

## 1 – INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This guidance has been produced by Heads and Governors in order to assist Headteachers in writing reports to their Governing Bodies. It is a requirement of Head Teachers to keep governors informed about achieving the aims and objectives set by the governing body and in particular towards meeting specific targets set. Exactly how often, in what format and the precise content, should be left to locally based agreements. It is hoped that experienced Heads will find this useful in fine tuning their reports to the Governing Body and that new Heads will find it invaluable in helping them write their first report.
- 1.2 This guidance at no point seeks to be prescriptive. How can it when the style and content of every Head's report is different? This is because each school has its own unique management style. For example, some aspects are completely managed by the Head, such as curriculum delivery, and therefore the Head may report to the whole governing body. Finance however, may be shared with a committee and the Head reports to the committee, which in turn reports to the full governing body.
- 1.3 Within the National Standards for Headship accountability is seen as essential for effective headship.  
*'Head teachers account for the efficiency and effectiveness of the school to the governors and others....'*  
*They:*
- i. *provide information, objective advice and support to the governing body to enable it to meet its responsibilities for securing effective teaching and learning and improved standards of achievements, and for achieving efficiency and value for money;*
  - ii. *create and develop an organisation in which all staff recognise that they are accountable for the success of the school;*
  - iii. *present a coherent and accurate account of the school's performance in a form appropriate to a range of audiences, including governors, the LEA, the local community, OFSTED and others, to enable them to play their part effectively.*
- 1.4 It would be helpful for Headteachers to refer to the guidance document '*Roles of Governing Bodies and Head Teachers*', ref.DfEE 0168/2000. It sets out all the main functions of a school and who should be making decisions about these functions. Decisions delegated to the head by the governors are those which must be reported by the head to the governing body at their next meeting.
- 1.5 Heads and Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools need to refer to their specific copies of the Guide to the Law for School Governors.

- 1.6 Finally, it is important that all aspects of reports from the Head to the governors should be a matter for negotiation between the Headteacher and the Governing Body. The content needs to reflect the management structure of the Governing Body.

## 2 - PURPOSES OF HEADTEACHERS' REPORTS

There are two main purposes for Headteachers' reports to governors:

- 2.1 **Management accountability:** reports are the main mechanism for the headteacher to account to the governing body for:
- the quality of education provided;
  - the development of pupils and their mobility;
  - the standards attained and trends of performance;
  - the efficiency of the management of the school's resources and curriculum;
  - the progress made in implementing the school's improvement plan (SIP) and OFSTED action plans;

Reports will therefore contain monitoring information on both performance and policy implementation.

The information required to achieve this purpose is:

*a/ that which enables governors to monitor performance and policy and delivery within a time scale. This is related to the success criteria contained either within individual policies, action plans or within the improvement plan, or to performance indicators which the Governing Body and Headteachers have agreed in advance.*

*b/ that which celebrates success. This may include examples of particular achievements of individuals or groups which are not necessarily related to school improvement plan (SIP) targets or policy implementation.*

- 2.2 **Assisting decision making:** reports should provide governor bodies with the information they will need to make decisions or to formulate policy, for example, linking finance to resourcing the curriculum.

The information required to achieve this purpose can be the following:

*a/ information on the school's own circumstances and how this compares and contrasts with that of similar schools, where appropriate ,eg .from comparative financial data to PANDAs*

*b/ information on local and national legislation and policy developments which impact upon the life of the school.*

*c/ the Headteacher's professional advice, or results of seeking advice from other sources, such as LEA adviser, other governors , etc.*

*d/ any other information the governing body requires.*

### 3 – FREQUENCY

- 3.1 There are very distinct aspects to a school year, for example , the Autumn term sees the publication of the PANDA reports, the Spring term is finalising the current budget and setting the new one, and the Summer term is the time of national tests. Governors cannot wait until the end of the year to discuss aspects that happened at the beginning of the year. The focus of the report should reflect the issues at that time of year. Though the regulations state that a Headteacher must report to the governors ‘*at least once a year*’ ( The Education ( School Government) (Terms of Reference) Regulations 2000 \*) it is common practice for Headteachers is **to present a written report to the governing body once or twice a term**. An annual checklist is provided at the end of this guidance.

\* Found in annex 6 , Guide to Law for School Governors

- 3.2 The governors must produce an annual report to parents. The previous Headteacher’s reports and other governor committee minutes may be useful for governors to write the annual report.

### 4 - STYLE

- 4.1 Every Headteacher will have a different style and this guidance is not setting out to have all reports cloned in the same way. None the less, there are certain characteristics that are recognised as good practice:

a/ The report is well structured , set out with clearly numbered and /or headed paragraphs for ease of use and reference ;

b/ Some information could be shown as charts or appendices, for example PANDA details, reports from advisers;

c/ Avoidance of jargon and acronyms.

d/ The tone needs to be business-like, friendly yet in a formal way. Remember you are reporting to lay governors.

- 4.2 The Headteacher’s report should always be sent out to governors in advance of the meeting ( at least 7 clear days) with the agenda papers. It’s good practice to be one of the first agenda items so that there will be time to deal with matters arising from this report.

### 5 – WHAT DO REPORTS CONTAIN ?

- 5.1 Writing a head’s report to governors is a time consuming activity and it is therefore important not to spend time describing issues that come from a governors committee that will be reported separately to the Governing Body.

5.2 A full annual cycle is available in appendix 1 but here are the key areas:

a/ ***The curriculum***: the quality of teaching and learning and issues from the SIP;

b/ ***The staff***: in particular how staff are managed and organised and staff development, including teaching and non-teaching;

c/ ***The resources***: major expenditures needed , adequacy and effectiveness;

d/ ***The pupils***: test results, monitoring and evaluating performance and target setting, attendance, exclusions , admissions, role, special needs , inclusion ,performance indicators and extra activities.

e/ ***The finances***: monitoring the budget, donations, how the school has applied best value;

f/ ***The premises***: health and safety issues, maintenance and improvements.

g/ ***Leadership / management***: leadership issues , including Performance Management;

h/ ***School Improvement Plan***: progress in key areas;

i/ ***Other*** : visits out, visitors in , community links, reviewing policies.

Working Party:

Gordon Aspland	DAPH link officer
Judy Burgess	Governor Services
Jim Cobbett	Primary Head
Gary Read	Primary Head
Roger Fetherston	Secondary Head
Hilary Green	Special School Head
Carol Hicks	Governor
Pat Johnson	LEA Adviser