

Inspiring Employers

Ten ways of promoting school governance to your workforce



1. Find your own school governor champions

Nominate a named lead as an internal school governor champion who will be the main point of contact and liaise with our own named contact at Inspiring Governance. Where possible this will be your dedicated person to carry out any required workplace activities. They may already be a school governor or trustee, but they don't have to be. They could be someone who's role already focusses on community engagement.

2. Identify advocates

Employees who are already governors are likely to be willing to share their positive experiences with others. If you can find staff who are respected across the organisation, even better. Gather quotes and case studies from them to use in your ongoing communication to staff.

You might have a board member or director who is a school governor, or one who is genuinely passionate about education, social responsibility or volunteering. Having them help launch the programme and put their name to communication about the scheme will get people to sit up and pay attention.

3. Hold a kick-off event

Hold a kick-off event: This could be part of a staff briefing or a standalone event. One of our Inspiring Governance team will be happy to attend, make a presentation and answer any questions staff may have. You might want to invite one or two advocates to speak briefly about why they volunteer and how they benefit, or a local headteacher to talk about why it's important to have governors or trustees with business skills. We can help you with this.

4. Regular communication with staff

In our experience volunteers are more inspired to take the plunge when they can hear about it, and ask questions, face to face. Therefore, it's a good idea to consider carrying out face to face events at company sites every so often. These can be tailored to need and include presentations, surgeries, question and answer sessions. We'd love the opportunity for a member of our team to visit every so often and promote the role in this way.

You can promote the event and your new scheme through existing internal communications channels (such as email bulletins, intranet and staff newsletter). We can provide a variety of templates, tools and bespoke support, including flyers and sample emails etc. to help.

Look at our resources page or ask us for assistance.

5. Create a Be a School Governor space in the workplace

This could be on a noticeboard in a staff area, intranet or e-newsletter. Download our poster. You can use existing channels, such as your intranet or staff newsletter, to generate interest for your event and new scheme, and explain why your business is working with Inspiring Governance to promote governance as volunteering opportunity and what the benefits are to staff. We can supply you with copy, logos and case studies.

Encourage staff to visit

www.inspiringgovernance.org/volunteers to find out more.

6. Share successes and maintain enthusiasm

Once the initial flurry of activity has passed, maintain visibility for the scheme by including regular updates in your existing communication channels. It may take a little while for some volunteers to be placed with a school, so this will keep them engaged in the meantime. You could feature different volunteers or ask schools to nominate governors or trustees who have made a difference, with a sentence explaining why. Ask us to provide “vacancies of the month” in your local area to circulate.

Ongoing reminders on these opportunities to your staff will help to increase your response rate.

7. Conduct a survey

The aim of a survey is to find out who is already a governor and who is interested. Once employees understand the benefits of being a governor or trustee, many will want to know more. At your first anniversary, conduct a follow up survey to measure and evaluate success. Ask employees for ideas on how the company can better support them in their role as governors or trustees.

8. Set up a governor support group

Consider encouraging the formation of a governor support group and giving staff time off to govern (as appropriate, dependent on the size of the business). Once you have a significant number of people participating, arrange a time and location perhaps once a month for them to meet and share experiences. We have case studies to show how others have done this and our team at Inspiring Governance would be happy to help.

Mobilising your staff governors into a network group has other benefits. It provides a forum in which staff governors can feedback on the challenges in local schools which might affect your business, how your sector or business is perceived (by local schools, pupils and parents) and what actions local schools are doing to ensure their pupils are better prepared for entering the local jobs market in the future.

Communication is a two-way thing, and you could use this group as a way of getting your own organisational messages over to schools.

Let new employees know about the scheme and that they are invited to participate. You can create your own information sheet or use our volunteer leaflet

9. Build into your appraisal system

At the appropriate points in your appraisal cycle, remind managers that skills and experiences gained through governance can form part of performance management and contribute to CPD. We work with many volunteers who've progressed in their careers and received that dream promotion, because of their experience as a school governor

10. Become a School Governor Advocate

Consider acting as an advocate and supporter of school governor volunteering beyond your own workplace and membership. You could choose to be a School Governor Champion advocate throughout your own professional networks, within your local area or within your sector.

Interested? Want to know more? Need help?

If you want more information or would like help and advice doing any of this please get in touch. We offer bespoke support. Either contact your contract manager or get in touch on 020 7566 4880 enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org.

Inspiring Governance has a team of staff who can provide you with a framework, time and the resources to help you promote school governance.

020 7566 4880 enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org

