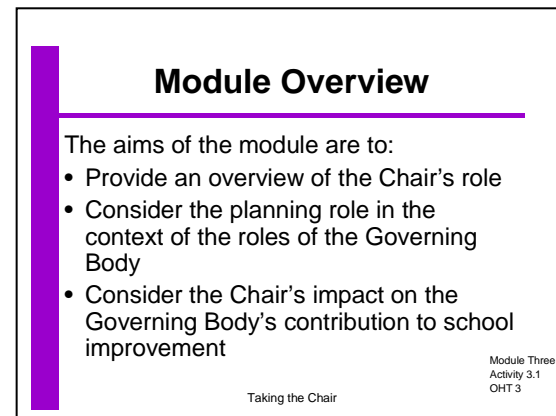
Module Three

Leading and Managing the Work of the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 2

Module Overview

The aims of the module are to:
• Provide an overview of the Chair's role
• Consider the planning role in the context of the roles of the Governing Body
• Consider the Chair's impact on the Governing Body's contribution to school improvement
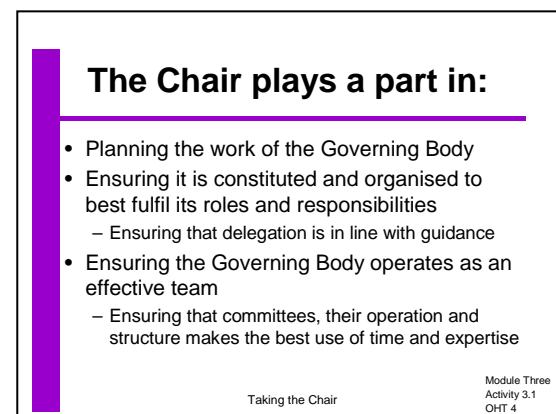
Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 3

Use Activity 3.1: OHT 4 to introduce an overview of the role of the Chair

• You may be focusing on some of these roles in the activities you have chosen and now might be the appropriate time to run through your programme and highlight the topics you will be including

The Chair plays a part in:

• Planning the work of the Governing Body
• Ensuring it is constituted and organised to best fulfil its roles and responsibilities
  – Ensuring that delegation is in line with guidance
• Ensuring the Governing Body operates as an effective team
  – Ensuring that committees, their operation and structure makes the best use of time and expertise

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 4

Use Activity 3.1: OHT 5 to outline the Chair's role in leading and managing meeting schedules – the key points to make are:

- The schedule of Governing Body meetings should be linked to the school improvement planning cycle
- Information for discussion and decision making should be available before meetings and in line with the improvement cycle
- The Chair can support the Headteacher by ensuring that the Governing Body considers plans and policies in time for them to be agreed and does not hold up implementation
- Meetings also need to be scheduled around the budget planning cycle and cycles for the review of policies, monitoring and progress
- The idea of a strategic framework which ensures that this happens is explored in later activities

The Chair ensures that:

- Meetings are linked to school improvement
- Information is available at the right time
- Meetings are timely and support progress
- Meetings are linked with budget and review cycles

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 5

Use Activity 3.1: OHT 6 to make the following points about the management of meetings themselves:

When planning, organising and chairing meetings, the chair should ensure that:

- Agenda items are related to strategic school improvement
- Information is presented in advance and in a form that all can understand
- There is enough time to discuss important items and this is reflected in the balance of the agenda
- Everyone has an opportunity to contribute
- The decision making process is clear to all
- Accurate minutes are produced and circulated

The Chair ensures that:

- Agendas focus on school improvement
- Information is appropriate
- The agenda is balanced
- All have an opportunity to contribute
- The decision making process is clear
- Minutes are accurate

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.1
OHT 6

Facilitator presentation (15 minutes)

Module Three

Activity 3.2: How many members?

Aims

- To consider the impact of legislation on the size and composition of the Governing Body
- To consider the advice Chairs might give to their Governing Bodies on membership
- To provide practice in presenting an argument

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.2: OHT 1
- Guide to the Law, Chapter 2: How Governing Bodies are made up in community, foundation, VA and VC schools
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- Regulations taking effect from 1st September 2003, contained in the Statutory Guidance on School Governance (Constitution)(England) Regulations 2003, require all Governing Bodies to review their membership by September 2006. This change in legislation gives Governing Bodies much more freedom to choose the size of the body rather than it being determined by the number of pupils on roll. The total number of governors can vary between 9 and 20.
- Although all Governing Bodies must make a decision by September 2006, this is not a once and for all decision and changes can be made if the needs of the school change
- Chairs need to ensure that discussions take place to enable the Governing Body to plan for change
- There is a similar activity in the National Development Programme for Clerks to Governing Bodies, so if the Clerk has been on this training, he/she would be a good source of advice on this topic
- Issues influencing a decision on the number of members of a Governing Body include:
  o A small Governing Body will result in only two staff members. One place is reserved for the Headteacher, the second place must go to a teacher, unless no-one stands, leaving no place for a member of the support staff
  o A small Governing Body may have difficulty in finding sufficient Governors to sit on appeals committees (for example on a staff dismissal case) if some are barred from doing so (the head) and some may not wish to do so (other staff) and others are debarred because they have prior knowledge.
  o A small Governing Body with a number of committees may put a burden on individuals who have to attend meetings of several committees
  o Large Governing Bodies may be more difficult to manage and individual contributions may be reduced

Module Three
Activity 3.2

- Governing Bodies may also consider Federation (2 or more schools under one Governing Body) or Collaboration (2 or more schools pooling resources – e.g. making a joint appointment of a specialist teacher or a bursar or joint committees comprising members of the different Governing Bodies.

Task: How many members do we want?

Use Activity 3.2: OHT 1 to introduce the activity

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How many members?

The aims of the activity are to:
- Develop awareness of legislation on reviewing membership of the Governing Body
- Consider the advice Chairs might give to their governing bodies on membership

Module Three
Activity 3.2
OHT 1

Taking the Chair
</div>

- Remind participants of the legislation regarding a review of membership and that there are a number of pros and cons for large and small governing bodies. Ask for just one or two very brief suggestions of what the issues might be to get people thinking in the right area
- Divide participants into two groups
- Ask Group A to speak in favour of small Governing Bodies
- Ask Group B to speak in favour of large Governing Bodies
- Give each group about 12 minutes to prepare their case and 5 minutes to present their case to the other group
- Ask them to think about how they will present their case – will they have only one spokesperson from the group, or will they all take a role?
- Put the essential instructions and timings on a flip chart so that the groups can refer back to them as they work

Facilitator introduction and preparation of presentation (15 minutes)
Group presentation (5 minutes each) (10 minutes)

- When both groups have presented their cases take a vote.
- Ask participants what steps have been taken to start this debate on their Governing Body and whether they think their present membership works for them
- Remind them of sources of information (Guide to the Law, DfES Governor website, the LEA and the Clerk)

Plenary (5 minutes)

Activity 3.3: How many committees?

Aims

- To consider the effectiveness of a number of organisational structures and learn from the practice of others
- To consider how the context of the school influences the committee structure
- To consider how to make best use of committees and ensure effective reporting back systems

Overall length

- 50 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.3: OHT 1
- Activity 3.3: Handouts 1 and 2 (sent out in advance of the session)
- Activity 3.3: Handouts 3 and 4
- Examples of committee structures
- Examples of terms of reference of committees
- Guide to the Law
- Flip chart, Blu-Tack and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- As many of your participants will be relatively new Chairs, or may not yet be Chair, this activity provides them with the opportunity to review and consider the pros and cons of a variety of committee structures
- The activity will also stimulate more experienced Chairs to think afresh about the structure of their Governing Body
- Some of the issues to consider when deciding the number of committees are:
  - What decisions can be delegated to a committee, individual or the Headteacher - see Statutory Guidance on the School Governance (Procedures)(England) Regulations 2003. Ref DfES/0430/2003 in the latest version of the Guide to the Law
  - When delegating to the Headteacher, does the Headteacher have the necessary experience, school leadership team and good management systems in place to effectively undertake the task?
  - What is the overall size of the Governing Body and are there enough members to serve on committees without overburdening individuals?
  - Are there enough committees to get through more than the average amount of work? (For example if we are a school in special measures)
  - How can duplication of effort be avoided?
  - Is there enough experience and expertise to spread among the committees so that decision making can be safely delegated to them?

o   Are there enough people to chair and clerk committees?
o   Do a small number of committees put too much influence in the hands of a few?
o   Do committees share the review of policies?
o   How efficiently and effectively are reports from committees dealt with – remembering that the Governing Body retains legal responsibility for decisions?
o   What support might committee Chairs need?
o   Would the opportunity to chair a committee help develop future Chairs of the Governing Body?

- There is a similar activity in the course reader for the National Development Programme for Clerks to Governing Bodies, so if the Clerk has been on this training, he/she would be a good source of advice on this topic
- You might also remind participants of the interactive decision planner on Governornet
- This activity focuses on how decisions are made about the number and type of committees and methods for reporting back – the timing of committee and Governing Body meetings and the agenda items for them are dealt with in Activity 3.4. The object is not to recommend a particular structure. One size will not fit all.

Task 1: Identifying the issues

Introduce the activity using Activity 3.3: OHT 1

How many committees?

The aims of the activity are to consider:
- The effectiveness of a number of organisational structures
- How the context of the school influences the committee structure
- How to make best use of committees and ensure effective reporting back systems

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.3
OHT 1

- Lead a brainstorm on the issues to consider when deciding the committee structure (see key notes for facilitators above) and flip chart the issues – but not the solutions or recommendations. You might ask, "What are the issues we need to think about when deciding the committee structure of the Governing Body?" The issues have been listed on Activity 3.3: Handout 4 and you may wish to hand this out at the end of your brainstorm session

Flip charting issues (10 minutes)

Task 2: Suggesting solutions

- Divide the participants into groups of 3 or 4 according to the current size of their Governing Body or other criteria that you think will ensure that participants from schools in fairly similar circumstances work together
- Ensure that participants have completed the pre-session task or give them examples of Governing Body structures
- Give out Activity 3.3: Handout 3 and ensure the group understands the task before giving them 15 minutes to complete it
- Give each group a flip chart sheet and pens

Group work (20 minutes)

- Lead a question and answer session by inviting each group in turn to present their 5 recommendations and 3 Hot Tips in 5 minutes and to answer questions from the other groups

Reporting back (20 minutes)

Structuring the Governing Body

Pre-session task

In preparation for Module Three, please try and find the time to make the following notes on the recording sheet provided.

1.   Make a list of your Governing Body committees

2.   For each committee make a brief summary of its remit

3.   Make notes in answer to the questions below:

*   When was the composition of the Governing Body last reviewed?

*   How did you decide on the number and remit of committees?

*   What is the value of these committees to the Governing Body?

*   When do committees meet in relation to the main Governing Body and does it enable efficient and effective reporting back to the Governing Body?

*   Any other comments or queries about committee structures?

*   How many members on your Governing Body?

Structuring the Governing Body: Recording sheet
Please make an extra copy of this sheet if you have more committees than will fit here

Our Committees	Their Remit

How many committees?

Task sheet

In your group discuss:

1. How efficiently and effectively your governing bodies are organised (using your pre-session notes)

2. Agree 5 recommendations for the organisation of Governing Body committees and put them on a flip chart

3. Agree 3 'Hot Tips' for ensuring the committees effectively report back to the Governing Body

You will have 5 minutes to make your recommendations and give your tips.

How will you organise your feedback? For example, will all of you take a turn to speak or will you select one spokesperson?

Some Of The Issues To Consider When
Deciding The Number Of Committees

- What decisions can be delegated to a committee, individual or the Headteacher - see Statutory Guidance on the School Governance (Procedures)(England) Regulations 2003. Ref DfES/0430/2003 or the latest version of Guide to the Law

- When delegating to the Headteacher, does the Headteacher have the necessary experience, school leadership team and good management systems in place to effectively undertake the task?

- What is the overall size of the Governing Body and have we enough members to serve on committees without overburdening individuals?

- Do we have to get through more than the average amount of work? (For example if we are a school in special measures)

- How can we avoid duplication of effort and make the best use of people's time?

- Do we have enough experience and expertise to spread among the committees so that we can safely delegate decision making to them?

- Do we have enough people to be the Chairs of committees and clerk them?

- Do a small number of committees put too much influence in the hands of a few?

- Do people feel more committed if they are involved in working on committees?

- Do our committees share the review of policies?

- How efficiently and effectively do we deal with reports from committees – remembering that the Governing Body retains legal responsibility for decisions?

- What support might committee Chairs need?

- Would the opportunity to chair a committee help develop future Chairs of the Governing Body?Could we make more use of Working Groups to take on specific tasks?

Module Three

Activity 3.4: Planning a strategic framework

Aims

- To develop confidence in constructing a strategic framework for the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate policy, practice and impact
- To consider the issues to be taken into account when scheduling the work of the Governing Body and its committees

Overall length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.4: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 3.4: Handouts 1-3

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity encourages participants to consider how to plan the Governing Body's annual workload
- The issues are taken from Ofsted forms S3 and S4 which many schools are maintaining on an ongoing basis
- The issues are a mixture of statutory requirements and questions about standards and quality
- Governing bodies, often represented by the Chair but also including other governors, will be expected to have the evidence to support their judgements on these issues when discussing them with inspectors
- The participants will need to consider what evidence the Governing Body will need in order to support their judgements on these issues, how it will be gathered, when and by whom
- Remind participants about the online year planner www.governornet.co.uk/calendar

Module Three
Activity 3.4

Task1: Planning a strategic framework

Introduce the activity using Activity 3.4:
OHT 1

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Planning a strategic framework

The aims of the activity are to:
- Develop confidence in constructing a strategic framework for Governing Body meetings
- Consider the issues to be taken into account when scheduling the work of the Governing Body and its committees

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.4
OHT 1

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Activity 3.4: OHT 2 outlines the key elements of the Chair's role in enabling the Governing Body to plan its work

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The Chair…

- Looks ahead and is strategic rather than reactive
- Has an overview of the priorities for improvement
- Knows what school, local and national initiatives need to be considered by the Governing Body
- Makes the best use of the Governing Body's time and effort
- Does not crowd the agenda with issues that can be or should be dealt with by others
- Is prepared to adjust plans

Module Three
Activity 3.4
OHT 2

Taking the Chair

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Facilitator introduction (5 minutes)

- Divide groups into trios – this activity works best if group members come from similar size schools so group primary with primary and secondary with secondary if possible. You may have enough participants to distinguish between small and large primaries. This is an opportunity to move groups around to give people a variety of others to work with
- Give out Activity 3.4: Handouts 1-3
- Suggest which issues each group might tackle so that they are all covered and each group does not try to do too many in the time available
- Check that everyone understands the task
- Circulate while the groups are working to ask and answer questions and challenge decisions
- If a group decides that its school will not have committees but always work through full Governing Body meetings, ask them to plot the relevant agenda items on the Annual Calendar of Work and to think about who will be invited to present information to the Governing Body
- Ask participants whether they ever set up Working Groups and what kinds of tasks do they ask them to carry out.

Group work (25 minutes)

- Hold a plenary discussion to probe what the groups have learned from this exercise:
- What issues did the activity throw up?
- What is their normal practice for planning the work of the Governing Body?
- Do they have an annual calendar of work and does it allow them to gather this sort of evidence in a regular and systematic way?
- Are they making the best use of committees?

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Planning a strategic framework: The Task

Background

You are the Governing Body of a school.
It is the start of the autumn term.

The items on Handout 2 are taken from Ofsted forms S3 and S4. The Governing Body is expected to be able to provide the answers to these questions and have the evidence to back its judgements.

Your task is to plan the work of the Governing Body and its committees so that these issues are monitored and evaluated.

With your group:

1. Decide which committees the Governing Body of this school will have

2. Which of the issues could be put on a committee agenda? Which committee?

3. At which committee meeting should the issue be considered, bearing in mind when relevant information is likely to be available?

4. At which meeting will the issue be brought to the Governing Body and who could be invited to present information?

Plotting agenda items on the Annual Calendar of Work

Plot appropriate agenda items on the year planner so that the issues below are considered by the appropriate committee and/or the Governing Body.

The Annual Calendar of Work already includes some items that must be covered in meetings. You may consider moving some of these items.

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1. Does the school meet the requirements of the general duty and the specific duties in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) Code of Practice?

2. Does the school have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when meeting pupils' special educational needs and make its policy known to parents?

3. Does the Governing Body have procedures for ensuring the school meets all relevant health and safety legislation?

4. Do the school's procedures for child protection follow the requirements of the local area Child Protection Committee, and does the Governing Body ensure that these are followed?

5. Does the Governing Body have a performance management policy and does it ensure that all teachers, including the Headteacher, are appraised in accordance with statutory requirements?

6. How effective are teaching and learning?

7. How well are pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities developed?

8. How well does the school work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community?

Module Three
Activity 3.4: Handout 3

Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
Full Governing Body	Committees	Full Governing Body	Committees	Full Governing Body	Committees
Elect Chair and vice Chair (if this is what the GB has decided)	Elect Chair and Vice Chair	Agree budget	Review policies	Review Governing Body performance this year	Review staff pay
Agree delegation and terms of reference	Plan annual programme of work	Agree staffing structure		Report on operation of Performance Management Policy	
Prepare and approve Annual Report to Parents					
Plan annual programme of work	Arrange Headteacher's performance management review				
Review School Improvement Plan		Review School Improvement Plan		Review School Improvement Plan	

Activity 3.5: Working with the Clerk

Aims

- To identify good practice in planning meetings
- To emphasise the role of the Clerk and build confidence in working with the Clerk
- To encourage ownership of the agenda by the Chair and the Governing Body

Overall length

- 50 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.5: OHT 1
- Activity 3.5: Handouts 1-2
- Model Job Description: National Training Programme for Clerks to Governing Bodies, Course Reader, page 106: at least one copy per group
- Flip charts and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- You could start this activity by outlining the clerking services in your area
- Many Chairs are unaware of what can be expected of a Clerk or the level of service for which they are paid
- The relationship with the Clerk will be an important one for a new Chair
- Chairs need to be aware of what level of support they can expect from the Clerk
- The Clerk serves the Governing Body and not the Headteacher
- The Chair is responsible for the agenda and the order of items on it
- The agenda items should reflect the Governing Body's focus on school improvement and their three key roles: Strategic view, critical friend and ensuring accountability
- The Chair should know in advance what the Headteacher's report contains and can ask the Headteacher for information which has not been included
- You might wish to have a discussion about 'Any other business'. This can be used inappropriately, for example when Governors raise issues that take the Headteacher and other Governors by surprise or when issues are raised that need prior notice to allow for information to be gathered and reflection time. Some governing bodies do not have 'AOB' on the agenda at all, but practice varies.

Module Three
Activity 3.5

Task 1: Working with the Clerk

Use Activity 3.5: OHT 1 to introduce the
activity

Working with the clerk

The aims of the activity are to:
• Identify good practice in planning
  meetings
• Emphasise the role of the Clerk and
  build confidence in working with the
  Clerk
• Encourage ownership of the agenda by
  the Chair and the Governing Body

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.5
OHT 1

• Group participants in trios
• Give out Activity 3.5: Handout 1 Working with the Clerk
• Ask trios to read through and discuss their experiences of working with the Clerk

Facilitator introduction and trio discussions (10 minutes)

• Now give out Activity 3.5: Handout 2, Planning Checklist, and ask participants to complete
  this in their trios

Trio work on checklist (10 minutes)

• Ask participants to feed back any key issues and any examples of good practice
• Note these on a flip chart and encourage participants to share ideas and good practice
• Make any key points that are not raised by participants

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Other steps to take before meetings

• Give each group a flip chart sheet and pens
• Give the groups 10 minutes to list other steps the Chair might take before meetings to
  ensure that meetings are well managed (assume that all the actions highlighted in 'Working
  with the Clerk' have been carried out)

Group work (10 minutes)

• Display the flip charts, give participants the opportunity to look at lists
• Comment on any good practice noted and any items omitted
• Additional items might include:
    o Setting yearly timetable of meetings in advance
    o Agreeing the length and timing of meetings to suit most governors
    o Ensuring that the meeting room is suitable/comfortable and visual aids work
    o Deciding in advance whether refreshments are served and when
    o Avoiding tabling documents unless essential

Discussion of flip charts (10 minutes)

Working with the Clerk

Every Governing Body must appoint a Clerk
Clerks may:
- Be experienced or inexperienced
- Have completed the National Training Programme for Clerks of Governing Bodies
- Be a member of an LEA clerking service

The tasks that may be delegated to a Clerk vary according to:
- The level of pay and agreed level of service
- The agreed job description

The Governing Body makes decisions and takes responsibility – the Clerk supports them in doing so

How the Clerk supports the Chair
A good Clerk:
- Is knowledgeable and advises the Chair and the Governing Body
- Ensures that the Governing Body is acting within regulations
- Keeps the Chair and others up to date with initiatives and legislation
- May have experience of good practice in other contexts
- Gives the Chair confidence that the right things are being done in the right way

How the Chair can support the Clerk
The Chair can:
- Work closely with the Clerk to ensure the Governing Body is well informed
- Encourage the Clerk to attend LEA briefings and seek information from the DfES and LEA web sites
- Encourage the Clerk to undertake the National Training Programme
- Encourage the Clerk to maintain good record-keeping systems

What the Chair and the Clerk do together
- Ensure that all papers are prepared for meetings including committee meetings
- Ensure that all relevant papers are circulated seven days in advance of meetings

Working with the Headteacher and the Clerk, the Chair ensures:
- That all agenda items are clearly set out
- That items are set out in an order which will ensure that sufficient time will be allocated to discussing matters of high importance
- That there are no surprises in the Headteacher's report
- Items focus on school improvement and the three key roles of the Governing Body: strategic view, critical friend and ensuring accountability

The Chair ensures that committee Chairs follow the same procedures

Working with the Clerk – Planning Checklist

Use the Clerk's job description from the National Programme for Clerks of Governing Bodies to refresh your understanding of the role of the Clerk	
Who should be consulted when drawing up the agenda?	
How should the order of items on the agenda be decided?	
When should the preparation and distribution take place?	
What information is needed in advance and how are governors going to receive this?	
What is the purpose of 'Any Other Business'?	
Tips for working successfully with the Clerk and the Headteacher that you want to take away from this session:	

Activity 3.6: Active Listening

Aims

- To encourage participants to analyse their own listening skills
- To develop their understanding of communication skills

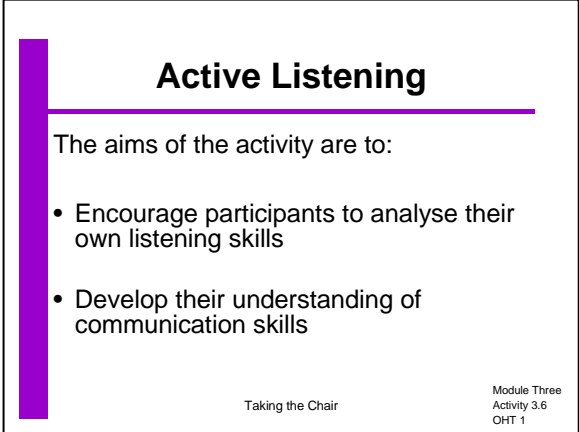## Overall Length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.6: OHT1
- Activity 3.6: Handouts 1 and 2
- Plain paper, pencils and clip boards

Key notes for Facilitators

- This is an active listening exercise designed to identify the positive and negative aspects of verbal communication skills
- Participants will work in pairs, sitting back to back and as far away from other pairs as space will allow
- You will need to copy the handouts on to plain white paper. Only one person in each pair should see the handout allocated to them. Participants can choose which of the designs on the handout they use in the exercise.
- If you would like to include this activity but need to reduce the time allowed, give a diagram to a volunteer and ask them to describe it to the whole group. Put the diagram on an OHT to show to the group at the end of the activity

Task 1: Active listening

Introduce the activity using Activity 3.6: OHT 1

Active Listening

The aims of the activity are to:

- Encourage participants to analyse their own listening skills

- Develop their understanding of communication skills

Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.6
OHT 1

Module Three
Activity 3.6

- Give out Activity 3.6: Handout 1 to one participant and plain paper and pencil to the other
- The participant with the handout has to describe what they see in such a way that the person with the pencil and paper sitting back to back with them can draw the same diagram
- People drawing may ask questions for clarification and accuracy, but may not see the diagram.
- Listen to the pairs and note the kind of language they are using, what questions are being asked, what misunderstandings occur etc. Note how well participants listen to instructions and how clearly the instructions are given

Instructing and drawing (10 minutes)

- Stop the activity and discuss how easy or difficult the drawers found it to follow the instructions and why.
- Repeat the exercise with roles reversed, using Activity 3.6: Handout 2

Instructing and drawing (10 minutes)

- Lead a plenary discussion:
  - Did the process improve the second time around and if so, why?
  - Which communication skills were they using? – Responses might include paying attention, active listening, reflecting, summarising, managing silence, encouraging, echoing, checking, clarifying, expressing feelings, verifying conclusions, asking for examples, questioning etc.
  - Widen the discussion to include questioning techniques (did they ask the right questions?) and the importance of body language (and how this makes normal communication much easier) and the environment (noise, distraction etc).
  - What do they think is the connection between this activity and their roles as Chairs, Vice Chairs etc.?
  - Link the activity and learning points to the vital communication role of the Chair.
  - Can they think of situations which could have been improved by a more conscious use of communication skills?
  - Are there any communications skills which they know they could improve (you might want to admit to one yourself!)
  - Stress that verbal communication is a two way process involving both listening and talking. (Refer participants to the questioning skills outlined in Activity 1.5)

Plenary (10 minutes)
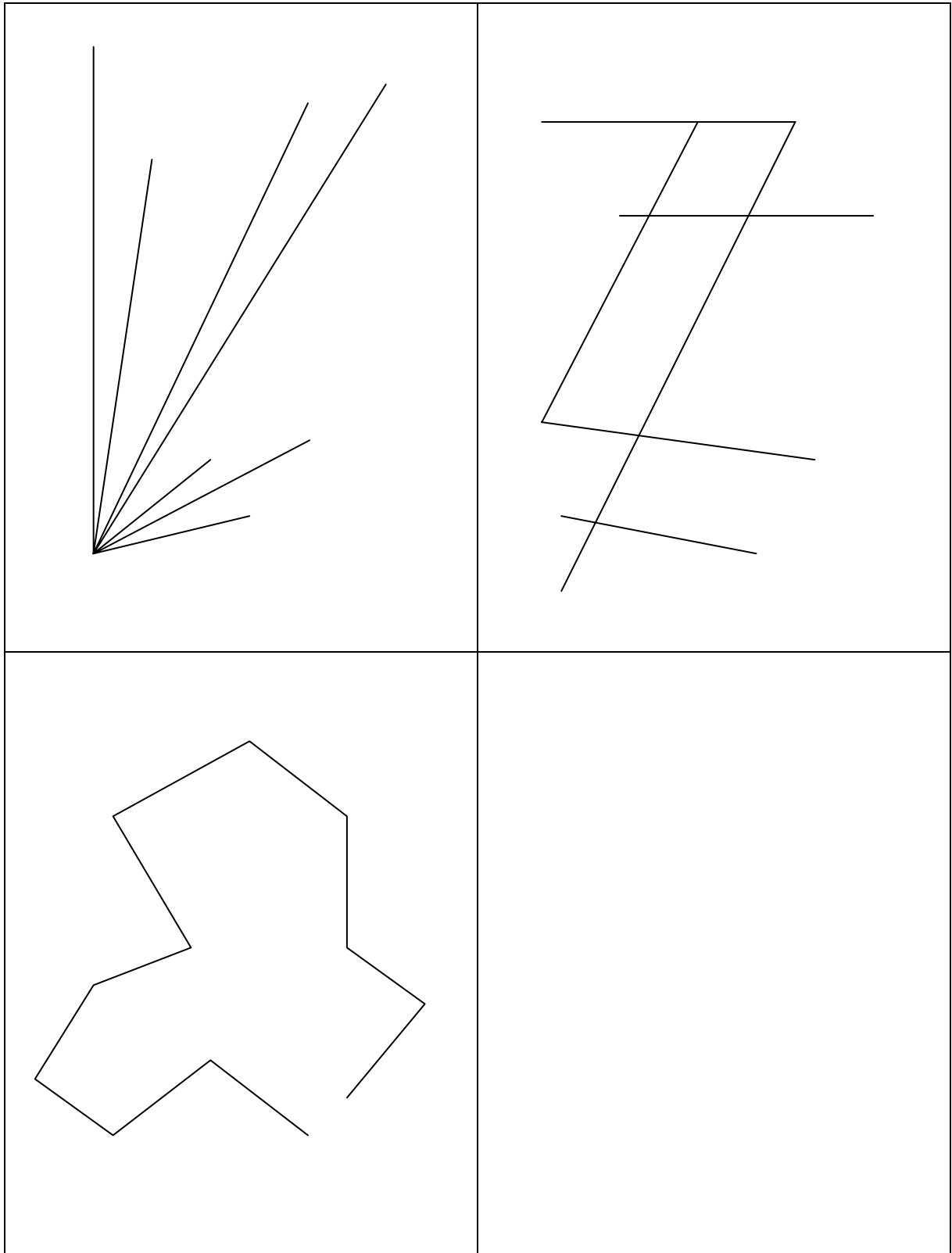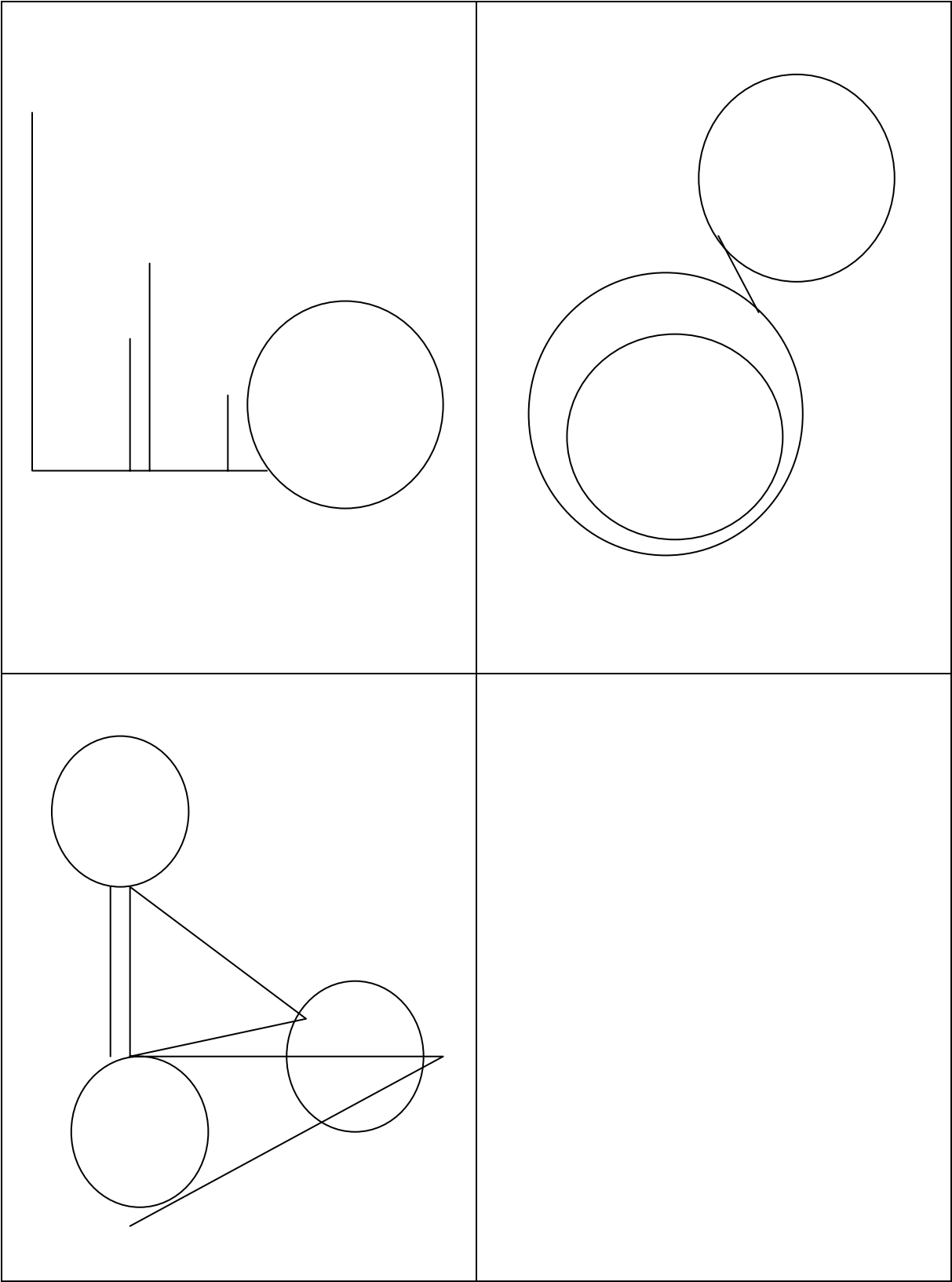
Activity 3.7: Dealing with challenging situations

Aims

- To identify ways to respond to conflict within the Governing Body

Overall length

- 60 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.7: OHT 1
- Activity 3.7: Handouts 1-3
- The video from the Training Programme for New Governors: scenario Time and the Word.
- Video player and TV or digital projector

Key notes for Facilitators

- The video demonstrates very poor practice in the organisation of the finance committee's meeting – Ashok, the new member of the committee is not given proper notification of the arrangements for the meeting; papers are tabled; the Headteacher and the Chair clearly make decisions outside the framework of the committee's work; time is wasted.
- Whilst the process understandably aggrieved Ashok, it would have been better if he had challenged in a more constructive manner.
- When we are attacked our natural reaction is to defend
- In situations like this it is vital for the aggrieved person to feel heard. The maxim 'seek first to understand then to be understood' is a useful guide
- The empathetic model described on Activity 3.7: Handout 1 is one way of managing such a situation. Activity 3.7: Handout 2, Negotiation Skills, describes how to achieve a win-win situation.
- Both these handouts are useful background to the activity, but will be too much for participants to read during the session. If you decide to use this activity you will need to send them out in advance as pre-session reading, or extend the time allowed for the first stage of the activity

Module Three
Activity 3.7

Task 1: Dealing with challenging situations

Introduce the activity using Activity 3.7: OHT 1

- Explain that participants are going to view a video depicting an extract from a badly organised meeting which prompts an emotional outburst from a Governor. They are going to think about the skills they need to respond from the perspective of a Chair or Chair of Committee

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Dealing with challenging situations
─────────────────────────────────
The aims of the activity are to:

• Identify ways to respond to conflict
  within the Governing Body

                              Module Three
                              Activity 3.7
                              OHT 1
              Taking the Chair
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- Give out Activity 3.7 Handouts 1 and 2 and run through the key features of the approaches

Facilitator introduction (10 minutes)

- Divide participants into three groups A, B and C
- Give out Activity 3.7: Handout 3 and allocate each group an observation task during the video. Ask Group A to focus on Alison, the Chair of Finance Committee, Group B to focus on Ashok, the new governor, and Group C to look at the situation overall and think about how they respond to both Alison and Ashok in a meeting to discuss Ashok's concerns
- The video is in two sections with questions on the screen between the two. Watch both sections straight through
- Ask the groups to focus on the questions on the handout rather than those on the screen, which were intended for new governors

Organisation of groups and viewing video scenario (15 minutes)

- Reorganise the groups by taking an A and B and a C from each group to form new groups. Talk through the second part of the task on Activity 3.7: Handout 3.   Remind them about any relevant activities from Module Two relating to the needs of new governors.

Group work (15 minutes)

- Put pairs of trios together (6 participants) and ask them to exchange scripts or role play and:
    o   Identify those questions and comments that are likely to have a positive result
    o   Note what if, anything, could be improved
    o   Estimate the likelihood of a satisfactory outcome for each example

Group work (10 minutes)

- Hold a plenary to pull out examples of good practice.   Ask for examples of approaches and behaviours which worked well and think about why they worked well. Highlight key skills being used.

Facilitator led plenary (10 minutes)

The Empathetic Model for Conflict Resolution

Stage/skill	Behaviour	Outcome
Listen	• Don't interrupt or talk over them • Listen actively • Maintain eye contact appropriately	Shows respect and a desire to co-operate Gains control
Show understanding and respect	• Model the behaviour you want to see • Apologise if you're in the wrong • Stay calm • Use their names • Paraphrase to show you have understood. • Acknowledge their feelings 'I can see you're angry'. • Look as if you mean what you say –take care re body language	Shows you care
Ask supportive questions and open questions	• I can see this causes difficulty for you, would it help if…. • What can we do to improve matters? • How would you feel if…?	Ensures you have all the information you need before moving to a solution Enables you to be assertive Shows that you wish to co-operate Gains control
Explain	• Take care with tone of voice • Stick to the issue	Encourages understanding
Seek joint agreement	• Give a sense of making a choice. Invite ideas re solutions/ways forward. • Say 'Yes **and**', rather than 'yes **but**'. • Avoid value-laden statements e.g. –'I'm being very fair with you'. • Seek win/win outcome.	Shows co-operation, and willingness to negotiate. Gains control
Take action	• Do what you say you will do in the timescale agreed	Fulfils obligation. Inspires trust and confidence
Monitor action	• Check plan is working or amend.	

This is most effective if you repeat the first 3 stages until the tension reduces sufficiently to be able to move on to explain your perspective.

'Seek first to understand, then to be understood', Stephen Covey

Stages of negotiation

Preparing:
• Consider both points of view
• Decide on fallback position
• Consider best alternative

Creating a positive atmosphere
• Stating objectives (both parties)
• Dealing with disagreements/conflict/anger
• Finding solutions and/or acceptable compromises
• Reaching agreement

Agreeing objectives – think win-win

	YOU WIN	**YOU LOSE**
I WIN	WIN/WIN Best Outcome	WIN/LOSE Undesirable outcome
I LOSE	LOSE/WIN Undesirable outcome	LOSE/LOSE Really bad news!

Skilled negotiators actively:
• Seek information: they spend 20% of their time asking questions compared to 10% for average negotiators
• Test understanding, summarise: they spend twice as much time testing understanding and summarising the stages negotiations have reached.
• Signal/label behaviour: they are five times more likely to signal the type of behaviour they are about to use. E.g. "Can I ask you a question...?", "If I may make a suggestion…?"

Skilled negotiators actively avoid:
• Personal attacks/irritating
• Value-laden terms
• Attack/defend spirals
• Counter-proposals.
• Argument dilution

From: Huthwaite Research Group

Managing challenging situations: TASK

Group A: Chair of Finance Committee

Watch the scenario and consider:
   a) How Alison could respond to Ashok to reduce the tension
   b) What comments could she make?
   c) What questions could she ask?

What could constitute a win-win situation for both parties?

Group B: Ashok, a new governor

Put yourselves in the position of Ashok. What would he want to see happen:
   a) Immediately?
   b) In terms of future practice?
   c) What could he do to contribute to achieving a satisfactory outcome?
   d) What could constitute a win-win situation for both parties?

Group C: Chair of Governors

Put yourselves in the position of the Chair.

What would he/she do if asked to facilitate a meeting between the two of them immediately after the outburst?

What could constitute a win-win situation?

After the video and in new groups:

- In your roles, plan what you would do and say at a meeting to address the concerns expressed by Ashok
- Think about the best way of approaching the situation and what you are trying to achieve
- The objective of the discussion between the three parties is to create a productive working relationship which benefits the work of the Governing Body

Either:

   a) Write rough notes or a script so that you can feed back on the key points of the discussion to another group, or
   b) Construct a very short role play to show what each of you would do or say in the situation

Module Three

3.8 Managing an effective meeting: Checklist

Aims

- To give participants an opportunity to make a self assessment of their effectiveness in managing meetings

Overall length

- 10 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.8: Handout 1

Key notes for Facilitators

- A meetings checklist is included here:
  - o You may wish to develop this into an activity in preference to the role-play Activity 3.9
  - o You may wish to offer it as a pre- or post-session task
  - o You could give this out after Activity 3.9 for participants to use to reflect on their own skills as Chair but it is useful for them to have considered aspects of effective chairing before taking part in the role-play

- The checklist prompts participants to consider the effectiveness of their own role in chairing and managing meetings. Participants should be encouraged to:
  - a) Check their perceptions with a colleague or the Headteacher
  - b) Consider what action or support is needed to improve

Managing an effective meeting: Checklist

Circle the number which most applies:
1 = Always, 2 = Often or usually, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Never

1	Before a meeting I make sure that I know how a formal meeting should be run	1	2	3	4
2	I make sure I am well prepared for the meeting	1	2	3	4
3	I begin the meeting at its scheduled start time	1	2	3	4
4	I make sure governors understand the minutes of the previous meeting	1	2	3	4
5	I explain the purpose of the meeting clearly to all the participants especially new governors	1	2	3	4
6	I follow the agenda for the meeting	1	2	3	4
7	I make sure that governors always speak through the Chair even if informally	1	2	3	4
8	I know what each governor's motives and hidden agenda are	1	2	3	4
9	I make sure all governors are fully involved in the meeting	1	2	3	4
10	I allow all points of view to have a fair hearing	1	2	3	4
11	I encourage respect for the professional views of the Headteacher and staff	1	2	3	4
12	I make sure those attending don't ramble or adopt aggressive attitudes during discussions	1	2	3	4
13	I don't express my own views until the end of a discussion	1	2	3	4
14	I enable the Clerk to take accurate minutes of the meeting	1	2	3	4
15	I make sure all governors know what action to take before the next meeting	1	2	3	4
16	I make sure the date, time and place of the next meeting is known to all	1	2	3	4
Total score:					

What does your total score suggest?

16-41 Your meetings are effective and probably enjoyable!
42-47 You run quite effective meetings
48-54 You could run more effective meetings
55-64 You are finding this difficult and need more support
     Do you need to plan any action?

Activity 3.9: Chairing meetings

Aims

- To provide experience of taking part in a meeting to observe and evaluate chairing skills
- To consider how to manage behaviours and concerns in a meeting
- To reflect on the skills required to manage conflict

Overall length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.9: OHTs 1-2
- Activity 3.9: Handouts 1 and 2
- Role cards – cut up

Key notes for Facilitators

- Participants will either practise being the Chair in their group or contribute to the discussion on improving chairing skills
- Emphasise, if necessary, that this activity is not role play but discussion in their usual role of governors at meetings
- There are 8 specific roles, additional participants should be given 'Governor' cards
- Ensure that there is an appropriate spread of roles if working in two small groups
- The issue under discussion is not of central importance, the focus of the activity is on what the Chair does and how he/she manages a meeting and reacts to typical types and situations
- If there is a local issue which you feel would make a better discussion point you will need to produce an alternative briefing sheet (How to deal with pupils taking holidays in term time might be one alternative discussion topic)

Module Three
Activity 3.9

Task 1: Chairing a meeting

Use Activity 3.9: OHT 1 to introduce the
activity

- Put participants into one large group of up to 12, or two smaller groups, depending on how much space you have
- Give out the role cards and a copy of Activity 3.9: Handout 1 to all participants
- Draw everyone's attention to the agenda item, the timing of the meeting and the time allowed for the agenda item
- Ask participants to arrange the furniture for the meeting and to decide where the Chair, Headteacher and Clerk should sit

Introduction, organisation of groups and furniture (10 minutes)

- When everyone is seated, invite the Chair to open the meeting and lead the discussion

Group discussion (15 minutes)

- Stop the discussion after 15 minutes if the Chair has not already done so

- Give everyone a few moments to consider the questions on Activity 3.9: OHT 2 (The value of time to reflect is that the discussion does not get controlled by the confident participants who are quick to air their views)

- Lead a discussion around the questions
- Ensure that positive feedback is given to the 'Chair'
- Feedback on the skills you observed in action (see Skills checklist in Toolkit Introduction) with examples of how they were effective and ask for key learning points
- Give out Activity 3.9: Handout 2

Plenary discussion (15 minutes)

Chairing a Meeting: Briefing for participants

Time of meeting: The autumn term
Time allocation for this agenda item: 15 minutes

Agenda item Number 1

To discuss a proposal to ban parents from parking on or turning round in the school car park

---

Background to the agenda item:
- The school is in a large village in a rural area
- There is a narrow road outside the school with gates to the car park and to the pathway to the playground area
- Transport is available for pupils living the prescribed distance from the school
- The car park is adjacent to the playground with no barriers between them
- The school is part of the Healthy Schools project
- Many parents drive their children to school
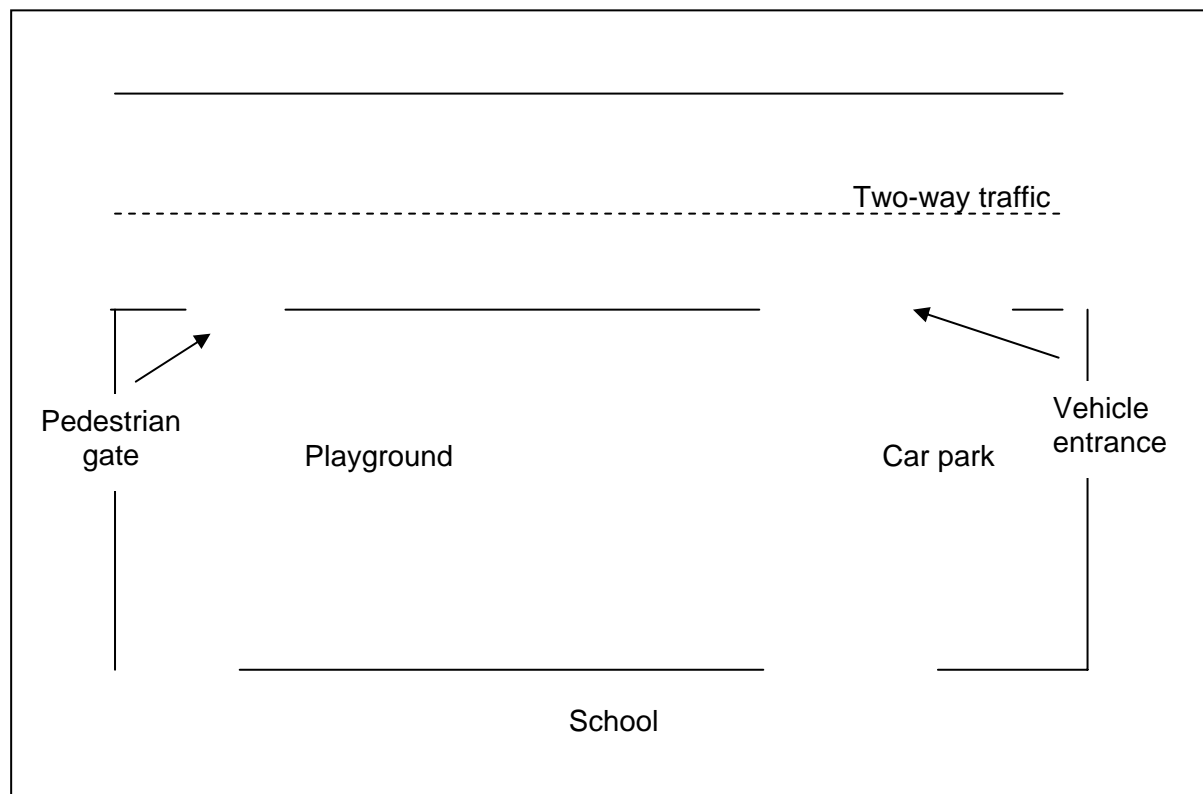
Chairing a meeting

Chair	Clerk
Governor who does not like change	**New Parent Governor** Single parent, lives in the village and works 20 miles away. Regularly drives child to school
Governor who likes everyone to agree	**Governor who likes to get through the agenda as quickly as possible**
Quiet Governor Lives 3 miles away but drives child to school because he does not like travelling on the school bus	**Governor who goes off at a tangent**
LEA Governor who made the initial suggestion	**Headteacher**

Managing Conflict

Conflict can be an inevitable part of decision making. Research shows that teams that do not always agree make better decisions and achieve more than teams who are always in agreement.

When people become entrenched in their views, the Chair has to manage the situation carefully so that relationships are not damaged and the group is not prevented from making a corporate decision.

When faced with conflict, we sometimes become emotionally involved and become challenging or defensive.   This sort of reaction can cause long-term damage rather than resolving the situation.

Listen → Stop → Think → Stop →Speak

Strategies for resolving conflict include:

- Asking people who are upset to explain why they feel strongly so that everyone understands
- Asking for the views of those who are less emotionally involved but who will give a frank answer
- Summarising the different view points, adding any information which may clarify the situation
- Remaining emotionally uninvolved
- Ensuring that the views of all are given a good hearing by not rushing the decision making
- Being firm about the need to make a decision - if not immediately, then in the very near future
- Considering a vote to help come to a resolution
- Securing commitment to a corporate decision so that the disagreement does not continue
- Being clear about the process for revisiting the decision in the future
- Being sensitive to those who have lost their argument
- Being positive about the value of a healthy debate

Module Three

Taking the Chair

Activity 3.10: Does it have to be the Chair?

Aims

- To identify areas of work often undertaken by the Chair which could be delegated to the Vice Chair or others
- To highlight the advantages which delegation would have for the:
    - Chair themselves
    - The Vice Chair or others
    - The Governing Body

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.10: OHTs 1 and 2
- Post-its
- Pens
- Five sheets of flip chart paper Blu-Tacked around the room

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity is not about the Chair abdicating their responsibilities, but sharing the load
- Chairs and Vice Chairs can successfully share the load using each other's strengths to best advantage
- This job share is also advantageous for governing bodies of schools in challenging circumstances
- Groups should also be encouraged to think of sharing responsibilities with governors other than the Vice-Chair
- Give lots of encouragement to the group to think differently or share their own experience of sharing the workload in their own Governing Body
- If necessary, remind group of the corporate nature of the Governing Body and that the powers of the Governing Body are vested in the body not individuals
- If you used Activity 1.2 in Module One, you might want to refer back to it here. This activity takes the Chair's role further by looking at delegation.
- Remind participants to write one item only on each Post-it

Module Three
Activity 3.10

Task 1: What tasks are the responsibilities of the Chair?

Introduce the activity using Activity 3.10: OHTs 1 and 2

Does it have to be the Chair?

Aims of the activity are to:
• Identify areas of work traditionally undertaken by the Chair which could be delegated to the Vice Chair or others
• Highlight the advantages which delegation would have for the:
  – Chair themselves
  – The Vice Chair or others
  – The Governing Body

Module Three
Activity 3.10
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

Should the Chair be a superhero?

Module Three
Activity 3.10
OHT 2

Taking the Chair

• Put participants into groups of 3
• Give each group a stack of Post-its and pens
• Ask group to write on separate Post-its all the tasks they think are the responsibility of the Chair (one item per Post-it)

Introduction and group work (10 minutes)

• Now ask the participants who else on the Governing Body might be able to share some of these tasks?
• Mark up the flip charts with the roles they suggest (e.g. Vice-Chair, ex-Chair, governor with particular interests etc, and have one marked 'Chair'.)
• Ask participants to place their Post-its on the appropriate chart if they think that person could share or be delegated a task carried out by the Chair

Sorting Post its (10 minutes)

- Lead a discussion on the tasks allocated to the Chair and others. What agreement has there been? Has the load of the Chair been lightened? Ask participants to justify choices
- What advantages do the participants see in lightening the load of the Chair?
- Comments might include:
    - Delegation provides development for others
    - Strengths and skills are used effectively
    - Broader participation strengthens involvement and motivation
    - Distributing leadership around the Governing Body reflects what happens in effective school staff teams
- Are there any disadvantages?
- Ask participants whether the activity has given them any ideas for delegating tasks

Group discussion (10 minutes)

Module Three

Activity 3.11: Is this a good minute?

Aims

- To develop awareness of the need for accurate minutes which reflect the decision making process
- To explore the Chair's role in ensuring the quality of minutes of Governing Body and committee meetings

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 3.11: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 3.11: Handouts 1-4

Key notes for Facilitators

- Activity 3.11: Handout 3 outlines the value and importance of accurate minutes
- Ofsted inspectors will look for evidence that the Governing Body has asked challenging questions – these need to be recorded in the minutes
- The minutes should make clear how the Governing Body has been discharging its three key roles
- This activity links to Module 2 where the role of Chairs in developing members of the Governor body was raised. It also links to activity 3.5, working with the Clerk.
- The national Training Programme for Clerks to Governing Bodies includes a minutes checklist. An additional checklist has been included which you may want to give out for participants to take away and use with their Governing Body
- The Chair also needs to make clear which items are confidential and why
- Your LEA may well give additional guidance which you would want to raise here

Task 1: Is this a good minute?

- Introduce the activity using Activity 3.11: OHT 1

Is this a good minute?
The aims of the activity are to:
• Develop awareness of the need for accurate minutes which reflect the decision making process
• Explore the Chair's role in ensuring the quality of minutes of Governing Body and committee meetings
Module Three Activity 3.11 OHT 1
Taking the Chair

Module Three
Activity 3.11

Organise participants into groups of 4 or 5
- Ask participants if they are satisfied with the minutes of their meetings and if not, what the issues are
- Give out Activity 3.11: Handouts 1 and 2 and check that everyone understands the task
- As an alternative to using Handout 2 to record their actions, participants could be given a sheet of flip chart paper to draw a flow chart on a flip chart for reporting back to the larger group

Facilitator input and group work (15 minutes)

- Give each group the opportunity to justify their planned actions
- Ask each group to give one key point they would want to see recorded in the minutes
- Ask participants to describe how they work with the Clerk during meetings to ensure accurate minutes
- Distribute Activity 3.11: Handout 3

Plenary feedback and closing discussion (15 minutes)

Is this a good minute?

Task

1. Read through the account of a meeting of the Governing Body and the minute written by the Clerk
2. Decide in your group what action the Chair should take in the short and medium term
3. Write the action on Handout 2: Chair's action
4. Decide which 5 key points should have been recorded in the minutes
5. Nominate a member of your group to feedback to the others on the reasons for your actions

Background

The Governing Body of Anywhere School discussed the achievement of their KS3 pupils under the agenda item Targets and Results at their full Governing Body meeting in October.

The discussion lasted for 30 minutes

The governors looked at available data, and reminded themselves of previously agreed targets.

The governors identified various issues and the Headteacher was asked to give the governors some explanations.

Among other things, the governors raised questions about how the pupils and staff were supported. The governors were concerned and planned to ensure that more detailed information would be made available for the next meeting of the Curriculum committee. They expressed a wish to be more involved in monitoring progress and wanted to make some plans to do so.

Minute written by the Clerk

Minutes of the meeting – October 2003

Agenda Item 6: Targets and Results

Papers were distributed. Governors spent some time discussing the figures.
The Headteacher gave a verbal report. Will be a future agenda item.

Is this a good minute? Chairs action

What actions should the Chair take?

5 key points to record in the minutes

What are minutes for?

Minutes:
- Are a record of the way in which the Governing Body has discharged its responsibilities
- Are a brief record of the main points of a discussion at a meeting, the decisions made and any actions decided on
- Do not have to be long, but must be a fair reflection of the variety of views
- Must be understood by someone who was not at the meeting

Every meeting of the Governing Body and of committees must be clerked
- This means that someone must be given the responsibility of taking and producing minutes of the meetings, even if it is too costly for a school to have a paid Clerk at all committee meetings

Governing Bodies can delegate decision making powers to committees
- All decision making powers of committees must be agreed by the Governing Body and laid out in the terms of reference for that committee
- Even where powers are delegated to a committee, the Governing Body is still responsible for the decisions and actions of that committee and minutes must be included in the agenda for the next full governing body meeting (except where the detail should remain confidential)

Demonstrating accountability
- The Governing Body must have access to an accurate record of all discussions and decisions so that it can demonstrate to stakeholders and to external bodies, such as Ofsted, that it:
    o Is acting as a critical friend by questioning, acknowledging success and challenging
    o Is acting strategically – demonstrated by the focus on evidence of pupil achievement and school improvement priorities
- Minutes should record the key points made by those present in a fair and balanced way
- Minutes should clearly record the corporate decisions and any action to be taken

The Chair's role
The Chair has a role to play in ensuring that the minutes of governing body meetings serve as an accurate record. The Chair does this by:
- Listening carefully to the discussion
- Summing up the key points to aid the Clerk in recording the discussion
- Ensuring that the Governing Body has agreed a decision
- Wording that decision to aid the Clerk in recording
- Taking action if minutes are not adequate
    o Making recommendations to Clerks
    o Ensuring that Clerks have access to appropriate training

The Chair also ensures that Chairs of committees work in the same way with their Clerks or minute takers.

Module Three
Activity 3.11: Handout 4

Governing Body Minutes Audit

Do your Governing Body minutes provide evidence of its support for school improvement?

Evidence	Comment
The agenda and discussion make clear links to priorities in the School's Improvement Plan	
There is evidence of an explicit focus on pupil achievement	
The PANDA and other sources of data are used by the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate performance.	
Governors are aware of the progress made by different groups of children.	
Governors are aware of performance within key stages and within curriculum areas	
The governing body is fully involved in formulating, promoting, monitoring and evaluating policies	
Discussions about the budget are referenced to the school's strategic priorities	
Governors challenge the senior leadership team in a constructive manner	
Governors acknowledge and celebrate success	
Reports are presented to the Governing Body by various members of the Leadership Group	
The Governing Body demonstrates a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.	
The meeting was clearly focused, action points were agreed and recorded	

Activity 3.12: Plenary Activity

Aim

- To reflect on learning
- To evaluate the session
- To prepare for the next session or module

Overall length
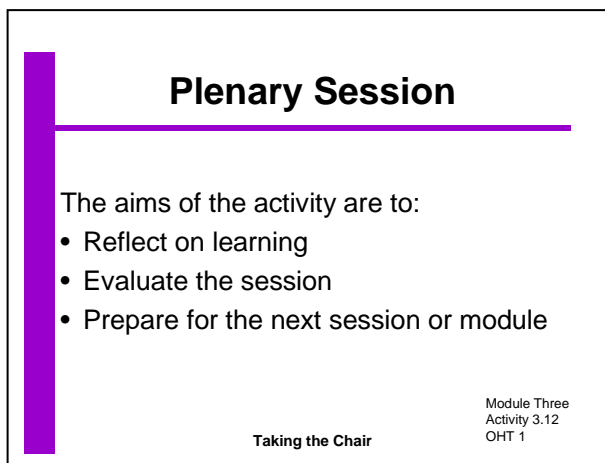
- 15 minutes

Resources
- Activity 3.12: OHTs 1-2

Task 1: Plenary discussion

- Introduce the plenary session using Activity 2.9: OHT 1

> **Plenary Session**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Reflect on learning
> - Evaluate the session
> - Prepare for the next session or module
>
> Module Three
> Activity 3.12
> OHT 1
>
> **Taking the Chair**

- Encourage participants to spend 5 minutes recording any actions for the future identified in this session on their Learning Record using Activity 3.12: OHT 2
- Take one point from each participant and record it on a flip chart
- Distribute any remaining related handouts
- Discuss the objectives of the next session and distribute any preparatory tasks

> **Reflection**
>
> Please spend 5 minutes
> - Recording your key learning points on your Learning Record
> - Identifying any actions you plan to take between now and the next session
>
> Module Three
> Activity 3.12
> OHT 2
>
> **Taking the Chair**

- Ask for any questions or comments

Plenary session (15 minutes)

Task 2: Preparation for Module Four

Activity 4.3 and Activity 4.4

If you are planning to use Activity 4.3 or 4.4, ask participants to:

- Look at a copy of the latest school prospectus and consider how the school's values, vision and aims are communicated
- It will be helpful if they bring the school prospectus with them to the session.

Activity 4.6

If you are planning to use Activity 4.6 you will need to ask participants to:

- Obtain the most recent copy of the school improvement plan and refresh their knowledge of its contents and how the Governing Body was involved in the development of the plan
- Ask the Headteacher whether he/she is satisfied with the level of Governing Body involvement

Module Four:
The Chair's Role in Supporting Strategic Leadership

Key themes

This module focuses on the role of the Chair in ensuring that the Governing Body fulfils its strategic role – particularly the governors' role in answering the school improvement questions "How well are we doing?" "How do we compare with similar schools?" "What more should we aim to achieve this year?" and "What must we do to make it happen?"

Activities in this module explore:

- The role of the Governing Body in school improvement
- The development of shared values
- How evidence is sought of the values being lived out
- Sharing the vision
- The Chair's role in evaluating strategic effectiveness
- Getting involved in school improvement planning
- Sources of strategic information
- How to use information strategically
- Using resources strategically

Adapting the module

All activities and their related handouts and overheads are numbered but you can tailor this module to the needs of the participants and to the amount of time available by:

- Omitting some activities altogether
- Changing the order of the activities
- Shortening activities by transferring information to handouts
- Supplementing activities with your own material

Timings, appropriate for groups of 10-12, have been included to give an indication of the approximate length of each activity

Learning Record

You may want to re-introduce the Learning Record before your first activity, in which case you may need spare copies.

Module Four: Overview

Activity	Topics	Approx Time
4.1	**Introduction** An overview of the Governing Body's role in contributing to school improvement	25 mins
4.2	**Developing shared values** Developing an awareness of the importance of shared values and how these can influence policy and practice	40 min
4.3	**Looking for evidence of values in action** Exploring the evidence governors might look for when determining how well the school is doing in making its values a reality	30 mins
4.4	**Sharing the vision** A short discussion on the meaning of vision, its importance for determining the direction of the school and how the Chair can ensure the Governing Body shares in the development and ownership of the vision	20 mins
4.5	**Evaluating strategic effectiveness** Developing an understanding of strategy and evaluating the Governing Body and the Chair's role	35 mins
4.6	**Getting involved in school improvement planning** Looks at good practice in involving governors in school improvement planning and what the Chair can do to ensure that the views of a range of stakeholders are taken into account	30 mins
4.7	**Sources of information** A quick group activity to ensure that all are aware of the range of information a Governing Body needs to carry out its strategic role	30 mins
4.8	**Using information strategically** Examining a variety of types of information and the Chair's role in ensuring that they are used to determine strategic direction	40 mins
4.9	**Strategic use of resources** A debate on the links between school improvement, staff development, workforce reform and budget setting	30 mins
4.10	**Plenary session** Summarising learning and preparing for next session	15 mins

Skills being addressed in this module

Skills and Attributes Activity	Team building skills	Organisational skills	Communication skills	Strategic skills	Analytical skills
4.1					
4.2	√	√	√	√	√
4.3		√	√	√	√
4.4		√	√	√	
4.5		√	√	√	√
4.6		√	√	√	
4.7		√	√	√	
4.8		√	√	√	√
4.9		√	√	√	√
4.10					

Module Four

Introduction to Modules Four and Five

There is a change of emphasis in the programme between the first three modules and the last two. The first three modules explored the role played by the Chair of a school's Governing Body. The emphasis has been on the contribution a Chair can make to the development of relationships and ways of working in order to:

- Promote an effective partnership between the Governing Body and the school leadership team, particularly the Headteacher
- Lead the Governing Body more effectively in the conduct of its business

Having explored the Chair's role in creating the climate for partnership working, Modules Four and Five seek to identify where the Chair can support the Governing Body in carrying out its three main roles. These roles are:

- Providing a strategic direction for the work of the school
- Challenging, supporting, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school (the critical friend role)
- Holding the school to account for the standards achieved and the quality of education, and in turn, being accountable to the school's stakeholders.

The Governing Body works in partnership with the Headteacher and the school leadership team to develop overall strategies, plans and policies, so shaping the vision and aims of the school. The Governing Body should also be part of the monitoring and evaluation of strategies, in order to understand how well these strategies have been implemented, and the impact they are having on pupil achievement and school improvement.

The process of school improvement is called a cycle with good reason. The planning, evidence gathering and decision-making processes are part of a continuous cycle and there are overlapping starting and finishing points for different aspects of school management and improvement. It is not possible to completely separate the Governing Body's contribution to strategic planning from its role in holding the school to account for standards. Both these aspects of the role are played out alongside each other and the critical friend role continually informs the interactions between the Governing Body and the school leadership team. It must also be remembered that the Governing Body is itself accountable to its stakeholders both for the work within the school and for the way in which it has contributed to school improvement.

In order to create more manageable modules, we have focused Module Four on aspects of strategy and Module Five on aspects of accountability, but it is important to recognize that they are closely related activities. Almost all the topics referred to in Modules Four and Five are the responsibility of the whole Governing Body. However, we have tried to emphasise how the chair can support more effective working and create the climate in which the Governing Body challenges and supports the school and where the Chair can enable and support the role of the Governing Body.

Activity 4.1: The Governing Body's role in school improvement

Aims

- To provide an overview of the Governing Body's role in contributing to school improvement
- To begin to consider the Chair's role in enabling the Governing Body to fulfil its strategic role

Overall length

- 25 minutes

Resources

- Activity 1.4: OHTs 1 – 5
- Activity 1.4: Handout 1 and 2
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This is an opportunity to describe the focus and structure of modules 4 and 5 outlined in the introduction on page 4.4
- This module focuses on how the Chair ensures that governors are involved in answering the following questions: 'How well are we doing?', 'How do we compare with similar schools?', 'What more should we aim to achieve this year?' and 'What must we do to make it happen?'. Module 5 deals with 'Taking action and reviewing progress' and accountability
- The school improvement cycle (Activity 4.1: Handout 1) has been annotated to show where governors become involved and make a contribution by asking critical friend questions to challenge and support. The questions in the circle come from the original DfES school improvement diagram, the questions around the outside have been added to reflect the questions that the Governing Body asks
- Essentially, they should be involved in all stages of the cycle and the way that involvement is managed, and the degree of involvement will vary from school to school. This is the opportunity to share good practice
- It is important to stress that the governors are partners in leading the school and participants should be encouraged to think about how to manage situations where partnership and teamwork with the Headteacher and the school leadership team could be improved
- In the previous module participants will have explored how the work of the Governing Body is managed to create the opportunities for involvement in school improvement. This module looks at how the Governing Body makes the most of the opportunities the Chair has helped them create

Module Four
Activity 4.1

Task 1: The Governing Body's role in school improvement

Use Activity 4.1: OHTs 1 and 2 to introduce the module

Taking the Chair

A National Development
Programme for Chairs, Vice
Chairs and Chairs of Committees

Module Four
Activity 4.1
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

Module Four

The Chair's Role in
Supporting Strategic
Leadership

Module One
Activity 4.1
OHT 2

Taking the Chair
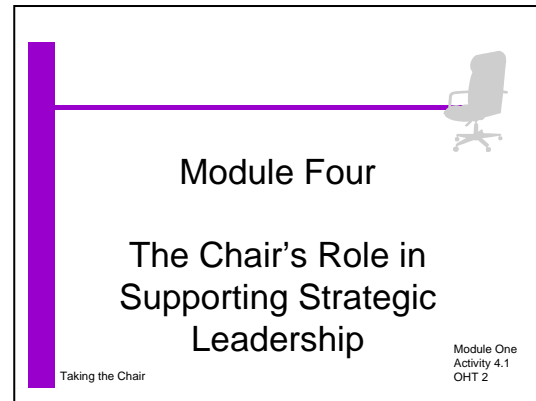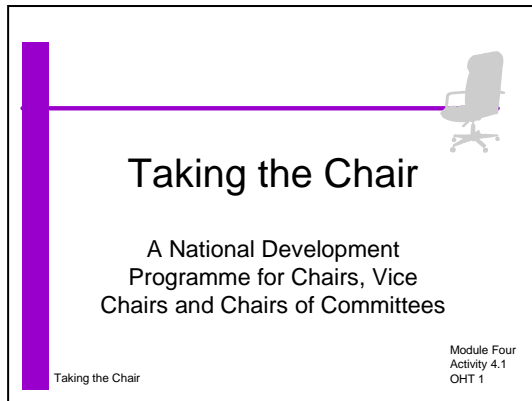
Use Activity 4.1: OHT 3 to introduce the activity

The Governing Body's role in school improvement

The aims of the activity are to:
• Provide an overview of the Governing Body's role in school improvement
• Begin to consider the Chair's role in enabling the Governing Body to fulfil its strategic role

Module Four
Activity 4.1
OHT 3

Taking the Chair
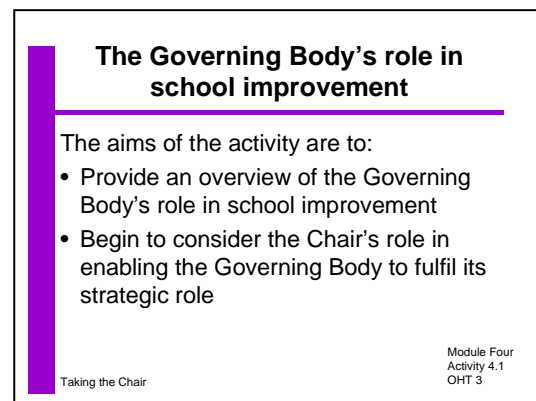
Use Activity 4.1: OHT 4 to remind the participants of the three key roles of the Governing Body

School improvement

The Governing Body contributes to school improvement by fulfilling its three key roles:
• Providing a strategic view
• Acting as a critical friend
• Ensuring accountability

Module Four
Activity 4.1
OHT 4

Taking the Chair
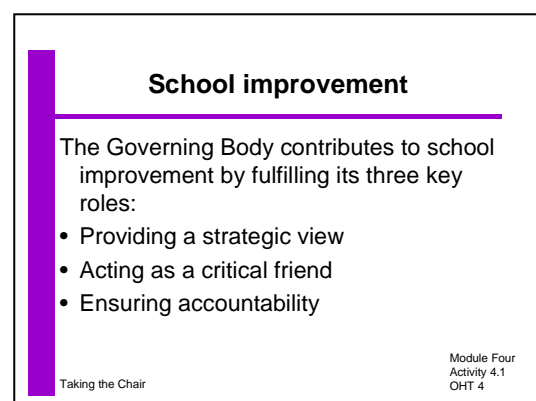
Facilitator introduction (5 minutes)

• Give out Activity 4.1: Handout 1 and Activity 4.1: Handout 2

Use Activity 4.1: OHT 5 to talk about the
school improvement cycle, drawing attention
to the questions inside the circle and those
around the outside, which are the questions
the Governing Body asks
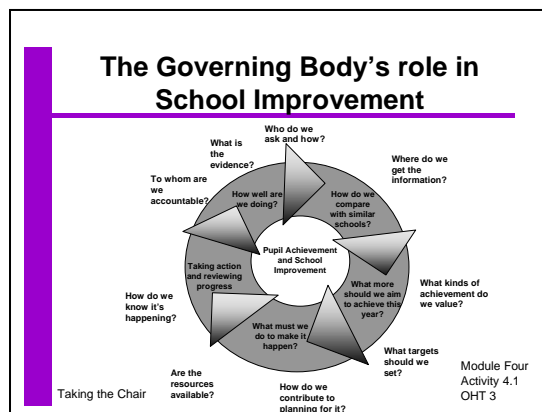
- Give participants a few moments to look at the school improvement cycle diagram
- Ask the question "What kinds of achievement do we value?"
- Put their ideas on a flip chart
- Ask the question "What is the evidence?" In other words, what kind of evidence does the Governing Body expect to see that tells them how well the school is doing?
- Put their ideas on another flip chart. This is good preparation for Activity 4.7

Discussion and flip charting (15 minutes)

Use Activity 4.1: OHT 6 to summarise *how* the
Governing Body works to fulfil its role
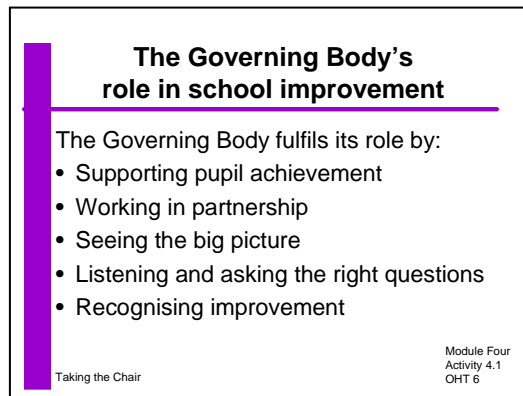
Facilitator input (5 minutes)

- You could extend this activity by asking participants to look at the Governing Body's role in school improvement on Activity 4.1: Handout 2 and considering the extent to which their Governing Body is currently effectively involved in these activities.
- Alternatively this could be taken away for discussion with other governors

The Governing Body's Role In The School Improvement Cycle

What are our values? What is our vision? What are we trying to achieve?

Who do we ask and how?

What is the evidence?

Where do we get the information?

To whom are we accountable?

How well are we doing?

How do we compare with similar schools?

Pupil Achievement and School Improvement

Taking action and reviewing progress

What more should we aim to achieve this year?

What kinds of achievement do we value?

How do we know it's happening?

What must we do to make it happen?

What targets should we set?

Are the resources available?

How do we contribute to planning for it?

The Governing Body's Role in School Improvement

The Chair ensures that the Governing Body is appropriately involved at all stages in the school improvement cycle in:

- ❑ Developing and sharing the values and vision

- ❑ Taking the views of stakeholders into account

- ❑ Evaluating evidence on how well the school is doing

- ❑ Seeking information from a variety of sources

- ❑ Agreeing targets for improvement

- ❑ Planning to achieve improvement

- ❑ Ensuring that deployment of staffing and resources match the school's priorities

- ❑ Reviewing progress and evaluating outcomes

- ❑ Demonstrating accountability to stakeholders for their decisions

Module Four

Activity 4.2: Developing shared values

Aims

- To distinguish between values and vision
- To clarify the importance of values and vision being shared by all stakeholders
- To try out a 'tool' for developing shared values
- To encourage reflection on the impact of values and vision on policy and practice in participants' schools

Overall length

- 35 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.2: OHTs 1-5
- Activity 4.2: Handout 1
- Post-its (large)
- Flipchart and pens
- Blu-Tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- Often prospectuses confuse values, vision and aims
- Values are the core beliefs that underpin the way people think and act.
- We should not assume that they will be shared by all stakeholders in a school
- It's important to identify those that everyone can subscribe to
- Vision is the preferred future for the school. It should be exciting and dynamic and must relate to the context in which the school is operating.
- Ofsted is clear that governing bodies should influence the values, vision and direction of the school and that the values of the community should be understood and respected by the Governing Body
- The Headteacher 's perspective is crucial and if there is consensus amongst all key stakeholders then everyone's efforts will be focused on the same goals
- Prepare for this activity by putting three blank flip chart sheets up around the room

Module Four
Activity 4.2

Task 1: Defining values and vision

Use Activity 4.2: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity and include the points raised above

Developing shared views

The aims of the activity are to:
• Distinguish between values and vision
• Clarify the importance of values and vision being shared
• Try out a 'tool' for developing shared values
• Encourage reflection on the impact of values and vision on policy and practice

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.2
OHT 1

Use Activity 4.2: OHT 2 to make a point about the importance of the Governing Body having a clear view of the values they wish to promote

Effective Governing Bodies

'Are clear about the aims of the school and the values they wish to promote'.

Ofsted

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.2
OHT 2

Use Activity 4.2: OHT 3 to talk through the meaning of 'values'.

• Ask participants whether they think it is important for staff, pupils and parents to share values and whether they have examples of what can happen if values are not shared

• You may want to let participants know that shared vision is the topic of a later activity (4.4)

Values

Deeply held beliefs:
• Affect the way we think and act, the decisions we make
• Will not necessarily be the same for every key group associated with the school
• Need to be shared
• Underpin vision
• Should lead to guiding principles and policies
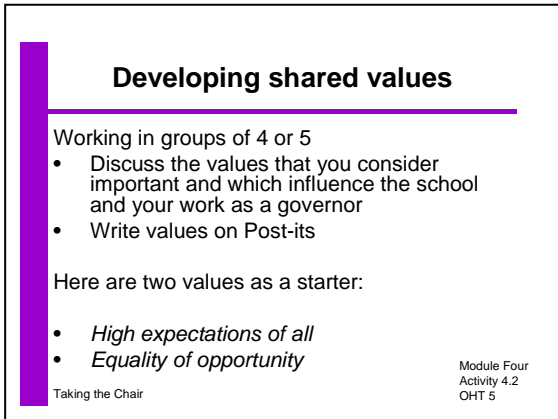
Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.2
OHT 3

Facilitator input and discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Developing shared values

Use Activity 4.2: OHT 5 to introduce the task

- Ask participants to work in groups of 4 or 5
- Give out Post-its and felt pens and ask groups to discuss values – what values influence their work as governors?
- Participants should write one value on each Post-it

> **Developing shared values**
>
> Working in groups of 4 or 5
> - Discuss the values that you consider important and which influence the school and your work as a governor
> - Write values on Post-its
>
> Here are two values as a starter:
>
> - *High expectations of all*
> - *Equality of opportunity*
>
> Taking the Chair
>
> Module Four
> Activity 4.2
> OHT 5

- Once participants have had time to consider their own values, ask them how others might answer – staff, parents and children. Maybe ask a separate question about what values do they see in evidence in the way the their school is led and managed. Are they the same as their personal values?

- Move around the groups and encourage participants to be clear about the values they decide on by asking what they will look like in practice

Introduction and group work (15 minutes)

- Towards the end of the time allowed for group work, start collecting up the Post-its and put them on the flip charts, grouping like values together. You will find that themes emerge. Stop the activity and ask participants to put up any remaining Post-its, grouping them with like values
- Ask participants to stand in front of the flip charts and identify the common themes
- Look at the theme or value with the most Post-its and ask how the particular value influences the work of the school and relationships
- Ask whether the participants feel that any important values have been omitted – use Activity 4.2: Handout 1 to suggest ideas if necessary, or give out to take away for further reflection in school
- Ask participants if and how shared values have been developed in their schools and how they influence policies

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Developing shared values

One school has defined its values in this way:

> Our school is developing a learning community where:
>
> - Everyone is proud to belong
> - We all have high expectations of ourselves and each other
> - Individuals respect each other
> - There are positive attitudes to learning
> - Many different styles and ways of learning are valued
> - It is recognised that we all go on learning throughout our lives
> - Everyone respects the right of others to learn
> - We recognise the importance of playing a part in our wider community

Values prompts

• High expectations of all	• Mutual respect
• Independent learners	• Integrity
• Imagination	• Truth
• Challenge	• Justice
• Enjoyment	• Compassion
• Positive reinforcement	• Responsibility
• Pride in achievement	• Accountability
• Added value	• Openness
• Participation	• Honesty
• Equality of opportunity	• Self-esteem
• Fair treatment for all	• Self control
• Empowerment at every level	• Leadership at all levels
• Lifelong learning	• Team working
• Celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity	• Partnership with parents
• Consistency	• Community involvement
• Financial enterprise	• Security (physical/emotional)
• Value for money	

Activity 4.3: Looking for evidence of values in action

Aims

- To highlight the importance of governors having evidence that values are translated into the action
- To explore what evidence of applied values governors can look for in the school's culture and ethos

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Materials required

- Activity 4.3: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 4.3: Handouts 1 and 2
- Activity 4.3: Crib sheet
- Flip chart and pens
- Blu-Tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- If the previous activity has been used, participants will have explored a set of values
- This activity asks participants to consider the actual evidence they might see around the school if the agreed values were being lived out in practice.
- If you have not used the previous activity, a short discussion about the types of value statements found in the school's prospectus would provide the starting point – you may have asked participants to bring the school prospectus as part of the preparation for the session
- During an inspection, governors will be asked how they know that some of the statements made about the school are true. By encouraging the Governing Body to try out this exercise for themselves, the Chair can develop their ability to provide challenge and support as the critical friend
- The evidence might be tangible but will also be found in observing relationships and how people behave towards each other
- If you have time to extend this activity, participants might also be encouraged to think about what evidence of values in practice they would like to see in 5 years time – this would encourage some futures thinking about changes to the nature of learning and teaching
- A crib sheet has been included for the Facilitator giving a broad range of possible evidence of values in action

Module Four
Activity 4.3

Task 1: Looking for evidence of values in action

Use Activity 4.3: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of
the activity

- Remind participants of the importance of not
  relying on others for evidence of how well the
  school is doing.
- By identifying first hand evidence that values
  are translated into action, the Governing Body
  will gain confidence in accounting for the
  school to stakeholders such as parents and
  Ofsted

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Evidence of values in action

The aims of the activity are to:
- Highlight the importance of having
  evidence that values are translated into
  action
- Explore what evidence governors can
  look for in the school's culture and ethos

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.3
OHT 1

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- Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4
- Give out the task sheet, Activity 4.3: Handout 1, and the values and evidence grid, Activity
  4.3: Handout 2
- Give out flip chart paper and pens
- Suggest that participants only work on two or three of the values – allocate these to groups
  so that all are covered
- Talk through the task and make sure that everyone understands it
- Tell the participants how much time they have for the activity

Introduction and task setting (5 minutes)

- While groups are working, circulate and offer ideas for evidence, using Activity 4.3: Crib
  sheet

Group work (10 minutes)

- Ask groups in turn to talk very briefly about the evidence on their flip charts (1 minute)
- Invite others to add their ideas

Feedback and discussion (10 minutes)

- To complete the activity explore the following questions:
  o Would it be useful to use this activity with their own Governing Body – why and how?
  o Would the evidence they might hope to see in 5 years time be different?

Plenary discussion (5 minutes)

Looking for evidence of values in action: TASK

In groups of 3 or 4:

- Look at two or three of the values listed on the Handout

- For each value consider how you would know that the value was informing the life and work of the school

- List:

  o The evidence you might see and

  o The evidence you might hear

- Put your evidence on a flip chart and be ready to share your ideas with the whole group

Looking for evidence of values in action

What evidence would you expect to see and hear that the values on the left are being lived out in practice in the school? One example of evidence has been provided for you.

Values	Evidence to look for
There are high expectations of all	● School vision and aims displayed
Mutual respect is evident in the way that staff and pupils relate to each other:	● Pupils work without disturbing others
The school promotes positive attitudes to ethnic and cultural diversity:	● The school uses the expertise, skills and knowledge of people from ethnic minority communities
Pupils have rights as well as responsibilities:	● School council information is displayed

Pupils' achievements are celebrated	● The work of pupils of all abilities is on display
The school environment is looked after by all	● Litter free, clean, tidy corridors, reception area, classrooms, toilets
Teaching and learning are enjoyable for adults and pupils	● Laughter, enthusiasm, energy, active participation are evident in learning situations
The school environment is a 'safe' place – emotional and physical security are prioritised	● Rules displayed and being followed
The role of parents as partners in the learning process is recognised and valued	● When parents visit by appointment they are seen promptly

Module Four
Activity 4.3: Crib sheet

Evidence of values in action: example evidence

Values	Evidence
There are high expectations of all	• School vision and aims displayed • School targets displayed • Staff follow up students who are not adhering to the school's standards – uniform, behaviour etc • Staff handbook describes standards for performance, behaviour etc. • School rules are in evidence • 'We can do…' • The Governing Body has agreed a code of practice to underpin its work
Mutual respect is evident in the way that staff and pupils relate to each other	• Pupils work without disturbing others • Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively on group tasks • Pupils do not interrupt each other or staff • Staff do not interrupt each other or pupils • Pupils do not intimidate or belittle each other • Teachers maintain control without the use of threats, humiliation etc • The behaviour policy emphasises 'catch them being good' • Teachers are courteous when they speak to pupils and the reverse is true • All staff have access to appropriate accommodation and facilities – staff rooms, work rooms, offices etc • 'What do you think?' • Governors make every effort to understand and complement the professional role of the Headteacher and staff
The school promotes positive attitudes to ethnic and cultural diversity	• Staff and pupils are aware of The Race Equality policy • The school uses the expertise, skills and knowledge of people from ethnic minority communities • Pupils are encouraged to recognise and respect social, ethnic and cultural differences and similarities • Signs and home-school communications are in languages befitting the pupil population • Positive images of people from various ethnic groups and their cultural backgrounds are displayed in the school • Celebrations of festivals of different cultures and religious beliefs • School diary/calendar shows full range of ethnic religious festivals • Ethnic and cultural diversity in the staff and the Governing Body are commonplace • Special dietary needs are catered for • Curriculum content and resources reflect ethnic and cultural diversity

Pupils have rights as well as responsibilities	• Pupils are associate members of Governing Body Committees • Pupils are exercising leadership skills • School council information is displayed • Pupils are acting as mentors/buddies/counsellors for their peers • The Headteacher and staff refer to pupils by name • Routine management does not interrupt teaching and learning • Visible 'charter' of pupils' rights • Pupils are aware of, and articulate about, their rights and responsibilities • High quality teaching and resources support learning • Home school contracts list the rights of each partner (as well as responsibilities) • Pupils help to determine the rules and sanctions • Suggestion box • Exit surveys • Staff interactions with pupils model the values of the school
Pupils' achievements are celebrated	• The work of pupils of all abilities is on display • Displays are up to date and in good condition • Press cuttings books in reception area • Displays, photos cover a range of achievements – academic, social, cultural, sporting, both in and out of school • Display in entrance area shows destinations of most recent cohort of leavers • Positive and public appreciation of effort as well as success – awards, assemblies, badges, stickers, certificates etc • Staff and governors show pride in pupils' work • Pupils show pride in each other's work • Prefects chosen for their personal qualities regardless of their academic achievements • Regular home-school communication about pupils' efforts and successes • Behaviour credit cards
The school environment is looked after by all	• Pupils and staff show respect for people, living things, property and the environment • Litter free, clean, tidy corridors, reception area, classrooms, toilets • Tidy classroom award • Interactive wall displays are used, not damaged • Displays are up to date • Equipment all in good working order
Teaching and learning are enjoyable for adults and pupils	• Laughter, enthusiasm, energy, active participation are evident in learning situations • A variety of teaching styles are employed to maintain pupils' interest • Pupils are encouraged to explore, to enquire and to become confident, independent learners • Low rates of absenteeism – pupils and staff • Some staff turnover due to promotion

	• Pupils keen to display and talk about their work • High involvement in extra curricular activities • Nobody is left out • School is over subscribed • Governors welcome the opportunity to develop their skills and increase their knowledge and understanding • Governors evaluate training before making recommendations to colleagues
The school environment is a 'safe' place – emotional and physical security are prioritised	• Rules displayed and being followed • Physical security is effective but not oppressive • All visitors wear badges • There are no voices raised in anger • Pupils and staff move around the site in an orderly manner • Pupils are given opportunities to understand human feelings and emotions and the way they impact on people • Anti-bullying policy well publicised to staff, pupils and parents. • Named person to go to • Buddying scheme and pupil counsellors • Pupils feel safe offering their opinions • Rules are applied fairly and consistently • Everyone is 'Health and Safety' conscious • The Governing Body plays an effective part in monitoring and evaluating policies on behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety
The role of parents as partners in the learning process is recognised and valued	• Signposting around the school is effective • When parents visit by appointment they are seen promptly • Home school agreements are treated seriously by all partners • Parents' newsletters and notice boards are informative and well set out. • The views of parents on the school's performance are actively sought. • Parents assist in classes • Parent workshops and training e.g. ICT • Parent assemblies • The Governing Body's annual report to parents is interesting and informative

Activity 4.4: Sharing the vision

Aims

- To consider the purpose of a vision for a school
- To consider the Chair's role in ensuring that the vision for the school is developed and shared with the Governing Body
- To consider the way in which a shared vision underpins the Governing Body's strategic role

Overall length

- 20 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.4: OHTs 1 and 2
- Participants' own school prospectus

Key notes for Facilitators

- If you have asked participants to bring their school prospectus containing the school's values and vision, these can be used to inform the discussion
- The purpose of the discussion is to challenge participants to consider:
    - o The importance of vision
    - o Why it is important to have a shared vision
    - o How a vision should influence the decisions of the Governing Body
    - o What the Chair can do to ensure that the Governing Body is involved in developing a shared vision
- Some participants may consider the idea of 'vision' to be rather woolly. However, the development of a clear vision for a school is a key learning point for candidates on the National Professional Qualification for Headship and one that makes them feel very secure in their ability to lead a school forward with a sense of purpose
- Without a vision to guide the future of the school and what it wants for its pupils, decisions are made in a vacuum. All plans should be evaluated for the contribution they will make to the school's preferred future
- If the Governing Body and the Headteacher and staff do not share a vision, they may have different priorities and pull in different directions
- Vision is what inspires people to keep working towards their goals even in times of difficulty
- It is often the Headteacher who will generate the vision for the future.
- Some Headteachers will develop a vision statement in partnership with the Governing Body, the staff and other stakeholders. In some schools the involvement of others may be an exercise without a great deal of meaning – in which case the Chair will need to consider how to encourage greater involvement for the Governing Body

Module Four
Activity 4.4

- The vision belongs to the whole school, not to an individual or one group within the school

Task 1: Sharing the vision

Use Activity 4.4: OHT 1 to talk about the aims of the activity

Sharing the vision

The aims of the activity are to consider:
- The importance of a vision for a school
- The Chair's role in ensuring that the vision for the school is developed and shared with the Governing Body
- The way in which a shared vision underpins the Governing Body's strategic role

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.4
OHT 1

Use Activity 4.4: OHT 2 to discuss a definition of vision

Successful vision

- Incorporates the values of the school
- Expresses a desired direction and future for the school
- Attempts to continually improve
- Informs aims and plans

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.4
OHT 2

Using Activity 4.4: OHT 3, hold a short discussion about what the quotation means in the context of a vision for a school, making some of the key points from the notes above if these do not emerge from the discussion

- A key point to make here is the connection between having a vision and showing strategic leadership

Sharing the vision

Vision is seeing the masterpiece while you are mixing the paints

Anon

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.4
OHT 3

Facilitator input and discussion (10 minutes)

- Ask how the vision for their school has been developed, what part they have played in it and what Chairs can do to ensure that the vision is shared

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Activity 4.5: Evaluating strategic effectiveness

Aims

- To develop awareness of what is meant by "strategic"
- To explore what it means to act strategically
- To evaluate the strategic effectiveness of the Governing Body
- To reflect on the Chair's role in ensuring the Governing Body fulfils its strategic role

Overall length

- 35 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.5: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 4.5: Handouts 1 and 2

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity is aimed at reinforcing an understanding of the strategic role
- Definitions of 'strategic' include: 'Having a plan or technique for achieving an end', 'Identifying the way forward in a complex environment, referring constantly to a longer term vision for the organisation'
- The objective is to stand back and consider what it means to act strategically and what the Governing Body does that contributes to a strategic view
- The questionnaire that will be completed during the activity could be taken away and used for further discussion with the Headteacher and the Governing Body
- Emphasise the practical application of this activity:
     a) In ensuring that evidence of the work of the Governing Body is well understood and documented in preparation for Ofsted and
     b) As part of the Governing Body's contribution to school self-evaluation

Task 1: Evaluating strategic effectiveness

Use Activity 4.5: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity

> **Evaluating strategic effectiveness**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Develop awareness of what is meant by "strategic"
> - Explore what it means to act strategically
> - Evaluate the strategic effectiveness of the Governing Body
> - Reflect on the Chair's role in enabling the Governing Body to fulfil its strategic role
>
> Taking the Chair
> Module Four
> Activity 4.5
> OHT 1

- Brainstorm examples of what it means to act strategically, using Activity 4.5: OHT 2 to start the discussion

- Put the ideas on a flip chart, encouraging contributions from all and valuing all contributions`

What does it mean to act strategically?

Examples:
We have a shared vision for the school's future…we are involved in setting targets and checking evidence that milestones are being reached…

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.5
OHT 2

- Give out Activity 4.5: Handout 1
- Ask participants whether any strategic responsibilities have been left off the brainstormed list. Add any further examples suggested

Facilitator introduction and brainstorm (10 minutes)

- Give out Activity 4.5: Handout 2. Explain that the questionnaire gives more detailed examples of what the Governing Body does in its strategic role
- Draw attention to the scoring
- Ask participants to work on their own and quickly score their Governing Body's effectiveness in each area of activity
- Ask them to note, if possible, one piece of evidence to justify the score for each area

Individual work (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to work in fours (moving people around the room to work with different colleagues if they have been with the same group for a while)
- Ask participants to refer to their evidence and discuss:
  - o What contributes to excellence in areas scored 1
  - o What could a Chair do to assist the Governing Body in improving areas scored 4 – the third column of the handout could be used to note down any ideas generated
- You may need to give some guidance on the number of areas to be discussed in the time available

Group work (10 minutes)

- Hold a plenary discussion
- Ask for one or two examples from the group of strategic activities scored 3 or 4 and what they think the Chair could do to improve strategic effectiveness
- Complete the activity by suggesting that participants might like to finish completing the final box (noting how they could encourage the Governing Body to take further action) in consultation with others (the Headteacher or the Vice-Chair, for example)

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

The strategic role of the Governing Body

- The Governing Body has a statutory responsibility to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement': Education Act 2002

- The Governing Body decides what it wants the school to achieve and sets the framework for getting there

- The Governing Body agrees vision, values, plans, policies and targets and reviews progress

- The head is responsible for internal organisation, management and control of the school and advises on and implements the Governing Body's strategic framework

From: Roles of Governing Bodies and Headteachers

The Chair leads the Governing Body in:

- Focusing its work on raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning, so that pupils achieve their potential

- Ensuring that all those who have an interest in the success of the school contribute when the values and aims are being agreed

- Deciding what they want the school to achieve, agreeing priorities for the improvement plan and ensuring resources are used wisely

- Helping to set and keep under review the policies that provide a broad framework within which the Headteacher and staff should run the school

- Ensuring systems are in place to gather evidence of progress

Module Four
Activity 4.5: Handout 2

Evaluating the strategic effectiveness of the Governing Body

Acting Strategically	Score: 1 = excellent, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = priority for improvement	
Areas of strategic activity	**Score**	**Evidence we can produce** **Actions we need to take**
1. Our work is clearly focused on school improvement.		
2. We have a shared vision for the school's future.		
3. We regularly review the aims and objectives that will help us achieve our vision.		
4. We know our school's strengths and weaknesses		
5. We are actively involved in setting the priorities of the school improvement plan.		
6. We check that the school's budget supports the improvement plan.		

7. We are confident that the school is effectively led and managed.		
8. We ensure that we have a staffing structure and personnel policies that create the professional team to meet our school's needs.		
9. We ensure that our performance management process supports the improvement plan.		
10. We are involved in setting targets and checking evidence that milestones are being reached.		
11. We ensure that policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are current and are effective in supporting the school's aims and values.		
12. We have a programme in place for evaluating the impact of our strategic decisions.		
13. We have a strategic view of how our Governing Body will develop.		

Complete the third column in consultation with the Governing Body and the Headteacher

Module Four

Activity 4.6: Getting involved in school improvement planning

Aims

- To explore the Chair's role in ensuring that the Governing Body is involved in the strategic leadership of the school
- To examine ways in which the Chair ensures involvement of the Governing Body in the development of the school improvement plan

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.6: OHT 1
- Activity 4.6: Handout 1

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity challenges participants to reflect on their current involvement in school improvement planning and what they can do to improve the involvement of the Governing Body in using evidence
- In order to share leadership and fulfil their strategic role, the Governing Body should be involved throughout the planning cycle so that they have evidence of what the school does well and what it needs to improve, and can challenge the school to ensure that the plan is a vehicle for improvement
- Many schools will have well developed strategies for involving staff, governors, parents and pupils in setting the strategic direction of the school and contributing to the annual updating of the school improvement plan
- Many schools will take a systematic approach to the use of evidence to support the identification of improvement priorities leading to the production of detailed plans
- There will be others where plans lack detail, are mainly the work of the Headteacher and where the Governing Body's role is reduced to rubber stamping the plan
- Participants consider what factors need to be taken into account when deciding on priorities. These include:
    - o The LEA's view of the school's priorities
    - o The targets agreed with the LEA
    - o The LEA's Education Development Plan
    - o National initiatives (see Appendix 6 (The National Agenda) in the Toolkit Introduction)
    - o Local initiatives

- The participants may well have very different experiences of contributing to school improvement planning. Where participants have brought with them their school improvement plans, ask if they could be shared among the groups for this activity
- The scenarios illustrate how two schools have approached a shared approach to school improvement planning and act as a springboard for participants' reflection on their Governing Body's involvement and how it might be developed. These scenarios are included for illustration only and you may have more appropriate examples for your group to consider
- There will probably be some interesting discussions about the importance of Governing Body involvement in school improvement planning versus the demands on the time of volunteers
- The value of this activity is in sharing effective and efficient strategies that enable a high level of Governing Body involvement

Task 1: Getting involved in school improvement planning

Use Activity 4.6: OHT 1 to talk through the aims of the activity

> **Getting involved in school improvement planning**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Explore the Chair's role in ensuring that the Governing Body is involved in the strategic leadership of the school
> - Examine ways in which the Chair ensures involvement of the Governing Body in the creation of the school improvement plan
>
> Taking the Chair
>
> Module Four
> Activity 4.6
> OHT 1

- Give out Activity 4.6: Handout 1 and allow time for reading

Introduction and reading (10minutes)

- Ask participants to form groups of 4 and to discuss
  - o When and how the Governing Body is involved in improvement planning
  - o How effective that involvement is
  - o 2 'good practice' tips to share with the others

Group discussion (10 minutes)

- Take feedback from the groups on 'good practice' tips adding any local guidance
- Refer back to the school improvement cycle diagram for comments on when some of these activities might take place

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Getting involved in school improvement planning

The two examples set out below show how the Governing Body might share strategic leadership with the Headteacher and others in the school. Some schools set aside a day for staff and governors to work together on evaluating the current position of the school and setting priorities for development.

High Hopes Primary School

On the first non-pupil day of every year the staff and governors at High Hopes Primary School come together for a day to celebrate the achievements of the previous year and plan for the year ahead.

They begin by reviewing their statement of values, vision and aims, to ensure it remains relevant and is shared by everyone. Working in mixed groups, they then evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses over the past three terms. A variety of documents are monitored such as the school improvement plan, the PANDA and the LEA review – a self-evaluation exercise carried out each year by the Headteacher, Chair and LEA Development Adviser.

Each group feeds back the outcomes of its discussion and points are recorded on a flip chart. The whole group then decides which should be the priorities for the forthcoming year, and the improvement plan is revised accordingly.

This process means that all the governors start the year with a clear understanding of the direction the school is taking. The Governing Body then plans its programme of work for the year focusing on the key priorities that have been decided.

Workwell Secondary School

Workwell Secondary School involves all its staff and governors in the planning process throughout the year.   In January the Senior Leadership Team, middle managers and the Governing Body meet together. The aim of the session is to review the current plan and to formulate priorities for the coming year.   The working groups for the discussions are based on the Governing Body's four committees: Personnel, Finance, Curriculum and Premises.

The Headteacher sets the scene and highlights any new developments that need to be taken into account such as national changes to the curriculum. The groups then review and evaluate the current plan. This involves identifying where the success criteria have been met and why, and where they have not and why. The key points are fed back to the whole group.

Following this the whole group identifies broad priorities. For example the implications of the changes to the 14-19 curriculum were identified for each group to look at.   Each group would be expected to consider these implications with a whole school view and a focused view linked to their governor committee remit e.g. the Personnel group would

need to identify the staffing and development needs and present these back to the whole group.

The session ends with key priorities being agreed. An agreed set of actions is then identified to enable the plan to be written.

A common format for the plan is available electronically for all staff and governors. Each governor committee, all subject departments and the senior leadership team write their part of the school improvement plan. This includes an evaluation of the current plan, an overview of the coming year and a detailed action plan for the coming year. These are collated into the final plan. All detailed plans include costings, which are then linked with the budget and approved by the finance committee. The plan is finalised and approved by the full Governing Body.

Everyone uses the plan throughout the year to guide action and monitoring. In the summer term the governors and staff meet again to work together on the key priorities. For example a key priority was how the school assesses pupil progress. A keynote speaker is invited followed by mixed staff/governor workshops.

Activity 4.7: Sources of information

Aims

- To ensure that participants are aware of the range of sources of information available to assist the Governing Body in understanding the school's strengths and weaknesses
- To underline the importance of information and data on quality and standards in order to carry out the strategic role
- To prompt participants to consider the action they might take if they do not have access to an appropriate range of information

Overall length

- 30 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.7: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 4.7: Handouts 1 and 2
- Activity 4.1: Handout 1
- Flip chart and pens
- Blu-Tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- Task 1 is a quick activity to encourage further thinking
- The Chair may be the gateway to information for the Governing Body
- To ask critical friend questions and make sound strategic decisions, the Governing Body needs to have access to all available information about the school in an understandable form
- Governing Bodies should seek and obtain firm evidence of improvement for the purposes of their accountability during an Ofsted inspection and for self-review
- The Chair needs to work with the Clerk and the Headteacher to ensure that the Governing Body has access to the information it needs
- As access to information and the quality of information varies from school to school, not all participants will be aware of what they can expect in the way of information from a range of sources
- Activity 4.7: Handout 1 lists possible sources and types of information. You might want to expand the sources of information available from your LEA
- When the information is required and what the Chair can do to ensure that good use is made of it is dealt with in another activity
- Prepare for this activity by putting up 4 or 5 flip chart sheets around the room where volunteers from the group can write on them

Task 1: Sources of information

Use Activity 4.7: OHT 1 to introduce the aims of the activity, underlining the Chair's role in ensuring that the Governing Body gets the information it needs – in the right form and at the right time

<table>
<tr><td>

Sources of information

The aims of the activity are to:
• Raise awareness of sources of information about the school's strengths and weaknesses
• Underline the strategic importance of information and data on quality and standards
• Consider how to ensure access to an appropriate range of information

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.7
OHT 1
</td></tr>
</table>

• Refer participants to the school improvement cycle diagram (Activity 4.1: Handout 1) and remind them that the strategic role requires the Governing Body to be able to answer the questions "How well are we doing?" and "How do we compare with other schools?"

• Ask **where** information on standards and quality might come from…e.g. from the Headteacher, staff etc. As they describe the sources, head up separate flip charts pinned round the room.   Examples of sources are listed on Activity 4.7: Handout 1 – you will probably want to group some on one flip chart. It is probably better to get people to think about the sources rather than have the flip charts headed up in advance
• Ask for two or three volunteers to stand ready with flip chart pens
• You and/or the volunteers write up the types of information under the appropriate source as they are suggested

Introduction and brainstorm (10 minutes)

• Give out Activity 4.7: Handout 1 and identify any missing items which might have been included on the flip charts
• Have a short discussion on whether most of those present have access to all this information. If they don't, ask for ideas about how they might remedy this situation.

Facilitator led discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Reliability of evidence

Give out Activity 4.7: Handout 2 or show the diagram using Activity 4.7: OHT 2
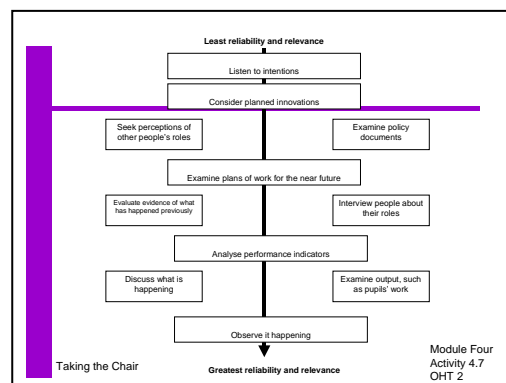
- Explain that this is taken from the Ofsted Inspection Handbook and helps inspectors to consider the reliability of evidence
- It is important for the Governing Body to consider how reliable is the information it has about standards and quality and not to rely on one source
- The diagram shows that information received verbally about future intentions is the least reliable type of evidence and that observing something happening is the most reliable. In between are various strategies that can be used to test the reliability of information
- Take one or two examples of information and ask participants to rate their reliability as evidence

Facilitator led discussion (10 minutes)

Sources of information

From the school:

- School mission statement/statement of values and aims
- School improvement/development plan, including targets
- Post-inspection action plan
- Headteacher's report to the Governing Body
- Other reports and presentations by staff to governors
- School prospectus
- Staffing structure
- Curriculum plans
- Reports of staff professional development and INSET days
- School policy documents
- Conversations with staff and pupils
- School council meetings
- Examples of pupils' work
- Baseline assessment, teacher assessments, value added data
- Outcomes of school self-evaluation

From the Governing Body:

- Reports of governors' visits to school

From the community:

- Parents' pre-Ofsted questionnaire results
- Views of parents, other schools, neighbours and local businesses
- Local and national media

From the LEA:

- LEA curriculum guidance
- Benchmarking/Value Added data
- LEA School Improvement Adviser's Notes of Visit

From the DfES:

- SATs and public examination results, league tables
- Financial benchmarking data

From Ofsted:

- Ofsted reports
- HMI monitoring reports
- PANDA and Autumn Package

Sources of evidence
Adapted from Ofsted Handbook for Inspection

Least reliability and relevance

Listen to intentions

Consider planned innovations

Seek perceptions of other people's roles

Examine policy documents

Examine plans of work for the near future

Evaluate evidence of what has happened previously

Interview people about their roles

Analyse performance indicators

Discuss what is happening

Examine output, such as pupils' work

Observe it happening

Greatest reliability and relevance

Module Four

Activity 4.8: Using information strategically

Aims

- To highlight the Chair's role in managing access to information
- To consider when certain types of information should be available
- To explore the Chair's role in ensuring the Governing Body makes good use of information at appropriate times in the school improvement and planning cycle

Overall length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.8: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 4.8: Handout 1
- Activity 4.1: Handout 1
- Guidance on the content of Headteachers' reports from www.governornet.co.uk

Key notes for Facilitators

- In order to carry out its strategic role, the Governing Body needs to be able to answer the questions "How well are we doing?" "How do we compare with similar schools?" and "What more should we aim to achieve this year?"
- The Governing Body needs to consider the evidence of school performance and standards from a variety of sources
- Stress the need to examine sources of information with a critical eye in order to ask the right questions
- The Governing Body needs to challenge the school as its critical friend and ensure that the improvement priorities are the ones that will make a difference to pupil achievement
- The Chair has a role to play, when constructing the agenda for meetings, in ensuring that information is received and dealt with in line with the school improvement cycle
- This activity encourages participants to think about:
  - o When the information should be made available
  - o What use needs to be made of it
  - o How the Chair ensures that it comes to the attention of the Governing Body
  - o Whether responsibility for using and evaluating the information can or should be delegated
- The length of the activity can be adjusted according to the number of types of information you ask each group to look at. The minimum recommended number is two pieces of information
- You will need to adapt the background information given in the light of practice in your LEA – in particular identify the latest guidance on who has access to the school improvement adviser's monitoring report on the school

Task 1: Using information strategically

Use Activity 4.8: OHT 1 to introduce the activity and make the key points given above – you may also want to refer participants back to the school improvement cycle diagram on Activity 4.1: Handout 1

Using information strategically

The aims of the activity are to:
• Highlight the Chair's role in managing access to information
• Consider when certain types of information should be available
• Explore how the Chair ensures the Governing Body makes good use of information at appropriate times in the school improvement and planning cycle

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.8
OHT 1

Use Activity 4.8: OHT 2 to explain the task

• Divide the group into 4's and give each group 4 types of information
• Tell the groups how much time they have for the activity
• Ask them to ensure that they think about the information needed for the last box on each sheet (What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?)

Using information – when and how?

For each type of information decide:
  – When the information is required
  – How it should be used
  – Who will consider the information
  – What the Chair needs to do to ensure this happens
  – Be prepared to feedback your decisions to the main group

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.8
OHT 2

Group work (15 minutes)

• Take each item of information in turn and ask groups who have worked on it to report back to the others on the task
• Ensure that they have thought about their role in managing how and when the information will be used
• Ensure that each group has a turn to go first
• Take the opportunity to point out good practice and give advice where necessary – if it is not forthcoming from participants
• Suggest that the grids could usefully be discussed with the Headteacher

Feedback on task (25 minutes)

Using Information Strategically

Source of information	Background
PANDA: Performance and Assessment Report	*Published Autumn/Spring. Benchmarks school's performance in end of key stage tests against all schools nationally and similar schools. Contains value added data – measuring pupils' attainment against their own starting points. Can be downloaded from internet using code supplied to school.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Source of information	Background
Headteacher's Report	*Likely to include information on: impact and progress of the School Improvement Plan/Ofsted Action Plan, pupil progress, policy review, staffing, relationships with parents and others, management issues Headteacher has dealt with, school budget, extra-curricular activities and achievements of pupils.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Source of information	Background
Budget monitoring report	*Contains information about original budget allocations, spending to date, percentage of budget spent so far and predicted over or under-spend.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Source of information	Background
A proposal for a major item of expenditure in the next financial year	*Helpful reports contain: Background to the proposal, options and their consequences, costs, comparisons, timescales, reference to relevant priorities, policies and plans. Helpful reports are summarised and backed by clear verbal explanations.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Source of information	Background
Report from Head of Department or Subject Leader	*Helpful reports contain: Reference to school improvement plan priorities, progress against timescales and success criteria, data on attainment, evidence of achievement, evidence of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, progress of pupils with special needs.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Source of information	Background
A report from the school's LEA school improvement adviser	*The frequency of LEA monitoring visits and the focus depends on how well the school is doing. There are variations across LEAs in who sees the adviser's report. Governors should check national guidance. The adviser may agree a rating for the school based on the school's self-evaluation and the adviser's observations.*
When is this information required?	**How should it be used?**
Who will consider the information?	**What does the Chair do to ensure this happens?**

Activity 4.9: The strategic use of resources

Aims

- To reinforce the importance of linking budget setting to school improvement planning
- To consider the importance of staff development in the light of national initiatives and how this influences budget setting
- To highlight the importance of the Chair being well informed in order to ensure the Governing Body is making strategic use of resources

Overall length

- 30 to 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 4.9: OHT 1
- Activity 4.9: Handouts 1 and 2
- Two statements on card or paper in large letters
    - Spending on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) should be safeguarded at all costs
    - We have much higher spending priorities than sending staff and governors on courses
- Blu-Tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- There is a lot of background information to this activity (see Activity 4.9: Crib sheet 1), but the activity itself is very straightforward and you may only need to draw on it if participants themselves do not raise the issues
- Draw participants' attention to the school improvement cycle diagram and point to the stage "What must we do to make it happen" – this activity is about strategic budget setting and the use of resources to make it happen
- National initiatives make demands on staff for change and change often needs to be supported by professional development
- In times of financial constraint governors have to juggle priorities and in some schools it is the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) budget that suffers, particularly as there is now so little ring fencing of allocations from Standards Fund.
- This activity has the potential to link three considerations together:
    - How well does the budget support the school improvement priorities?
    - What will be the impact on the implementation of change and staff motivation if funding for staff professional development is not safeguarded?
    - What are the pressures to spend on staff development arising from performance management and national initiatives?

- Participants should raise workforce remodelling as a key factor in their arguments. If participants have not attended local training on remodelling, you might want to remind them of the key messages from 'Workforce Remodelling – a Guide for Governors'
- Governors also need to allocate resources for their own development
- There are no right answers to this activity but participants should be aware that:
  - Remodelling has many strategic implications for governors
  - There should be a commitment to train, develop and motivate all staff for the improvement of the individual school and the wider education community
  - Staff are the vital resource without whom improvement and change cannot be implemented
  - The Governing Body needs to be aware of a great many pressures to spend from within and from outside the school when deciding how the budget should be allocated
- Prepare for the activity by putting the statement cards at opposite sides or ends of the room and ensure that you have enough space for the participants to stand up and move around. (Putting the two arguments up without comment at the beginning of the session might provoke some private thinking before you get to this activity.)

Task 1: The strategic use of resources

Use Activity 4.9: OHT 1 to introduce the activity without elaborating on the themes. You hope the points will come out in the discussion

The strategic use of resources

The aims of the activity are to highlight the importance of:
- Linking budget setting to school improvement planning
- Staff development in the light of national initiatives and its influence on budget setting
- The Chair being well informed to ensure the Governing Body is making strategic use of resources

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.9
OHT 1

- Draw participants' attention to the two statements displayed and ask them to get up and stand on an imaginary line between the two statements to indicate their position in relation to them.   (i.e. those supporting the statements strongly will stand close to them, the don't knows will be in the middle and others will position themselves along the imaginary line according to the strength of their views)

- Start with a person in the middle and ask him/her to explain why they chose that position.

- Invite others to ask one question only of this person or make one observation.

- Take another person who is towards the centre and repeat the process.

- When you have heard from about 5 people near the centre of the continuum, pick those at the extremes and ask them to argue their case

- Let the discussion open up and broaden. Stimulate a discussion on the relative importance of safeguarding spending on professional development.

- Challenge what people are saying using the key notes raised above. A number of related questions have been included on Activity 4.9: Handout 1 which you might want to use in the discussion and for the participants to take away and share with their Headteacher and Governing Body

- Finish the discussion by asking participants to 'vote' again. Invite the participants to return to their seats and ask for key learning points arising from the activity and any actions that they plan to take as a result of the discussion.

- Give out Activity 4.9: Handout 2 for background information

Facilitator introduction and group activity (30-40 minutes)

The strategic use of resources for
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

❑ Does the school's performance management policy play an effective part in identifying the development needs of individual staff?

❑ Do we have procedures for identifying the development needs of support staff and are they fair?

❑ What discussions about remodelling have taken place in our school?

❑ Do we know how our school plans to approach the remodelling tasks?

❑ What happens to the information gathered? Does it translate into an effective plan to meet the CPD needs of all staff?

❑ What is the relationship between the CPD coordinator and the senior leadership team and the Governing Body?

❑ Does the Governing Body have access to the information it needs to set a strategic budget?

❑ How well does the Governing Body plan for its own development?

❑ Is an annual evaluation of the impact on pupil achievement of expenditure on professional development presented to governors so that they can judge value for money? Are we getting value for money from expenditure on CPD?

The strategic use of resources – background information

1. **Financial Management Competencies Framework for Governors**
   A Financial Management Competencies Framework for Governors will be available from March 2004. The framework has been developed by the Department for Education and Skills for use by individuals that wish to identify their personal training and development needs and to find out what financial management competencies governors have between them.

2. **Financial Management in Schools Website**
   The National College for School Leadership's website, www.ncsl.org.uk has pages dedicated to school financial management. The site contains top tips, interactive scenarios, case studies, references and useful links to other related sites.

3. **Financial benchmarking**
   A financial benchmarking web site has been established and financial data on your school will have been supplied by your LEA.

   Benchmarking your expenditure will help you to:

   - Focus on planning and managing your budget;
   - Identify areas for improvement;
   - Set targets for improvement;
   - Achieve best value - quality v. cost;
   - Improve the effectiveness of your spending to improve performance;
   - Deliver educational services to a defined standard.

   Most importantly, benchmarking your finances can help lock your school into the cycle of continuous improvement and to develop a culture where it is easier to question the norm and to make changes. It is essential that financial benchmarking is not used solely to focus on reducing costs, but also to improve the quality and impact of your school's services. It might be difficult to measure improvements in quality through financial benchmarking but there can be significant quantifiable gains in pupil and staff satisfaction. If used in conjunction with the annual Autumn Package of Pupil Performance the impact on pupil attainment can be quantified. Schools can log onto the site using the usernames and passwords that they use for the Data Collection Website and for School2School.
   www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/tools/schoolfinance/

4. **Remodelling the School Workforce**
   Remodelling may well lead to a fundamental review of long-term budget deployment. For more information on the Governing Body's role in remodelling go to
   http://www.remodelling.org./who_governors.php

5. **Value for Money**
   The DfES has a Value for Money website offering practical advice for ensuring that your school makes best use of its resources. http://www.dfes.gov.uk/valueformoney/

6. **Getting the Best from your Budget**
   In 2000 Ofsted and the Audit Commission published 'Getting the Best from your Budget'. It can be downloaded from www.ofsted.gov.uk and provides guidance on the effective management of school resources. It emphasises the role of the Governing Body in making decisions, challenging decisions and monitoring and evaluating impact.

7. **Evaluating financial management**
   The Audit Commission web site for schools has on-line self-evaluation tools linked to 'Getting the Best from your Budget' and its sister publication, 'Keeping Your Balance'. Any governor can use the self-evaluation tools by logging on to www.schools.audit-commission.gov.uk and clicking on 'Access for governors'. The username required is the school's DfES number. If no one from the Governing Body has used the site before you will be asked to set up a password. If someone has used the site before, you will not be able to use the site until you have found out the existing password.

Activity 4.10: Plenary Activity

Aims
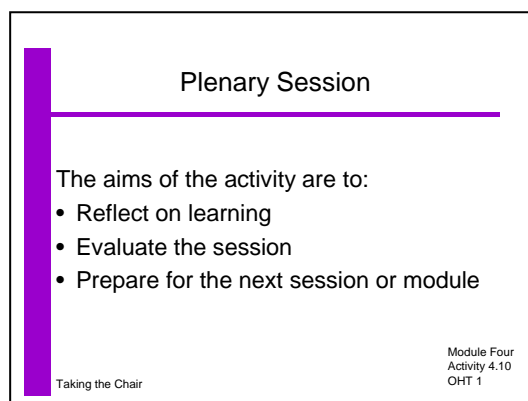
- To reflect on learning
- To evaluate the session
- To prepare for the next session or module

Overall length

- 15 minutes

Task 1: Plenary discussion

- Introduce the plenary session using Activity 4.10: OHT 1

Plenary Session

The aims of the activity are to:
- Reflect on learning
- Evaluate the session
- Prepare for the next session or module

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.10
OHT 1

- Encourage participants to spend 5 minutes recording any actions for the future identified in this session on their Learning Record using Activity 4.10: OHT 2

Reflection

Please spend 5 minutes
- Recording your key learning points on your Learning Record
- Identifying any actions you plan to take between now and the next session

Taking the Chair

Module Four
Activity 4.10
OHT 2

- Take one point from each participant and record it on a flip chart
- Distribute any remaining related handouts
- Discuss the objectives of the next session and distribute any preparatory tasks
- Ask for any questions or comments

Plenary session (15 minutes)

Task 2: Preparation for Module Five

- Activity 5.4 (Using pupil data) requires Activity 5.4: Handouts 1 – 4 to be sent out in advance. Giving participants the opportunity to look at PANDA data before the session will shorten the time for the activity. It might also encourage participants to discuss the task with their headteacher.

- You will need to know whether participants require the primary or secondary data from Activity 5.4: Handout 2 (primary) or Activity 5.4: Handout 3 (secondary)

- When giving out the handouts, or in a covering letter if they are to be posted in advance, you might want to reassure participants with a quote from Unit Five of the Distance Learning Pack

  "Governors do not need to be experts in data analysis but should ask critical friend questions. The Chair helps them to do this by being sufficiently familiar with the information available to assist the Governing Body in framing suitably challenging questions."

Module Five:
The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability

Key themes

This module deals with two aspects of accountability – the ways in which the Governing Body acts as a critical friend and holds the school to account for standards and the accountability of the Governing Body to its stakeholders for the performance of the school and the contribution it has made.

The activities focus on the aspect of the school improvement cycle which is to do with taking action and reviewing progress and assist the participants in answering the questions, 'How do we know it's happening?' Participants explore the Chair's role in leading the Governing Body in supporting the school by seeking out the evidence of improvement it needs and asking challenging questions.

A further set of activities explore the question 'To whom are we accountable?' Participants consider the Chair's leadership and management role in a number of situations involving stakeholders.

Adapting the module

All activities and their related handouts and overheads are numbered but you can tailor this module to the needs of the participants and to the amount of time available by:

- Omitting some activities altogether
- Changing the order of the activities
- Shortening activities by transferring information to handouts
- Supplementing activities with your own material

Timings, appropriate for groups of 10 – 12, have been included to give an indication of the approximate length of each activity

Introduction to Modules Four and Five

Please refer to the introduction to Modules Four and Five in Module Four for an explanation of how this module relates to the role of the Chair

Learning Record

You may want to re-introduce the Learning Record before your first activity, in which case you may need spare copies.

Module Five: Overview

Activity	Topics	Approx Time
	Pre-session task	
5.1	**Introductory activity** An introduction to the module and a review of the school improvement cycle with particular regard to accountability	15 min
5.2	**Finding evidence of school improvement** A review of the sources of evidence required by the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate school improvement priorities	45 min
5.3	**Ensuring it happens** Exploring the Chair's role in supporting the work of committees in holding the school to account for standards	55 min
5.4	**Using pupil data** Developing the confidence of Chairs in leading the Governing Body in interpreting attainment data	45 min
5.5	**Monitoring and evaluating progress** Considering the role of the Chair in ensuring that success criteria are used critically when monitoring and evaluating progress and achievement of improvement priorities	50 min
5.6	**Accountability to stakeholders** An overview of the stakeholders to whom the Governing Body is accountable and the Chair's role in managing relationships with stakeholders	65 min
5.7	**Managing complaints** A scenario exploring the role of the Chair in managing difficult incidents	35 min
5.8	**The Annual Parents' Meeting** An activity identifying the role of the Chair in demonstrating accountability to parents	35 mins
5.9	**Showing evidence of accountability** Participants consider evidence of their Governing Body's accountability and the action they might take to improve governance	40 min
5.10	**Plenary session** Summarising learning	15 min

Skills being addressed in this module

Skills and Attributes Activity	Team building skills	Organisational skills	Communication skills	Strategic skills	Analytical skills	Sensitivity
5.1						
5.2		√	√	√	√	√
5.3	√	√	√	√	√	√
5.4		√	√	√	√	√
5.5		√	√	√	√	√
5.6	√	√	√	√	√	√
5.7	√	√	√	√	√	√
5.8	√	√	√	√	√	√
5.9		√	√	√	√	√
5.10						

Module Five

Activity 5.1: Introductory activity

Aims

- To provide an introduction to the module
- To consider the school improvement cycle and how the activities in the module assist participants in reviewing the role of the Governing Body in monitoring, evaluating, holding the school to account and being accountable themselves

Overall length

- 15 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.1: OHTs 1 - 4
- Activity 5.1: Handout 1

Key notes for Facilitators

- Although the school improvement cycle sets out clearly defined questions that the school community needs to answer, the activities, which the Governing Body undertakes in its three key roles, are not sequential. An activity relating to the use of data for reviewing how well the school is doing in relation to other schools is included in this module.
- The module is divided into two parts: Holding the school to account and Being accountable
- If you have participants who have not met each other before, you will want to include the normal introductions
- Review ground rules as in previous modules

Task 1: Introductory activity

Use Activity 5.1: OHTs 1 and 2

Taking the Chair

A National Development Programme for Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Chairs of Committees

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.1
OHT 1

Module Five

The Chair's Role in Ensuring Accountability

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.1
OHT 2
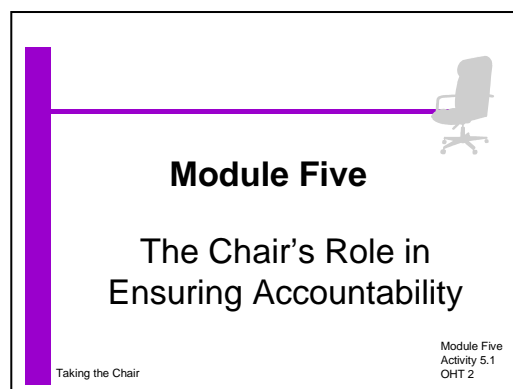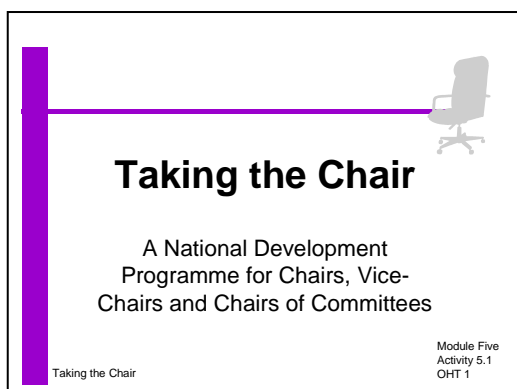
Module Five
Activity 5.1

Use Activity 5.1: OHT 3 to introduce the purpose
of this first brief activity

Use Activity 5.1: OHT 4 to review the school
improvement cycle diagram and show how the
activities you have chosen for this module link to
the role of the Governing Body
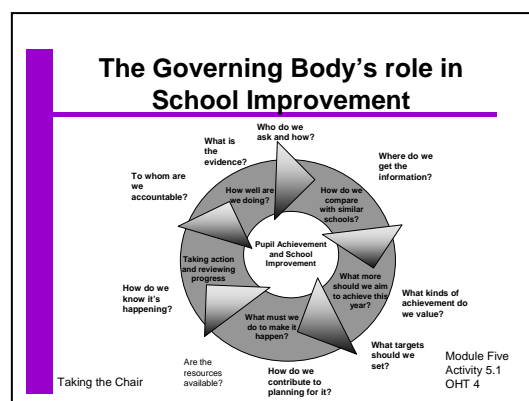
- Review Module Four by reminding participants about the activities undertaken which related
  to from 'How well are we doing?' to 'What must we do to make it happen in the
  improvement cycle?'

- Show how the activities you have chosen relate to 'Taking action and reviewing progress'.
  These include gathering and using evidence of improvement, including comparative data, in
  order to monitor and evaluate school improvement and hold the school to account for
  standards. The module also covers a range of activities in which Governing Bodies engage
  to demonstrate their accountability to stakeholders.

Facilitator introduction (15 minutes)

The Governing Body's Role in the School Improvement Cycle

What are our values? What is our vision?
What are we trying to achieve?

Who do we ask
and how?

What is the
evidence?

Do we
understand
the
information?

To whom are
we
accountable?

How well are
we doing?

How do we
compare
with similar
schools?

**Pupil Achievement
and School
Improvement**

Taking action
and reviewing
progress

What more
should we aim
to achieve this
year?

What kinds of
achievement
do we value?

How do we
know it's
happening?

What must we
do to make it
happen?

What targets
should we
set?

Are the
resources
available?

How do we
contribute to
planning for it?

Module Five

Activity 5.2: Finding evidence of school improvement

Aims

- To explore the Chair's role in ensuring the Governing Body can account for school improvement
- To examine the range of evidence needed for the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate progress with School Improvement Plan priorities
- To identify the key sources of evidence and develop strategies to ensure the Governing Body obtains the evidence it needs

Overall length

- 45 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.2: OHT 1
- Activity 5.2: Handouts 1 - 3
- Objective Cards 1 per group
- Evidence Cards 1 set per group
- Who and How Cards 1 set per group
- Flip chart paper and pens
- Blu-Tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- The Governing Body needs to be fully involved in the school improvement planning process. Each governor should have a copy of the school improvement plan. The Chair should ensure this happens
- When evaluating the progress and outcomes of the targets and priorities in the school improvement plan, the Governing Body needs to seek information and evidence
- The Chair needs to lead in this area to ensure the Governing Body gets evidence that is timely, understandable and evaluative
- The Chair can support committees in planning their work and evaluating outcomes
- The Chair's role will be to lead discussion, helping to identify key questions
- If governors are appropriately challenging and holding the school to account, they do not rely solely on the Headteacher's report. They also need to be able to answer the question (which will be posed by Ofsted inspectors) – "How do you know?"
- Planning the Governing Body's work to synchronise with key milestones in the school improvement plan will give the necessary framework for evaluation. Requests for information can then be timed and people can be fully prepared for meetings
- In this exercise, participants use cards to identify evidence or information needed to follow the implementation and achievement of objectives. They should not be restricted by the

cards and should be encouraged to identify appropriate additional sources of evidence or additional people to involve.

- It is not suggested that governors would seek all the evidence on the cards and there may be some differences in practice emerging, for example, some Governing Bodies are shown staff meeting minutes and others are not
- Also included in the evidence cards are 'red herrings', i.e. types of information that governors would not need to seek in order to monitor the progress of objectives. These have been included to stimulate debate
- A suggested layout for recording on a flip chart is included (Activity 5.2: Handout 3). One per group could be prepared in advance
- Participants should also complete the 'When' column of the flip chart to reinforce the message that the work of the Governing Body and agenda items need to be planned around the timescales of the school improvement plan
- Activity 5.2: Handout 1 provides a summary of many of these points for the participants to skim read before the activity
- The time needed for this activity can be reduced by using a limited selection of the evidence cards
- The activity works well. It is worth investing the time in putting the three types of card on different coloured paper and laminating them. You will need one set per group.
- On some pilots, governors wanted copies of the cards to use with their own Governing Bodies

Task 1: Finding evidence of school improvement

Use Activity 5.2: OHT 1 to introduce the activity and make some of the points raised above

Evidence of school improvement

The aims of the activity are to:
- Explore the Chair's role in enabling the Governing Body to account for school improvement
- Identify evidence for monitoring and evaluating school improvement priorities
- Identify sources of evidence and how evidence is obtained

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.2
OHT 1

- Divide the participants into groups of 5 or 6
- Give out Activity 5.2: Handout 1 and ask groups to skim read while you deal with the cards
- Give each group a set of cards:
  - o One set of school improvement plan Objective Cards, face down in the centre of the table (Shuffle the cards so that each group does not start with the same objective)
  - o One set of Evidence Cards, distributed evenly among the members of the group
  - o One set of Who and How Cards laid out face up on the table
- Give out Activity 5.2: Handout 2 and talk participants through the task
- Ask the group to turn over an objective card and identify three questions they would want to ask about the progress of this objective
- They write the objective and key questions on the flip chart
- Ask each member of the group to look at their evidence cards and place them on the table next to the objective card if they think it represents something they need to see, or know about, to monitor and evaluate the objective
- Ask the group to identify the relevant who and how cards

- Ask the groups to complete the flip chart including the 'When?' column
- Groups may move on to another Objective Card if there is time

Facilitator introduction and group work (25 minutes)

- Ask each group in turn to display their flip chart and to describe how they would monitor progress for the objective
- Invite other participants to comment or add suggestions
- When each group has fed back, ask whether they feel their Governing Body seeks sufficient evidence of school improvement plan outcomes
- Ask if they would feel confident in answering an inspector's question – "How do you know?"
- If not, what could the Chair do about this?

Whole group discussion (20 minutes)

Module Five
Activity 5.2: Handout 1

Using the school improvement plan

The Governing Body has a responsibility to stakeholders to give information about standards in the school and whether targets have been met. If you are unsure about nationally expected standards and target setting, further information on statutory testing, assessment and target setting can be found in the National Training programme for New Governors and the *Guide to the Law.*

The Governing Body needs to know the targets set for their school. The key document that forms the overall strategic plan for the Governing Body is the School Improvement Plan.

As Chair you will need to ensure that:

- Governors use the plan regularly as a working document.
- The actions and a timetable for monitoring and reporting on progress have been agreed.
- There is evidence that results of monitoring are provided to committees and the full Governing Body as verbal or written reports, so that appropriate questions to the Headteacher and other staff can be raised and minuted
- Time is set aside to consider progress and the impact of agreed strategies so that your Annual Report is as accurate as possible and reflects the views of the whole Governing Body.

By looking at the overall plan and the various minutes of committee and full Governing Body meetings, you will be able to assess whether there is enough evidence available for the governors to account for the standards in the school. If evidence is not available, you will need to check what responsibilities have been delegated to each committee and then encourage the Chair of the relevant committee to arrange for evidence to be obtained.

It is recommended that the Governing Body devote one meeting a year to a review of standards. They should consider comparative data, the Headteacher's report and National Curriculum test and examination results and any other relevant LEA information.

You will also need to encourage members of the Governing Body:

- To attend training that will assist them to operate as critical friends in order to be effectively accountable
- To be prepared to request information in their committees, analyse it and evaluate progress
- To monitor the impact of agreed strategies in the school improvement plan
- To ensure evidence is recorded in the minutes of all meetings
- To report back to the full Governing Body as appropriate
- To be prepared to contribute to the publication of the Annual Report to Parents

Evidence of school improvement: Task

You have three sets of cards:

- Objective Cards – representing objectives for school improvement
- Evidence Cards – representing the sort of evidence you might need to monitor progress in achieving the objectives
- Who and How Cards – representing people you might talk to and how

1. Chose one Objective Card

2. Decide in your group 3 questions you would ask about the progress of this objective

3. Select Evidence Cards to show what information you would seek

4. Select cards from the Who and How Cards pile to show who would be involved in providing this information and how

5. Write up your selections on the prepared flip chart

6. Complete the 'When?' column

7. Think about the role of the Chair in ensuring that evidence of school improvement is obtained

8. Repeat the activity with another Objective Card if you have time

Suggested layout for flip chart

	Objective 1	**Objective 2**
Questions we would ask		
Information or evidence required		
Who would be involved or consulted?		
How?		
When?		
What can the Chair do?		

Objective Cards

Objective 1	Objective 2
To increase by x% the number of boys achieving Level 5 or y% to achieve Level 7 or above in Maths	To reduce the incidents of poor behaviour at lunchtime breaks, so that the weekly average of reported incidents is half the weekly average for the previous academic year
Objective 3	**Objective 4**
To increase the level of parental involvement in Year 6 or Year 9, aiming for attendance at parent consultation evenings in line with the best of the other year groups	To increase the range of learning opportunities for the more able in Key stage 1 or 3, to take into account differences in learning styles
Objective 5	
To develop the monitoring role of the Subject Leaders or Heads of Department, so that all the requirements of the performance management policy are met	**OBJECTIVE CARDS**

Evidence Cards

Headteacher's report	National Test Data for Key stage 1	National Test Data for Key stage 2
National Test data for Key stage 3	GCSE results	A level results
Value added data	Targets set by the school	National test data for the last 3 years
Subject Leader/Head of Department reports	Parental attendance at parents' evenings for last 2 years	Attendance figures
Complaints record	Level of exclusions	Staff turnover
Curriculum planning	Optional Test data	Teachers' forecasts
Headteacher's observations	Governors' visit record	School Self evaluation
OfSTED S4	OfSTED report	LEA School Improvement Adviser's report

Evidence Cards cont.

Comparison of forecasts against current levels	Gender analysis of results	Question by question analysis
Curriculum Committee minutes	Behaviour analysis	Number and type of incidents of poor behaviour
Numbers of midday staff	Staff training record	Log of visitors to the school
Assessment procedures	Level of SEN in school	Other LEA advisers' reports
Pupils' survey results	Minutes of school council	Parents' survey results
Staff survey	Levels of staff absence	Budget returns for each quarter
Types of teaching styles used	Staff meeting minutes	Behaviour policy
Mid year reviews	Booster class information	Lesson plans

Who and How Cards

Headteacher	Subject Leader or Head of Department	Assessment Co-ordinator	Subject Linked governor
Deputy Headteacher	Parent governor	Chair	School Administrator
Midday assistants	Caretaker/site manager	Class teachers	Teaching assistants
Curriculum Committee Chair	Finance Committee Chair	Premises Committee Chair	Personnel Committee Chair
SENCO	SEN governor	Governor visit to talk to Maths Subject Leader	SEN governor visit
Committee to identify information needed in advance	Planning Governing Body meetings for the year	Checklist for Headteacher's report	Chair and Headteacher agree information at regular meetings

Activity 5.3: Ensuring it happens

Aims

- To identify how the Chair can support Chairs of committees to ensure that the Governing Body holds the school to account for standards
- To identify the information needed by the Governing Body to fulfil its role as critical friend
- To explore an issue that might arise for a committee in gathering and using evidence

Overall length

- 55 minutes

Materials required

- Activity 5.3: OHT 1
- Activity 5.3: Handouts 1 and 2
- Activity 5.3: Crib sheet
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity links to activities in Module Two in which participants explored the role of the Chair in supporting and developing individuals and ensuring that the Governing Body carries out its three key roles. It uses a scenario featuring the Chair of the curriculum committee
- The Chair has a role to play in checking that responsibilities delegated by the Governing Body to committees and individuals are carried out satisfactorily
- The Governing Body needs to agree targets for Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 in the Autumn Term and requires a range of information from relevant personnel from the school in order to do this
- The Chair of the committee needs some personal support to give her confidence and some advice about the legitimate questions the committee should be asking, preparation for meetings and reporting procedures
- The scenario suggests that the Deputy Head is either very busy or is not clear about the responsibilities of the Governing Body and how best to support them. Either way, there is a job for the Chair here in tactfully discussing issues with the Headteacher. Issues might include: clarity about roles and responsibilities, clarity about accountability, the needs of the Governing Body for written as well as verbal reports and staff workloads

Module Five
Activity 5.3

Task 1: Ensuring it happens

Use Activity 5.3: OHT 1 to talk through the aims of the activity

Ensuring it happens

The aims of this activity are to:
• Identify how the Chair can support Chairs of committees
• Identify the information needed by the Governing Body to fulfil its role as critical friend
• Explore an issue that might arise for a committee in gathering and using evidence

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.3
OHT 1

• Give out Activity 5.3: Handout 1 and talk through the scenario with the group, ensuring that the questions underneath are understood – but don't invite answers at this stage
• Ask people to work in groups of 4, discussing their response to the scenario and the questions
• Ask half the groups to begin with question 1 and the other half to begin with question 3 so that all the questions are well covered

Small group discussion (20 minutes)

• Ask groups in turn to comment on their response to the questions and the issues raised
• Use Activity 5.3: Crib sheet, if needed, to comment or add to their responses

Feedback discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Critical friend questions

• Ask participants to brainstorm critical friend questions that the committee could have asked at the meeting in order to be able to agree targets – put their ideas on a flip chart
• Ask participants to reflect on the skills they would use to improve the situation in discussion with the Headteacher and the committee chair. These might include: awareness of others, tact, diplomacy etc.
• Ask if any participants have had similar experiences and how they dealt with them
• What lessons did they learn?
• Give out Activity 5.3: Handout 2 as a checklist of possible questions – they might find this useful to pass on to the appropriate committee and to discuss with the Headteacher

Brainstorm and plenary discussion (25 minutes)

Scenario

This term the Governing Body has delegated the following responsibilities to the Curriculum Committee:

- To look at the PANDA and other data
- To consider the targets to be set, in discussion with the Deputy Head who is responsible for curriculum management
- To report to the next full Governing Body meeting with a recommendation for the targets to be set

You have a new, rather inexperienced, Chair of the Curriculum Committee.   She tells you that she has experienced great difficulty in obtaining a written report from the Deputy Head. He was unable to prepare any documentation in advance of their last meeting. The committee members listened instead to a verbal report. They felt unable to take in the information or to ask suitable questions. The committee is not sure whether or not the targets proposed by the Deputy Head are appropriate and whether they should be recommending them to the Governing Body.

The Chair of the Curriculum Committee comes to talk to you. She thinks that she has let the Governing Body down and she feels like resigning.

Questions

What are the issues raised by this scenario and how would you respond to them?

1. Is the governing body being prevented from effectively carrying out it role as 'critical friend'? How?

2. What are the statutory responsibilities, if any, in this situation?

3. What support would you, as Chair of governors, offer to the Chair of the curriculum committee?

4. How would you work with the headteacher to ensure that the issues are understood and dealt with effectively?

Module Five
Activity 5.3: Handout 2

Sample questions for the Curriculum Committee

- How do we know we are meeting National Curriculum requirements?

- How does the timetable ensure each pupil is receiving a broad and balanced curriculum?

- What do we do about special needs?

- Do all boys and girls experience the full range of the curriculum in accordance with our equal opportunities policy?

- How do our teachers assess and record pupils' achievements?

- How often does the school review the progress of individual pupils?

- Do we use similar reading/maths schemes to neighbouring schools?

- Do we allocate funds differently to other similar sized schools?

- Do we need to review our spending decisions in the light of the above?

- How do our results compare nationally and locally?

- What are the reasons for these differences?

- Do we do better in some areas of the curriculum than others? Why?

- Do some groups of pupils do better than others? Why?

- Are the targets we have set ourselves realistic? Challenging enough?

Is the governing body being prevented from effectively carrying out it role as 'critical friend'?

- The Governing Body must ensure that targets are set and published (It can delegate that task to a committee)

- As the committee has been asked to make a recommendation to the full governing body, it should do so

- To do this effectively, the committee should have the opportunity to examine and ask questions about the data available to the school e.g. PANDA, teacher assessment

What are the statutory responsibilities, if any, in this situation?

- There is a requirement for targets to be set for the Key Stages

- Minutes should be kept of Governing Body committee meetings

- If committees are given specific responsibilities they should be clearly set out in the committee terms of reference. These terms of reference should be kept under regular review by the Governing Body

What support would you as Chair of Governors offer to the Chair of the curriculum committee?

- You could encourage the Chair of the Committee to set up a dialogue with the Deputy Head about:
  - o The information needed by the committee to carry out its work
  - o The timescales within which they would need to work to ensure that committee members had the opportunity to study reports and frame the appropriate questions

- You could review the terms of reference of the committee with the committee chair and offer reassurance and support

How would you work with the Headteacher to ensure that the issues are dealt with effectively?

- Discuss with the Headteacher the requirements of the Governing Body with regard to reports. This could involve not just the Headteacher's report to the governors but information from other members of staff.

- Emphasise that this is to enable governors to carry out their responsibilities to both challenge and support the school.

- Ensure that the Headteacher is aware that you are taking into account the work/life balance of the staff involved

Module Five

Taking the Chair

Activity 5.4: Using pupil data

Aims

- To develop confidence in demonstrating accountability to stakeholders through the understanding and use of pupil attainment data
- To deepen skills in analysing data and summarising it for others
- To practise the skills of framing critical questions

Overall Length

- 45 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.4: OHT 1
- Activity 5.4: Handouts 1 – 4 (which may be sent out in advance)
- Activity 5.4: Handout 5
- Activity 5.4: Crib sheet
- Activity 1.5: Handout 2 from Module One
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- Governors do not need to be experts in data analysis but should ask critical friend questions. The Chair helps them to do this by being sufficiently familiar with the information available to assist the Governing Body in framing suitably challenging questions
- Where there is a good working partnership between the Headteacher and the Chair, the Headteacher will ensure that the member of staff responsible for assessment provides the Governing Body with the information and support they need and at the right time
- The role of the Governing Body is to ask challenging questions and work together in a strategic partnership with school leaders to frame targets based on an analysis of pupil attainment
- The Chair enables this to happen by ensuring that a discussion about data is an agenda item at the autumn term meeting and that governors have received some understandable analysis in advance, probably supported by a verbal report from an appropriate member of staff at the meeting
- The Chair needs confidence in framing an appropriate agenda item and in leading the discussion
- In addition to leading the discussion, the Chair will also ensure that attainment data is reported to parents in the Annual Report to Parents. The Chair also needs confidence in presenting the report and answering questions on it.
- There are two ways of dealing with this activity:

- o Send out a pre-session task – in which case the activity will take approximately 30 minutes, or
- o Incorporate the pre-session task in the activity – in which case you will need to extend the time for the activity
- o Additional copies of the handouts may be required if you have sent these as a pre-session task and participants forget to bring them
- The advantage of sending out a pre-session task is that it gives participants the opportunity to work with the Headteacher on the activity
- You will need to know whether your participants require primary or secondary data

Task1: Pre-session task

- Preparation for the pre-session task is included in Activity 4.10, Module Four.

Task 2: Using pupil data

Use Activity 5.4: OHT 1 to introduce the actiivty

Using Pupil Data

The aims of the activity are to:
- Develop confidence in understanding and using pupil attainment data
- Practise analysing data and summarising it for others
- Practise the skills of framing critical questions

Module Five
Activity 5.4
OHT 1

Taking the Chair

- Check that participants have brought with them the paper work sent out for the pre-session task
- Ask participants to suggest the wording for the agenda item (see pre-session task) and put suggestions on a flip chart and agree the wording – does the agenda item make clear what will be discussed and why it is being discussed?
- Go through the questions on the pre-session task and ask for responses to questions 2a to 2d.
- Ask participants who they would expect to talk to before the meeting. Answers might include: the Headteacher, the subject leader or Head of Department, the assessment coordinator or the governor linked to the subjects

Facilitator introduction and group discussion (15 minutes)

- Give out Activity 5.4: Handout 5
- Ask participants to work in groups of 4 and prepare some questions to ask at the Governing Body meeting and record them on the handout. Each person will need to record the groups' agreed questions
- Give out Activity 1.5: Handout 2 from Module One if you feel that additional support is needed in framing questions

Group work (10 minutes)

- Now ask participants to move so that they are working in different groups. Participants take turns to put their critical friend questions. Others should listen to the questions and give feedback on:
    - o   How they come across – are they framed appropriately?
    - o   Whether they are challenging enough – are they likely to achieve their objective?

Group work (10 minutes)

- Hold a plenary discussion asking for reflections and comments on the way in which data is used by their governing bodies and the issues raised by the actiivty

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Module Five
Activity 5.4: Handout 1

Pre-session task

Introduction

Please undertake some preliminary reading for an activity on using pupil data, which you will be carrying out in the next session of 'Taking the Chair'.

Enclosed with this task are:

- An extract from the PANDA and the targets that were previously agreed by the Governing Body of a primary school

- An extract from the PANDA and the targets that were previously agreed by the Governing Body of a secondary school

- An explanation of the grades used in the PANDA report

The task

You are the Chair and you have discussed these results with the Headteacher.

You ask the Clerk to include a discussion for the next Governing Body meeting on trends in Key Stage test results published in the PANDA and how the results compare with the targets that you set and agreed with the LEA. You discuss with the Clerk the wording of the agenda item.

1. Decide on the wording of the item you would like the clerk to include in the agenda

2. Look at the information you have been sent

   a. Where have improvements been made in attainment?
   b. Which national curriculum subject is it most urgent to discuss?
   c. Are there any patterns emerging from this information that cause you concern?
   d. What do you think might account for these?

Using Pupil Data: Primary

PANDA Extract
Anywhere Primary School

Key Stage Two NC tests average points

	2001			**2002**			**2003**		
Cohort Size	28			29			28		
	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals
English	B	B	A	B	B	A	A	A*	A
Maths	B	B	B	D	D	D	E	E	E
Science	C	B	B	B	C	B	C	B	B

Targets set by the Governing Body & agreed with the LEA against actual results

% of pupils reaching Level 4 or above

	2001		2002		2003	
	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results
English	74 %	75%	79 %	79 %	83 %	86 %
Maths	72 %	71 %	74 %	66 %	73 %	64 %
Science	75 %	74 %	77 %	77 %	76 %	78 %

Module Five
Activity 5.4: Handout 3

Using Pupil Data: Secondary

PANDA Extract
Anyplace Secondary School

Key Stage Three NC tests average points

	2001			**2002**			**2003**		
Cohort Size	158			162			163		
	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals	Comp all schools	Prior Attainment	Free school meals
English	B	B	A	B	B	A	A	A*	A
Maths	B	B	B	D	D	D	E	E	E
Science	C	B	B	B	C	B	C	B	B

Targets set by the Governing Body & agreed with the LEA against actual results

% of pupils reaching Level 6 or above

	2001		2002		2003	
	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results
English	74 %	75%	79 %	79 %	83 %	86 %
Maths	72 %	71 %	74 %	66 %	73 %	64 %
Science	75 %	74 %	77 %	77 %	76 %	78 %

Understanding PANDA grades

A*	Very high in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts
A	Well above average in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts
B	Above average in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts
C	Broadly in line with national average or school in similar contexts
D	Below average in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts
E	Well below average in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts
E*	Very low in comparison with national average or schools in similar contexts

Recording sheet for Critical Friend Questions

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What will the Governing Body achieve by asking these questions?

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Crib sheet

English
- There is an improving trend in results in English
- The school is doing well in comparison with other schools with similar levels of free school meals and in comparison with all schools
- Particularly pleasing is the fact that the last set of results show that progress of pupils was above average when compared to schools that had a similar level of attainment at the end of the previous key stage
- In English pupils are reaching the targets set and in 2003, the percentage achieving Level 4 or above was a little above the target set
- The results suggest that successful teaching and learning has been taking place

Mathematics
- There has been a decline in standards reached in maths
- Attainment has declined from above average to well below average
- Of particular concern is the fact that pupils' progress has declined steadily in comparison to schools with similar attainment levels at the end of the previous key stage
- The pupils did not reach the targets set
- As the same group of pupils have been improving their standards in English, there are questions to be asked about the quality of teaching and learning
- How does the school account for the decline in standards in maths?

Science
- Results in science are broadly in line with expectations and in some respects are above average
- In 2001 results were in line with those of all schools and above average when prior attainment and free school meals were taken into account
- In 2002, the results improved in comparison with all schools and progress of pupils was in line with pupils in schools with similar levels of attainment at the end of the previous key stage
- In 2001 and 2003, progress between KS 1/2 or K2/3 was above average when compared to schools with similar levels of attainment at the end of the previous key stage.
- The targets set in science were met or exceeded in 2002 and 2003

Critical friend questions
- Has there been a change of staff or staff absence?
- Were the results in maths anticipated?
- What does the subject leader or Head of Department think of the results?
- What has monitoring of teaching and learning identified about the quality of teaching in maths?
- What action has been taken?
- What support has been given or planned?

Module Five

Activity 5.5: Monitoring and evaluating progress

Aims

- To explore the Chair's role in supporting the Governing Body in monitoring and evaluating the achievement of school improvement priorities

Overall length

- 50 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.5: OHT 1
- Activity 5.5: Handout 1 - 4
- Activity 5.5: Crib sheets 1 and 2
- Flip chart and pens

Key notes for Facilitators

- Monitoring progress in achieving school improvement priorities is an important way in which the Governing Body holds the school to account for standards
- Evidence that the Governing Body has carried out monitoring in a systematic way is required to demonstrate the Governing Body's own accountability
- All School Improvement Plans and Ofsted Action Plans should contain achievable, realistic and challenging targets/objectives for key priorities for action
- Monitoring and evaluating objectives is much easier for governing bodies if they are fully involved at the planning stage
- Success criteria should make clear what outcomes are expected as a result of actions taken and what the outcomes will look like
- Success criteria should relate to outcomes for pupils – such as improvements in standards or other aspects of achievement, such as behaviour and motivation
- Explicit success criteria guide governing bodies to the evidence that will demonstrate the desired outcomes for pupils
- The task of monitoring and evaluating progress and outcomes may be delegated to committees or individuals
- The knowledge about progress will come from regular discussions between the Chair and the Headteacher as well as more formally through committee and Governing Body activity
- The Chair and the Headteacher can also usefully agree how the information can best be presented to the Governing Body
- The Chair plays a leading role in ensuring that committee structures and reporting procedures support robust monitoring systems

Task 1: Monitoring and evaluating progress

Use Activity 5.5: OHT 1 to introduce the activity

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Monitoring and evaluating progress

The aims of this activity are to:
- Explore the Chair's role in supporting the Governing Body in monitoring and evaluating the achievement of school improvement priorities

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.5
OHT 1
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- Make one or two key points from the facilitator notes about the importance of the school's accountability to the Governing Body and the Governing Body's accountability to stakeholders
- Head up a flip chart 'Concerns' and ask the group to give you headlines describing any concerns they have about their Governing Body's current effectiveness in monitoring and evaluating the School Improvement Plan or Action Plan priorities. Explain that you will collect ideas for good practice at the end of the activity.

Facilitator introduction and brainstorm (10 minutes)

- Organise participants into groups of 4 according to their school phase and give out Activity 5.5: Handout 1 to the Primary groups, Activity 5.5: Handout 2 to Secondary group and Activity 5.5: Handout 3 to both
- Ask the groups to discuss the task and make notes on the handouts in response to the questions

Group work (15 minutes)

- If you are using both Primary and Secondary examples, briefly describe the similarities between the two before asking for responses to each of the questions on the handouts
- Flip chart the ideas – challenging any that do not appear to reflect good practice
- Add any good practice ideas of your own that do not emerge from the participants. Activity 5.5: Crib Sheets 1 and 2 may suggest some to you
- Ensure that participants are focusing on the Chair's role in encouraging the Governing Body to have appropriate planning and structures in place for monitoring and evaluation

Group discussion (15 minutes)

- Give out Activity 5.5: Handout 3 and give participants a few moments to read it
- Ask whether any participants have identified action they could take as Chair to improve their Governing Body's involvement in monitoring and evaluating and how they might go about it
- Alternatively, give out Activity 5.5: Handout 3 for participants to take away and encourage them to reflect on any actions they might take

Reading and plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Monitoring and evaluating progress: Primary

The Ofsted report identified English as a weak subject. Improvement in this area is the key priority in the Action Plan. A new English co-ordinator took up post at the beginning of the academic year.

School Improvement Plan/Action Plan Extract

Objective	Actions	Success criteria
Improve standards of attainment in English at KS1 and KS2 so that published targets are met or exceeded	• Co-ordinator to audit English planning and pupils' work each term • Coordinator to observe all staff and provide feedback by end of Spring Term • Review English Policy • 2 Inset sessions to focus on English in Spring Term • Co-ordinator's Annual Evaluation report to GB July • Purchase of new reading materials for September	• All pupils meet or exceed personal targets • Progress in line with, or better, than similar schools • Overall performance in line with, or better than, national average and performance of benchmark group • Quality of teaching is improved across the school • Opportunities for writing are increased • Improved reading materials are available for all abilities • Staff feel more confident in teaching English • Co-ordinator's end of year evaluation of impact of improved teaching and learning provides evidence of improvement

Monitoring and evaluating progress: Secondary

The Ofsted report identified English as a weak subject. Improvement in this area is the key priority in the Action Plan. A new Co-ordinator for English and Literacy took up post at the beginning of the academic year.

School Improvement Plan/Action Plan Extract

Objective	Actions	Success criteria
Improve standards of attainment in English at KS3 and KS4 so that published targets are met or exceeded	- Co-ordinator to scrutinise planning and sample students' work each term. - Heads of Department & Co-ordinator to observe all staff within their own departments and provide feedback in Spring term - Co-ordinator for English and Literacy to collate outcomes of the monitoring process - Review English and Literacy Policy 1 Inset day to focus on English and Literacy across the whole curriculum - Spring term - Co-ordinator's Annual Evaluation report to Governing Body Curriculum Committee Summer - All departments to consider English and Literacy needs when purchasing resources for September	- All pupils meet or exceed personal targets - Progress in line with, or better, than similar schools - Overall performance in line with, or better than, national average and performance of benchmark group - Quality of teaching is improved throughout the English department - Awareness of development of English and Literacy opportunities in other departments is raised - Opportunities for writing are increased across the whole curriculum - Improved reading resources are available for all abilities across the whole curriculum - All staff feel more confident in teaching and identifying opportunities to enhance the use of English and Literacy across the curriculum - All Heads of Department and Co-ordinator's end of year evaluations of impact of improved teaching and learning provide evidence of improvement throughout the school

Monitoring and evaluating progress
Primary and Secondary Task

In groups, discuss:

- What sources of evidence of actions and outcomes would the Governing Body be looking for?

- How can the Chair support and lead the Governing Body in ensuring that structures and systems are in place for robust monitoring and evaluation?

The Chair's role in supporting the Governing Body in monitoring and evaluating the achievement of school improvement priorities

The Governing Body is accountable for 'conducting the school with a view to promoting high standards of education and achievement at the school.' The Governing Body fulfils its accountability by holding the school to account for standards. It monitors and evaluates the implementation of policies and plans by:

- Receiving information from the Headteacher
- Seeking out information
- Asking critical friend questions

The Chair has no greater part to play in the accountability role than other members of the Governing Body. However, the Chair is a key player in enabling the Governing Body, and the school, to keep accountability to the forefront of its work.

To fully understand what the school is trying to achieve, and why, the Governing Body first needs to involve itself in planning, in partnership with the Headteacher and the staff. Without that understanding, it is difficult for the Governing Body to monitor and evaluate the implementation of planned strategies and their impact on pupils.

The Chair can support the Governing Body by:

- Including items on the agenda
- Asking for information
- Encouraging committee Chairs to include items on the agenda
- Encouraging the Headteacher and other members of staff to prepare reports

The Chair also encourages the Governing Body to plan its work so that:

- The improvement plan or action plan is regularly used as a working document
- Actions and a timetable for monitoring and reporting on progress are agreed
- Time is set aside to consider progress and the impact of agreed actions
- Verbal and written reports are provided to committees or the Governing Body and appropriate questions to the Headteacher are raised and minuted
- One meeting a year is set a side for a review of standards
- A range of comparative data is analysed
- Committees report back to the full Governing Body

Sources of evidence: Primary

- Headteacher's and Co-ordinators' reports
- Planning and evaluation of in-service training
- Displays and examples of pupils' work
- Annual national test results
- Other test and examination results
- English Link Governor's report
- External reviews of English e.g. LEA adviser's monitoring reports
- Participation in local and national initiatives for promoting attainment in English
- Headteacher's annual report on implementation of Performance Management policy
- Finance report on expenditure on new materials and books

Possible Governing Body structures to support monitoring and evaluation: Primary

- Annual plan of work for the Governing Body
- Governing Body involvement in planning and setting priorities with Headteacher and staff
- Meetings between Headteacher and Chair/Chairs of committees
- Headteacher's and Co-ordinators' reports to Finance/Curriculum/Standards/Pupil committees
- Co-ordinators' presentation to Governing Body or relevant committee
- Finance Committee meetings and minutes
- English Link Governor's monitoring visits
- Governors' Visits
- Governing Body self-evaluation

Module Five
Activity 5.5: Crib Sheet 2

Sources of evidence: Secondary

- Co-ordinators' Report on Audit of English and Literacy
- Headteacher's /Co-ordinators'/Heads of Department reports on observation and feedback schedule
- Heads of Department/Co-ordinators' Evaluation Reports on the impact of teaching and learning in English and Literacy
- Planning and Evaluation of one Inset day
- Displays/examples of students' work
- Annual SATs/ GCSE test results
- Other test/examination results
- English and Literacy Link Governor's report
- External reviews of English and Literacy e.g. LEA annual monitoring report
- Participation in local/ national initiatives e.g. Young writers, poetry writing etc.
- Assistant/ Deputy Headteacher's annual report to the Personnel committee on implementation of Performance Management policy
- Finance report on costs/expenditure on new resources and books

Possible Governing Body structures to support monitoring and evaluation: Secondary

- Meetings between Headteacher and Chair/chairs of committees
- Governing Body fully involved in planning and setting priorities with headteacher and staff.
- Headteacher's reports to Governing Body meetings
- Headteacher's/Co-ordinators'/Heads of Department reports to Finance/Curriculum/Standards/Pupil committees
- Co-ordinators' presentation to Governing Body/Committee
- English and Literacy Link Governor monitoring visits
- Other Governors' Visits to all departments throughout the School
- Finance Committee meetings and minutes

Activity 5.6: Accountability to stakeholders

Aims

- To develop awareness of the Chair's role in leading and supporting the Governing Body's accountability to a range of stakeholders
- To review the stakeholders and ways in which the Chair encourages the Governing Body to demonstrate accountability to them
- To explore ways in which a stakeholder could be involved in school improvement planning

Overall length

- 65 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.6: OHTs 1 and 2
- Activity 5.6: Handouts 1 and 2
- Flip chart and pens for each stakeholder group (8 or 10 flip chart sheets)
- Blu-tack

Key notes for Facilitators

- The Governing Body holds the school to account for standards, but is also accountable itself to the school's stakeholders for the performance of the school and the contribution it makes
- The Governing Body receives and reviews information about how well the school is doing, and also needs to be able to answer questions from others
- The Chair has a role to play in ensuring that the Governing Body communicates effectively, and at appropriate times, with its stakeholders and the Chair is frequently the channel for that communication
- In addition to the stakeholders outlined in Activity 5.6:Handout 1, participants should also consider their accountability to the education community, including other schools. The rise in the number of collaborative activities between schools (such as Networked Learning Communities, Advanced Skills Teachers and the role of Leading Edge schools in working with others) is encouraging this change of perspective
- This accountability to the education community also extends to being willing to invest in professional development for staff – such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship – where the person developed may well go on to use the knowledge and expertise gained in another school
- The development of Extended Schools will increase accountability to the community and place an increasing responsibility on the school to work with other agencies
- The Chair should regard his/her own commitment and development as part of his/her accountability to their fellow governors
- Ways in which the Governing Body demonstrates accountability to its stakeholders have been included in Activity 5.6: Handout 2

Module Five
Activity 5.6

- The second task in this activity looks at practical ways in which stakeholders can be involved in school improvement planning
- You may find it helpful to have on display a number of resources for consultation with stakeholders including:
  - Ofsted Primary and Secondary Pupil Questionnaires
  - Ofsted Form S4
  - Other examples of staff, pupil or parent surveys
  - LEA or other school self-evaluation model

Task 1: Lines of accountability

Use Activity 5.6: OHT 1 to introduce the activity

Accountability to stakeholders

The aims of the activity are to:
• Develop awareness of the Chair's role in leading and supporting accountability to stakeholders
• Review the stakeholders and ways in which the Chair encourages the Governing Body to demonstrate accountability to them

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.6
OHT 1

- Hold a brainstorm on 'To whom are we accountable?' and write the ideas on a flip chart
- You may want to take one stakeholder group and brainstorm how accountability is demonstrated before moving on to the paired work.
- Give out Activity 5.6: Handout 1 to each participant
- Ask them to work with a partner and first add in the blank boxes any stakeholders they feel are missing from the diagram.   When they have done this they draw arrows on the diagram to illustrate the direction of the accountability (for many of them the accountability is two way)
- Circulate while pairs are working and offer suggestions, ensuring that the lines of accountability are understood

Facilitator introduction and paired work (10 minutes)

- Give each pair one or two stakeholders and a flip chart sheet and ask them to put a heading on the sheet and write down ways in which accountability is fulfilled

Paired work (10 minutes)

- Review the charts with the whole group and ask for any additional ideas
- Lead a discussion on how the Chair might support some of these activities

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Task 2: Involving stakeholders

- Ask participants to work in groups of 4 and allocate each group a stakeholder group to consider – parents, pupils, staff or LEA

- Give each group a flip chart sheet and a set of coloured pens

- Use Activity 5.6: OHT 2 to introduce the task. Each group creates a flip chart to present to the whole group – using words, pictures or diagrams to illustrate their ideas

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Stakeholder involvement in school improvement planning

In your groups decide:
- How each stakeholder can be consulted on what the school does well and what it needs to improve
- How each stakeholder can make an input to the school improvement plan
- What the Chair can do to ensure there is involvement

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.6
OHT 2


Group planning and preparation (20 minutes)

- Each group has 3 minutes in which to present their ideas to the whole group.
- Encourage the other groups to make brief comments and emphasise the actions that Chairs can take to ensure that involvement happens

Feedback and plenary discussion (15 minutes)

Accountability to stakeholders

Draw arrows on these lines of accountability to show in which direction the accountability flows

To whom else is the Governing Body accountable?
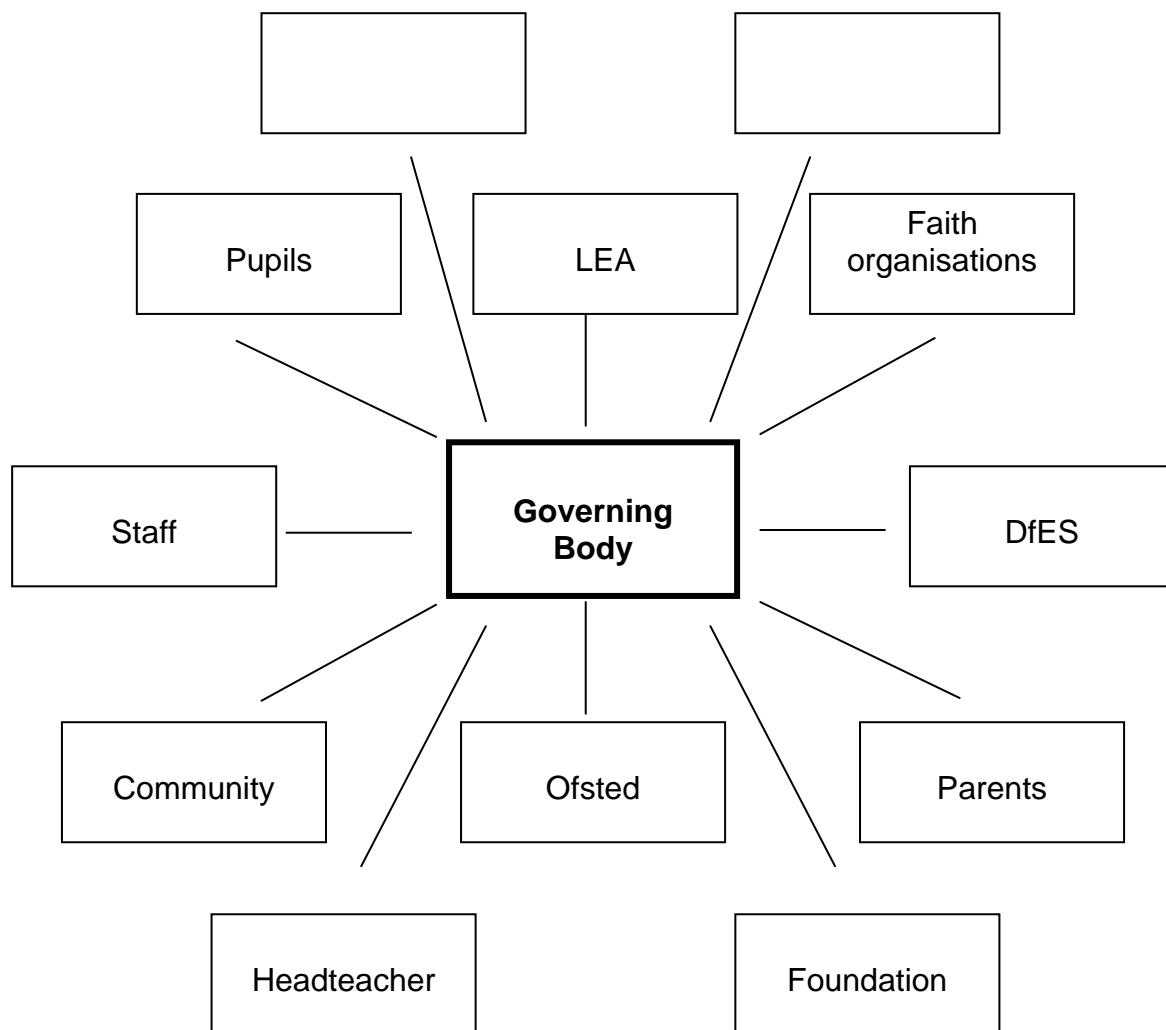
Ways in which the Governing Body demonstrates accountability to its stakeholders

❏ Listening to the views of pupils, perhaps through a School Council, or by using a pupil survey such as the Ofsted pupil survey

❏ Making pupils associate members of the Governing Body, where the Governing Body has been reconstituted

❏ Knowing the views of staff – through regular meetings with the Headteacher, senior teachers, surveys (including exit surveys) and through links with subject leaders

❏ Ensuring that the performance management cycle for staff is being implemented through the Headteacher's reports to the Governing Body

❏ Talking to parents, listening to their views and being prepared to discuss weaknesses as well as strengths

❏ Consulting with other stakeholders and valuing and respecting their ideas

❏ Being innovative in establishing communication with stakeholders

❏ Recognising that the school's neighbours are stakeholders

❏ Ensuring that the Governing Body addresses complaints fairly, quickly and appropriately

❏ Encouraging all members of the Governing Body to contribute to writing the Annual Report to parents and take ownership of it

❏ Seeking to empower parents at the Annual Parents' Meeting, if held

❏ Delivering an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and progress against key issues to the Ofsted Inspector

Module Five

Activity 5.7: Managing complaints

Aims

- To understand the role of the Chair when acting in an emergency
- To develop strategies for handling people in sensitive situations
- To understand how the Chair should handle a complaint on behalf of the school
- To understand the importance of ensuring the Governing Body has appropriate policies in place

Overall length

- 35 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.7: OHT 1
- Activity 5.7: Handouts 1 and 2
- Activity 5.7: Crib sheet

Key notes for Facilitators

- It is worth emphasising that this is based on a real scenario
- Not all the information given is relevant to the Chair in dealing with this particular situation and participants need to be able to distinguish this
- The Facilitator crib sheet outlines the key issues raised by this scenario
- The school should have procedures in place to deal with school visits, risk assessment and staff training.
- Remind the participants that Chairs and governing bodies would need to be familiar with the complaints procedure and they should act in consultation with the Headteacher and in accordance with the agreed policy
- Suggest that the Chair would discuss any trip of this nature with the Headteacher at their regular meetings and ensure that the Governing Body had the information it needed to approve the trip and assure themselves that risk assessment, insurance arrangements etc. had been dealt with
- This situation is an emergency and it would be proper for the Chair to handle it alone. Remind the group that the Chair would need to maintain confidentiality throughout and not discuss the matter with other governors, if the complaints policy required this
- Remind participants of the help available from various LEA departments in dealing with such situations
- You might also need to touch on confidentiality and with whom the Chair should discuss the issue – it might prove useful, for example, if the Vice-Chair was not party to the details in case he/she is needed to sit on a panel in the case of further action

Task 1: Managing complaints

Explain the aims of the activity using Activity
5.7: OHT 1

Managing complaints

The aims of the activity are to:
- Understand the role of the Chair when acting in an emergency
- Develop strategies for handling people in sensitive situations
- Understand the importance of ensuring the Governing Body has appropriate policies in place

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.7
OHT 1

- Divide the participants into groups of 5 or 6 and give out Activity 5.7: Handouts 1 and 2
- Ask each group to discuss the scenario and answer the questions raised

Facilitator introduction and group work (25 minutes)

- Ask groups to feedback and draw out the key aspects of the Chair's role and responsibilities in this situation and the accountability issues

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Managing complaints: the scenario

Deanswood Primary School is set in the village of Deansbury. The Headteacher has been at the school two terms. The Governing Body is made up of 14 members, 6 of whom are very new. You are the Chair of governors and have a child at the school in Year 5. The parents are very supportive of the school and raise money for school trips, amongst other things.

Every year pupils in Year 6 go on a five-day trip to Chalky Bay Outdoor Centre which is on the coast 70 miles away. The centre is staffed and has residential accommodation. The new Headteacher identifies staff to go on the trip and holds a meeting for parents to explain the purpose and nature of the trip. All pupils in Year 6 sign up for the trip.

Two teachers and one support staff member go on the trip with two parents. One pupil has special needs, although she does not have a statement. The Headteacher has discussed this child's needs with the parents who have agreed that she does not need any special help for the trip. The teachers are unhappy about this. Just before the visit, the Headteacher goes off on long-term sick leave. An acting Headteacher is appointed by the LEA, as there is no deputy.

On the penultimate day of the trip, the child with special needs falls off a trampoline and hurts her leg. She is in pain. The centre staff and one of the teachers check her. It appeared to them that she can move her leg and toes and so they tell her to sit down and watch the rest of the activities. One of the teachers phones the parents and tells them that their daughter has had a "slight accident" but there is no need for treatment or for them to come to the centre. That night the staff check on the child who complains of discomfort. They take no action.

The party returns to school on the Friday afternoon. The child goes home with her parents. No report is made of the incident. On the Monday morning the father of the child contacts you. He has taken his daughter to the local accident and emergency department and it is revealed that she has fractured her leg. He complains about the lack of action by staff and threatens to contact the local press and the Health and Safety Executive.

Managing complaints: recording sheet

What issues are involved here?

What information do you need?

What do you do now?

Actions for the Chair

- Contact the parents to reassure them and tell them they will be kept informed of progress
- Check that the Acting Headteacher is going to conduct an investigation into the incident
- Check the Acting Headteacher has informed the LEA legal department
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone else, unless the complaints policy says otherwise
- Ensure that the Governing Body reviews the procedures for school trips at the next meeting

Other points to note

If the Headteacher were off sick, the Governing Body would need to ensure that proper management arrangements were put in place. The Chair would expect to have discussions with the LEA about this.

The pupil should have been taken to a doctor or the nearest hospital. This should all be covered in the school's own visits policy and the Outdoor Centre's procedures. The Chair would expect to be informed about any accident on a trip so that they could be prepared for any contact with the parents.

In this case the school is likely to be found liable for not ensuring proper first aid and hospital treatment were obtained and for not reporting the incident. The Chair would not talk to any other governors at this point.

Suggested questions for the Chair to ask the Headteacher at the next opportunity or information to seek from previous minutes include:

- When was the school visits policy last reviewed?
- Had a risk assessment been done concerning the pupil with special needs?
- Were the staff clear about how to deal with such incidents?
- Have all those who are going had Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks?
- Does the outdoor centre employ appropriately trained staff?
- What information was given to parents before the trip?

If all these questions needed to be asked, the Governing Body would have been failing in their duty on this issue. The Governing Body has a responsibility to take steps to prevent these situations from occurring.

Chapter 15 of the Guide to the Law and www.teacher.gov.uk/visits contain useful information on responsibilities when undertaking school trips, including the responsibilities of the Governing Body.

Activity 5.8: The Annual Parents' Meeting

Aims

- To develop an understanding of the needs of parents as stakeholders when preparing the Annual Report for Parents
- To consider the role of the Chair of governors at the Annual Parents' Meeting, if held

Overall length

- 35 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.8: OHT 1
- Activity 5.8: Handout 1
- Activity 5.8: Handout 2
- Activity 5.8: Crib sheet
- The most recent guidance on the contents of the Annual Report to Parents
- Flip chart and pens
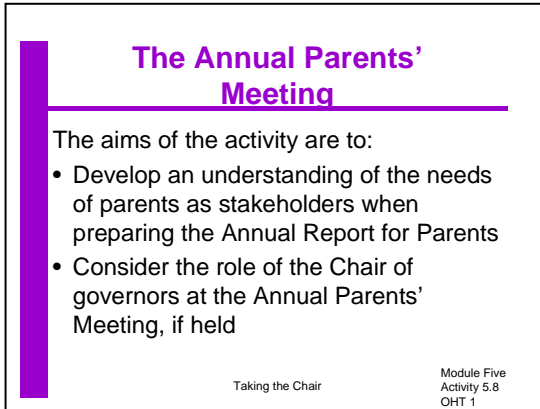
Key notes for Facilitators

- Although schools do not now need to hold an meeting to discuss the Annual Report if less than 15 parents respond to the invitation to attend, most school are so committed to communicating with parents that many are likely to continue to hold annual meetings and therefore the circumstances outlined in this activity could occur.
- At the Annual Parents' Meeting, the Chair is usually the spokesperson for the Governing Body and should present the report to parents
- The Annual Report to parents should give an accurate account of progress including progress with any outstanding key issues from the last inspection and statistical information about attainment of pupils. You will need to refer to the most recent Guide to the Law, Chapter 13 and/or current detailed guidance.
- When writing the report, governors should be aware of their stakeholders and ask themselves what parents will want to know
- The Chair (or the person chairing the meeting) should be prepared to deal with issues that may arise and ensure that parents feel that their concerns have been heard
- In this scenario, the Annual Report does not give all the required information
- The three main questions arising from this activity are:
  - To what extent was the Governing Body aware of the decline in standards and the teacher turnover?
  - Had they been effectively holding the school to account?
  - How should the situation be dealt with?
- The facilitator crib sheet contains some of the key points

Module Five
Activity 5.8

Task 1: The Annual Parents' Meeting

Introduce the activity using Activity 5.8: OHT 1

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The Annual Parents' Meeting

The aims of the activity are to:
• Develop an understanding of the needs of parents as stakeholders when preparing the Annual Report for Parents
• Consider the role of the Chair of governors at the Annual Parents' Meeting, if held

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.8
OHT 1

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• Introduce the task by handing out Activity 5.8: Handout 1, the scenario
• Ask the participants to read the scenario and ask them whether it is likely that there was anything missing from the Annual Report

Introduction and reading (10 minutes)

• Put participants into three groups and ask them to discuss the answers to the questions on Activity 5.8: Handout 2 and make notes on the handout

Group discussion (15 minutes)

• Ask groups, in turn, to lead on giving their responses to the questions and put them on a flip chart, taking additional points from the other groups if necessary
• Draw out the actions that the Chair should take to ensure that the school is held to account and that the Governing Body is accountable to parents

Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

How would you deal with this situation?

The Annual Meeting for parents is held in November each year. The report has been produced and has gone out to all parents before the meeting. Attendance at the Annual Meeting is normally low, but 15 people indicated that they would attend so you are holding the meeting, but you have arranged a governors' meeting straight afterwards.

The school had an Ofsted inspection three years ago. The key issues were
- Raise the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1/3
- Raise achievement in English across the school

Since the inspection, results have been gradually declining in all subjects. The results in last year's SATs showed the decline continuing, particularly in English. The national results recently appeared in the local press. The teacher turnover rate has also increased over the last two years.

The Annual Report does not make clear what progress has been made in these areas.

When you get to the school you find that over 25 parents are already there. During the meeting several parents ask about progress, the poor results and the teacher turnover. Several parents express a lack of confidence in the school.

How would you deal with this situation: Recording Sheet

How would you respond to the parents?

What could the Governing Body have done to prevent this situation?

What should the Governing Body do now:
  a) In relation to their Annual Report?
  b) In relation to their accountability for standards?

How would you deal with this situation?

The Chair should have ensured that the Governing Body was confident that:

- The Annual Report content met regulations
- The Governing Body had regularly received progress reports on the Ofsted Action Plan from the Headteacher and were well aware of the lack of progress
- The Ofsted Action Plan should have been a termly agenda item
- Standards were discussed with the Headteacher on a regular basis
- The Governing Body had been asking critical friend questions about standards and what the school was doing to raise them
- They were aware that staff were leaving and the individual circumstances and any impact on teaching and learning which resulted from the turnover of staff
- Parental views are regularly sought and their concerns anticipated

Endnote:

- If the number of parents present equalled 20% of the number of pupils at the school, and the parents at this meeting made a formal resolution, the Governing Body would have to consider it

- A Governing Body would be unwise not to follow up any question asked by a parent if it could not be answered fully during a meeting

- The Government has announced that it will be consulting on a new annual school profile. In due course this is intended to replace the governors' annual report to parents.

Module Five

Activity 5.9: Showing evidence of accountability

Aims

- To consider the evidence that could be produced to show that the Governing Body is accountable for its work
- To encourage Chairs to plan the action they need to take to ensure the Governing Body collects evidence to inform the process of evaluation

Overall length

- 40 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.9: OHT 1
- Activity 5.9: Handout 1
- Copies of Ofsted Forms S3 and S4 for reference

Key notes for Facilitators

- This activity encourages participants to reflect on the key roles of the Governing Body and some of the topics already touched on in the programme
- The focus is on the evidence that the participants know the Governing Body can produce when demonstrating accountability
- You might want to remind participants that Ofsted judges the quality of Governance of the school by the extent to which the Governing Body:
  - Helps shape the vision and direction of the school
  - Ensures that the school fulfils its statutory obligations
  - Has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school
  - Challenges and supports the senior leadership team
- The questions on the handout for this activity reflect these four areas
- The activity explores what Chairs might need to do next if they are not confident that the evidence of Governing Body activity is available
- Participants need to consider the questions in the light of their own Governing Body and will work individually to list the evidence they know can be produced
- They will work in pairs to consider the actions they could take to improve accountability
- As there will not be time in the session for individuals to think about and complete all 4 sections of the evidence grid (Activity 5.9: Handout 1), you might want to suggest different starting points. Alternatively you could decide that everyone will do just one section and that you will encourage them to follow this activity up with the Governing Body and the Headteacher

Module Five
Activity 5.9

Task 1: Showing evidence of accountability

Share the aims of the activity using Activity 5.9:
OHT 1

> **Showing evidence of accountability**
>
> The aims of the activity are to:
> - Consider the evidence that could be produced to show that the Governing Body is accountable for its work
> - Encourage Chairs to plan the action they need to take where evidence is lacking
>
> Taking the Chair
>
> Module Five
> Activity 5.9
> OHT 1

- Give out Handout 1 and ask participants to work on their own to complete the evidence column in note form (adapt the instructions depending on how much of the grid you expect them to do in this session)

    Introduction and individual work (15 minutes)

- Ask the participants to work in pairs and discuss areas where evidence is lacking and the action that Chairs could take to ensure that evaluations made by the Governing Body can be supported by evidence

    Paired work (15 minutes)

- Draw the activity to a close by asking the pairs to report the 3 new practices which they plan to take to improve governance and any other key learning points arising from working on the grid

    Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

Evidence Grid

What _evidence_ could you produce to show that the Governing Body helps to shape the vision and direction for the school?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
When was the last time the Governing Body discussed and developed the school's values and vision? What was the outcome? Who else was involved?		
How does the School Improvement Plan relate to the values and vision?		
What part does the Governing Body play in the production of the School Improvement Plan?		
What links are there between the priorities in the School Improvement Plan and the agendas of Governing Body meetings?		
What links are there between priorities in the School Improvement Plan and governors' visits to the school?		
To what extent does the Governing Body reflect on performance, promote change and capitalise on links with the local community?		

Module Five
Activity 5.9: Handout 1

What _evidence_ could you produce to show that the Governing Body ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
When establishing policies, what links does the Governing Body make with the school's values and vision?		
What part does the Governing Body, or its committees, play in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of policies?		
How much of form S3 could you complete?		
What evidence would underpin your views?		
What is the impact of the policy for Special Needs Provision?		
What is the impact of the policy for Race Equality?		
What is the impact of the policy for Disability Provision?		
What is the impact of the policy for Sex and relationships education?		

What _evidence_ could you produce to show that the Governing Body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
What data do the Governing Body, or its committees, study to identify strengths and weaknesses? Think widely – not just the tangibles such as attainment and progress.		
What are the key issues that it has identified? Where and how are they recorded?		
Who do you consult when trying to identify strengths and weaknesses?		
How do you use forms S3 and S4?		
If governors are able to spend time in the school, how do they gather information that would inform the whole Governing Body? What do they do with it?		

Module Five
Activity 5.9: Handout 1

What evidence could you produce to show that the Governing Body challenges and supports the Senior Leadership Team?

Prompts	Evidence that could be produced	Chair's Action Plan
How effective is the implementation of the performance management policy?		
How many members of staff give reports to the Governing Body, or its committees, on an annual basis?		
What structured links exist between the Governing Body and departments/curriculum areas etc?		
What evidence could you produce of open and frank discussion between the Governing Body and the Senior Leadership Team?		

Activity 5.10: Plenary Activity

Aim

- To provide time for the Learning Record and to listen to key learning points from the group
- To provide time to complete a programme evaluation
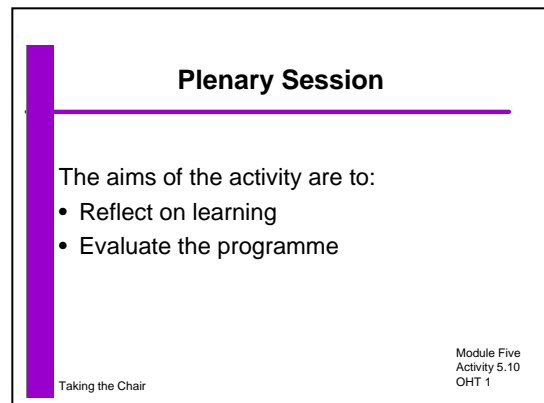
Overall length

- 20 minutes

Resources

- Activity 5.10: OHTs 1 and 2
- Flip chart and pens
- Programme evaluation

Task 1: Plenary discussion

Use Activity 5.10: OHT 1 to introduce the
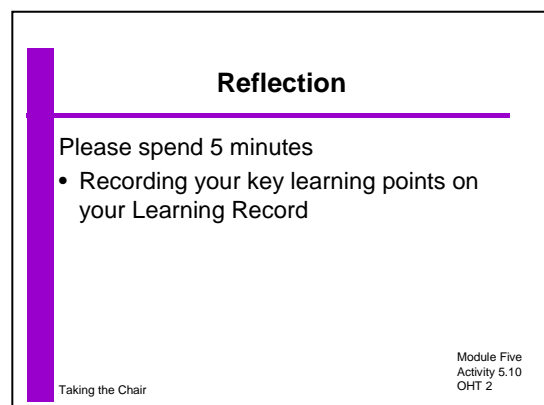Plenary Session

Plenary Session

The aims of the activity are to:
- Reflect on learning
- Evaluate the programme

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.10
OHT 1

- Encourage participants to spend 5 minutes recording any key learning points from this session on their Learning Record
- Take one point from each participant and record it on a flip chart
- Distribute any remaining related handouts
- Review the key learning points from the programme
- Ask the participants to complete the programme evaluation
- Ask for any questions or comments – you may wish to ask participants what actions they plan to take as a result of their learning on the programme

Reflection

Please spend 5 minutes
- Recording your key learning points on your Learning Record

Taking the Chair

Module Five
Activity 5.10
OHT 2

(20 minutes)