



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.
- **A useful source of information** is the Department for Education's Handbook for School Governors. You can download it from the DfE website. Also, if appointed through Inspiring Governance, you will receive a copy of the National Governance Association's guide to governance.



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:** especially if its acronyms. If you don't feel able to ask at the meeting ask afterwards.
- **Don't worry about understanding different roles and responsibilities:** there will be different types of governors sat around the table, 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 and 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.

