



The Role of Governors
at Hedingham School and Sixth Form
2025-2026

Our philosophy is very clear at Hedingham. We are a strong community school and believe in personalising the learning of our students and giving them an enriching, broad and balanced education. We have the very highest expectations for them and we are totally committed to providing them with the best teachers we can employ so that they can realise their potential. We do this within an ever changing and pressurised educational climate where results appear to dictate the educational system.

In order to help us fulfil our values we appreciate the well-informed understanding and support of our Governors.

The key Governors are the Chairs of Committees because they will be able to disseminate discussion outcomes from the half termly meetings that take place with the Head and Deputy Headteacher.

Current Situation

Governors know the school well and are kept informed of all developments through:

- Chair of Governors meets with the Head at least once per half term
- Full Governors' meetings
- Committee meetings
- Head's report to Governors
- Chairs of Committees meetings with Head and Deputy Head
- Specific school-based Governor training
- LA Governor training
- Governors are provided with appropriate documentation such as the SEF (Self-Evaluation) and School Development Plan (SDP)
- Have presentations from Leaders and students from different subjects at every Full Governors' meeting
- Governors take part in the interview process for key appointments
- Governors monitor risk assessment in the current educational climate

All of the above enables Governors to ask challenging questions and gain information about the school. However, we are a rapidly improving school, a good school and we want to get even better. Part of our improvement strategy is to ensure that Governors are more secure about the key aspects of the school and the aim is to empower Governors to be outstanding.

The Headteacher and the Leadership Team will continue to use the strategies outlined above and:

- Provide Governors with answers to all the key questions about the school
- Encourage Governors to be critical friends
- Invite Governors to staff development sessions
- Have a Governor presence at Open Evening and Parents' Evenings
- Have a Governor presence at school Events

Accountability

On 7 March 2017 Hedingham School had a short inspection with the Inspectors judging the school Good.

The Governors had an important part to play during the inspection. In order for the above to be successful Governors continued to trust and have confidence in the Headteacher and his Leadership Team to provide and implement the strategies for school improvement. The Leadership Team is very strong and is delivering school improvement rapidly. There is no doubt that Hedingham is a Good school with outstanding practice in a number of areas.

- We have robust student tracking systems so we know the progress all groups of students are making
- We have rigorous intervention programmes to ensure students get the correct support to help them achieve their target grades as a minimum
- We enlist the support of parents
- Our self-evaluation processes are accurate and determine specific action planning which is implemented quickly and monitored regularly
- We provide high quality teaching
- Staff 'buy in' to our culture, including well-being
- We keep Governors informed of all developments
- We have successful formal and informal partnerships with schools and the LA
- The behaviour of our students is Good because we have a fair and consistent behaviour management system
- We have good Governors who:
 - Take their responsibilities seriously
 - Support, encourage and praise
 - Ask challenging questions as critical friends

Know the school well

In order to have an intimate knowledge and understanding of the school, Governors should be very familiar with two key documents:

The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Self-Evaluation is a strength of the school. Our monitoring and review procedures allow us to gain the information and data required to make accurate judgements about our strengths and areas for improvement.

There is a whole school SEF which is informed by Learning Area and department SEFs.

Governors are invited to observe the process of monitoring and review in order to validate the robustness of our systems.

The School Development Plan, Level 1 (SDP)

Learning Area and Department SEFs inform the Whole School SEF. SEFs are used to produce Learning Area and Department Development Plans. These documents inform the School Development Plan which highlights Whole School Key Priorities.

Protocol for working with the Leadership Team

If a Governor wishes to visit the school, ask a question, get information or arrange to meet a senior leader or leader of learning area, this can be done by contacting the Headteacher's PA. Mrs Julie Sands, and make an appointment. It is essential to say what the nature of the visit is and she will do her best to accommodate you.

It is important that Governors have the chance to see the school in action during the working day by going on a Learning Walk with a senior leader. This gives an opportunity to get a feel for the school and go into lessons.

Working towards outstanding leadership and management

Hedingham School and Sixth Form is a Good school which is improving. We aspire to be judged as an outstanding school. Leadership and management is Good, and improving.

My aim is to work closely with Governors in order to make us an outstanding team.

The list below is the Ofsted criteria for outstanding leadership and management and is for guidance purposes, not a checklist. It is a challenge we will strive to meet and, at the same time, maintain our educational philosophy and integrity.

However, we remain grounded in the real world of Covid-19, funding cuts, difficulties with recruitment, constant change to curriculum and examinations and a ruthless accountability agenda

- Leaders and Governors:
 - Have created a culture that enables students and staff to excel. We are unwavering in setting high expectations for the conduct of students and staff.
 - Focus on consistently improving outcomes for all students, especially disadvantaged students. Our ambition is uncompromising.
 - Have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness informed by:
 - reliable attainment and progress data
 - the views of students, parents and staff
 - the impact of improvement strategies
 - Use incisive performance management that leads to effective professional development ensuring teaching is highly effective across the school.
- Governors challenge senior leaders so that effective deployment of resources, including pupil premium and SEND funding secures excellent outcomes for all students
- The school's actions secure substantial progress for disadvantaged students. Progress is rising across the curriculum, including English and Mathematics.
- Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They are deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate that motivates and trusts teachers to take risks and innovate
- The broad and balanced curriculum inspires students to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of learning including mathematical, scientific, technical, human and social, physical and artistic
- Students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's work.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity for students and staff. The ethos and culture of the school counters any form of discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and students do not tolerate prejudice.
- Safeguarding is effective.
 - There is a culture of vigilance where student welfare is actively promoted.

- Students are listened to and feel safe
- Staff are trained to identify when a student may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and report concerns.
- Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support students at risk
- Leaders work to protect students from radicalisation and extremism is exemplary and respond swiftly where students are vulnerable to these issues
- High quality training develops staff vigilance, confidence and competency to challenge student views and encourage debate.

Vision

This vision is driven through our school curriculum. Our aim is to ensure that the curriculum delivers the following principles:

- To provide the **knowledge and skills** required to be successful learners
- To create **resilient and independent** learners who are able to meet the challenges of the 21st century
- To **prepare** learners for the next step in their education
- To **broaden their horizons** through a rich and varied **enrichment** programme
- To encourage learners to be **active citizens** who contribute positively to the **community**

Paul Finch
Headteacher

December 2025