



## KGA Assembly – Spitfire Cricket Ground, Canterbury

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Over 40 Governors from across the county came together to share best practice and work together to prepare themselves and their schools for the impact of Brexit and the new Ofsted Inspection Framework.

In an open leadership workshop Governors addressed seven fundamental topics that reveal the strengths of Governance in Kent.



### 1. How a chair and headteacher are working well together

- Regular meeting between the Head and Chair – e.g. every two weeks
- Being honest and supportive of each other
- Critical and focussed question asked in a relaxed relationship
- Both parties are open to question and are mutually supportive
- Share ideas and act as a sounding board, giving a different perspective
- Good communication, respect with an outwards looking chair
- Chair being available by email or phone for advice as well as for issues.
- Having a communication protocol for follow up.
- Being considerate – no emails at the weekend or Friday afternoon
- Head comfortable with Chair meeting other staff in informal settings i.e. school trips etc.

### 2. How your governing body is making a greater impact on your school

- Sharing good practice between governing bodies
- Recruit governors for their strengths and attitude
- Governors who are interested, engaged and accountable
- Governors knowing the school and the bigger picture
- A governing body development plan linked to the School Development Plan (SDP)
- A governing body with diverse life / work experience
- Governors being interested, visible and positive letting the staff know their work matters
- Governors get to know teachers and being visible to parents.
- Governors know their area of responsibility and are linked to a member of staff
- Assign specific jobs with timescales to governors linked to the SDP
- Regular monitoring visits that are SDP related with timely reporting to the FGB
- Actions from monitoring visits revisited and tracked through FGB minutes
- All reports from visits and feedback from training include “impact” statements.
- Minutes identify IMPACT by flag
- Effective governors who read reports etc. and think of questions in advance of the FGB
- Annual review of governance – chair 121 with governors to review performance and development
- Annual 360degree review of the Chair.

### 3. How to improve the relationship between the school and parents

- Parent Reps – a rep for each class in each year to be a focus for other parents and to give feedback the school – the Chair and the Head meet with the Reps every other term. These meetings have been extremely positive, and some great ideas and support have come out of them.
- Regular newsletters for the school with long advance notice or trips and other events



- Governor newsletters to Parents
- Having an open-door policy for parents and being available e.g., at the school gates
- Online information about boys' progress / homework / issues and a clearer pastoral link / email contact has been a transforming development along with open attitudes.
- A Parent Forum – governors' articles and news in newsletter – governors attend parent evenings
- Parent surveys
- Parent Focus Groups followed by invitation to a learning walk
- Parent drop in – questions on a flipchart and parents can pop their responses on a Post-It
- Clarity of data, of expectations, of contact procedures, of outcomes and direction

#### 4. How to attract and retain Governors

- Using local community Facebook page / other local social media
- Using established school, community and church communication media
- Have a really good induction process with a mentor and a buddy.
- Use Inspiring Governors – they can provide a mentor and support induction
- Informal gatherings of governors with food and wine
- Interest potential governors by inviting them to observe the FGB meeting
- Ask experts that you need to get involved in a small way
- Find a way to recognise their contribution to show that governors are valued and rewarded

#### 5. How to improve the value of the Assembly meetings

- Some Leadership Training: Resilience, Change Management, Emotional Intelligence
- Topics not being repeated
- Hot Topics to be addressed please with high profile speakers
- We have district meetings – we have a Chairs Conference to keep us informed. We struggle to get people to the Assembly and the people that do attend all go to district briefings. I suggest we don't do them any more or we do a big one every year with a really exciting agenda and time to chat.
- Tasks / workshops don't work for me – too late.

#### 6. How the Education People (Kent Education support services) could improve their support for governors

- Share on-line soundbites or nuggets – "Ted Talks"
- Make (Services) free for all governors
- Don't forget Thanet governors – location of future Assemblies nearer us please

#### 7. Any other thoughts or ideas you would like to share.

- A professional Clerk and a great relationship with the Clerk is really important
- A register of what we are good at, to be a resource we can tap into

If you want to have your say, raise a question or just meet fellow governors to discuss experience and issues affecting you, come along to the next KGA Assembly, to be held on Monday 17 June 2019 7pm-9pm. Membership to KGA is free to all Governors and Trustees representing schools and academies. Details can be found at

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/school-management/leadership/governors/kent-governors-association>

and <https://www.theeducationpeople.org/products/partner-providers/kent-governance-association/>