



Before Your Meeting

- **Remind yourself of the 3 key functions of governance:** The board provides strategic leadership and accountability by;
 - Overseeing the financial performance of the school
 - Holding the headteacher to account
 - Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

All agenda items will have at least one of these key functions at their core.

- **Ask for help:** If your school has provided you with a mentor, talk to them before the meeting. Ask about format and any local protocols. Or speak to the chair or the clerk beforehand.
- **Familiarise yourself with their format:** Ask if you can see copies of previous minutes to familiarise yourself with how the meetings are run.
- **Refer to the Department for Education's Handbook for School Governors:** Download it from the DfE website or, if appointed through IG, you'll receive your own hard copy.



During Your Meeting

- **Make sure everyone introduces themselves:** Who they are and if they have a specialist governance role. If they forget do ask.
- **Do ask if you don't understand something:** If you don't feel able to ask at the meeting, ask afterwards. Or as an IG placed governor, call the NGA's helpline.
- **Don't worry about understanding different roles and responsibilities:** There will be different types of governors present, but everyone is there to carry out the core functions.
- **Don't worry about how much you contribute at your first few meetings:** It takes a while to get used to the format, the language and acronyms. You will definitely start to contribute more as time goes on and will probably take on a lead role in a key area for the school's development.
- **Remember the role is strategic, not operational:** Even experienced governors stray into raising operational issues from time to time. The clerk or chair will steer the discussion back to strategy.

