

# Ealing Learning Partnership

No learner left behind - no school left behind

## Governor Learning Conversation

### 'Setting strategic direction'

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019, 1.45-3.30pm

Following on from the Leadership and Governor Conference at the Doubletree

Governor to governor facilitated conversation with a focus on 'setting strategic direction.'

This is an ideal opportunity for governors to share practice on a \*core strategic governance function, setting strategic direction, - and benefit from getting to know other governing boards better. The intention is to make this a termly event focusing on a different theme each time.

Governors who attend this pilot session will be grouped with two other schools (triads). To be organised in advance of the session based on attendance. Ideally there will be no more than two governors from any one school in each triad.

#### ***Learning conversation (in triads)***

Each school should prepare in advance a 10 minutes (max) presentation to share with their partner schools covering the following questions:

1. What is the school's vision?
2. What are the significant strategic challenges facing the school?
3. How do these influence the school's strategic priorities and the work of the GB?
4. How are these communicated and monitored?
5. How are the vision statement, strategy and school development plan linked?

*This is delivered without interruption. The other members of the triad listen and at the end provide the following feedback for five minutes each:*

- *What went well – two positive aspects of the information provided*
- *Even better if – two suggestions for improvement – framed as questions. (They may have been considered/ tried already)*

Once each school has presented there will be some time for next steps/action planning.

Please also bring a copy or links to your vision, strategic plan and school development plan (SDP) for reference.

If you are unable to stay for the afternoon session, if you let [governors@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:governors@ealing.gov.uk) know in advance, you may allocate your place to another governor from your school free of charge unless they are using the car park, in which case an additional £5 will be charged.

\* See section 2-2.1 of the [DfE Governance Handbook 2019](#) below



## 2. Strategic leadership

1. The board's first [core function](#) is about strategic leadership. This involves setting the organisation's overall strategic framework, including its vision and strategic priorities. It also includes responsibility for setting and modelling its culture, values and ethos.

### 2.1 Setting direction

2. The board should ensure that the organisation has a clear vision – which is articulated in a specific written statement. This should include ambitions for current and future pupils, as well as for the organisation's relationship with other schools. For MATs, the vision should set out the level of ambition they have for future growth.

3. The board should ensure there is a strategy in place for achieving this vision. The strategy should provide a robust framework for setting priorities, creating accountability and monitoring progress in realising the organisation's vision. The focus should be on significant strategic challenges. The detail of all the actions that will drive school improvement should be contained in a separate school improvement plan (SIP). Avoiding unnecessary detail and peripheral issues will prevent the board's attention being spread too thinly and help create a practical and powerful tool for facilitating its core business. The department has published [Understanding your data](#), which is a resource intended to support boards' existing processes.

Taken from the [DfE Governance Handbook 2019](#)



## 10 Ground Rules for Meetings

### 1. Come prepared

Be prompt in arriving to the meeting and in returning from breaks.  
Be prepared to contribute to achieving the meeting goals.  
Come to the meeting with a positive attitude.

Respect confidentiality - some confidential/sensitive data may be shared which must not be shared wider than the group.

### 2. Stay mentally and physically present

Be present, and don't attend to other non-meeting business.  
Listen attentively to others and don't interrupt or have side conversations.  
Treat all meeting participants with the same respect you would want from them.

### 3. Contribute to meeting goals

Participate 100% by sharing ideas, asking questions, and contributing to discussions.  
Share your unique perspectives and experience, and speak honestly.  
If you state a problem or disagree with something do so in a professional manner and where appropriate, try to offer a solution.

### 4. Let everyone participate

Share time so that all can participate.  
Be patient when listening to others speak and do not interrupt them.  
Respect each other's thinking and value everyone's contributions.

### 5. Listen with an open mind

Value the learning from different inputs, and listen to get smarter.  
Stay open to new ways of doing things, and listen for the future to emerge.  
You can respect another person's point of view without agreeing with them.

### 6. Think before speaking

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.  
Avoid using any unusual acronyms, and phrases that can be misunderstood.  
It's OK to disagree, respectfully and openly, and without being disagreeable.

### 7. Stay on point and on time

Respect the groups' time and keep comments brief and to the point.  
When a topic has been discussed fully, do not bring it back up.  
Do not waste everyone's time by repeating what others have said.

### 8. Attack the problem, not the person

Respectfully challenge the idea, not the person.  
Blame or judgment will get you further from a solution, not closer.  
Honest and constructive discussions are necessary to get the best results.

### 9. Close decisions and identify actions

Make sure decisions are supported by the group, otherwise they won't be acted on.  
Note pending issues and schedule follow up meetings as needed.  
Identify actions based on decisions made, and follow up actions assigned to you.

### 10. Record outcomes and follow up

Record issues discussed, decisions made, and tasks assigned.  
Share meeting reports with meeting participants.  
Share meeting outcomes with other stakeholders that should be kept in the loop.