


**Bryan Slater**  
Director of Education

#### Distribution

Chairs of Governors,  
Clerks to Governors and  
Headteachers of  
all schools

*action*

This document needs your **action** as detailed below:

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Title</b>	Governing Body Self Review		
	<b>Summary of contents</b>	Letter from the Director of Education, Governing Body Self Review Form and Guidance Notes		
	<b>Associated documents</b>	Norfolk School Self Review Document		
	<b>Date</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2003		
	<b>Summary of action required</b>	<p>1. Chair of Governors to contact schools to establish the date of the Norfolk School Self Review Meeting with the Review and Development Adviser (RDA), which takes place in the Summer Term.</p> <p>2. Governors to complete governing body self-review form and agree a grade for the overall effectiveness of school governance, prior to the meeting with the school's RDA.</p> <p>3. Chair (or governing body representative) to attend the Norfolk School Self-Review meeting.</p>		
	<b>To be completed by</b>	Prior to the visit by the school's Review and Development Adviser in the Summer Term		
	<b>LEA Contact</b>	Anne Genge		01603 433276
	<b>E-mail address</b>	anne.genge.edu@norfolk.gov.uk		
	<b>Norfolk Self Review reference</b>	7. How well is the school led and managed?		
	<b>Document reference</b>	GI 01/2003		

24 February 2003

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Dear Colleagues,

### **Governing Body Self Review**

In the Summer Term, each school's Review and Development Adviser (RDA) will meet the Head and Chair of Governors (or other governing body representative) to discuss the school's self-review grades. Norfolk LEA is committed to self-review which plays a central role in the process of school improvement. School self-review has been successful; it has provided useful information to schools and has assisted them in improving their own practices.

Governing bodies have an important part to play in the development of schools and, in order to fulfil their responsibilities, each governing body, itself, needs to work effectively. All good organisations should continually be asking themselves the question, "How well are we doing?" Therefore, following the success of the school self-review process, we thought that it would be useful, and a natural extension, to involve governing bodies by providing a self-evaluation framework for them. By enabling governing bodies to analyse their present position in a succinct way, it will allow them to recognise what they do well and to focus their efforts on those areas which need further development. It will be a useful tool in helping each governing body to evaluate its own effectiveness. In addition, it will be helpful in prioritising governor training needs which emerge and it should make a significant contribution to the school improvement programme.

This year, we have included governance in the Norfolk School Self-Review process. The self-review form has been updated and, amongst other changes, includes a separate grade for school governance in the 'Leadership' section. A governing body self-review tool-kit has been devised and accompanies this letter. It is intended to assist governing bodies to agree a grade for the overall effectiveness of governance, which will be discussed with the school's RDA at the meeting in the Summer Term.

I hope that the whole governing body will take part in this approach to self-review on an annual basis and, by so doing, will be provided with useful information which will assist in improving its own practices.

Twenty standards for school governance have been drawn up under four key areas: Working Partnerships, Sound Practice, Strategic Planning and Ensuring Progress. The standards are drawn from legal requirements, official DfES guidance, OFSTED guidance and the kind of good practice we are trying to promote in Norfolk. The governing body will need to consider to what extent it fulfils each standard. Guidance notes are included which outline how governing bodies can assess themselves and how this can be translated into a grade for school governance.

If, following the self-review, you feel that your governing body needs further support with the process or its outcomes, then the Governor Support Service (GSS) will be happy to discuss the matter with you. Colleagues in the GSS can also assist in helping you to draw up an individual governing body development plan, aimed at improving governing body effectiveness. The Governor Support Service has already worked with a number of schools to produce such plans and the recent OFSTED Inspection of the LEA recognised this as good practice. Inspectors said, “ ***The Governor Support Service has worked extensively with schools to draw up development plans for individual governing bodies. These have proved effective in enabling governing bodies to understand their role and responsibilities.***”

As I stated at the beginning of this letter, Norfolk LEA is committed to self-review which plays a central role in the process of school improvement. I hope that governing bodies will now join this process and, in so doing, improve their own practices in order to help schools to improve. If you have any queries about this development, then please contact Anne Genge (Adviser for Governor Effectiveness and Manager of the GSS).

Yours sincerely,  
Bryan Slater  
Director of Education

## **Governing Body Self Review**

### **Guidance notes**

*“Research found a clear association between effective schools and effective governing bodies and that there were considerable benefits to be derived to a school, and in particular its headteacher, from having an effective governing body.”*

*‘Improving the Effectiveness of Governing Bodies’ DfEE 1999*

*The main features of an effective governing body include working as a team, developing good relationships with the headteacher, managing time effectively, knowing the school, ensuring effective meetings and reviewing its practices to identify training and development.*

In the Summer Term, the Review and Development Adviser (RDA) will meet with the headteacher and Chair of Governors, or another member of the governing body, to discuss the school's self review grades. One of these will be a grade for governance. The Governing Body Self-Review (GBSR) form has been devised, with guidance notes, to show how governors can assess themselves.

There are twenty standards in total, divided into four sub-sections, each of which contains five statements. Each sub-section focuses on a key aspect of governors' work covering strategic planning, ensuring progress, creating real partnerships and developing sound practices. The standards are drawn from legal requirements, official DfES advice, OFSTED guidance and good practice. In completing the GBSR form, the governing body will need to consider to what extent it fulfils each standard. Each standard should be scored with a mark out of ten.

To assist governors with their scoring, criteria are listed, on the following pages, which must be in place for a score of 10 to be awarded for each standard.

At the end of each section there is a 'ready reckoner', where numbers can be converted into a score out of ten and entered in the appropriate section on the GBSR form.

Governors will need to identify evidence. Some examples of sources are given below:

- Recent inspection evidence i.e. report/feedback notes
- RDA records of visit
- The effectiveness of the governing body's organisation structure and functions e.g. committee structure; statutory governors; other linked governors; policy documents; governing body and committee minutes, etc.
- Delegated responsibilities and how they are discharged e.g. committee terms of reference; review of governing body and headteacher responsibilities; minutes, etc.

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- Systems for monitoring and evaluation  
e.g. linked governors; visits policy/protocol; minutes; headteacher's report to governors; budget monitoring; School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP), etc.
- Annual planning cycles, meetings and consultation procedures  
e.g. calendar of dates; Annual Report to Parents; Performance Management Policy in place; minutes; involvement in SIDP; questionnaires to parents; Home School Agreement, etc.
- Actions taken by the governors as a result of attendance at training.  
e.g. Agenda items; training governor; governors' reports on training; minutes, etc.
- Impact of effectiveness of training on governing body.  
e.g. improved overall systems within the governing body as shown through minutes, etc.

Each section carries a total of 50 marks, giving a maximum of 200. By comparing the agreed mark with the range below, the governing body will identify a final grade. The grade for governance should be inserted in the Norfolk School Self-Review profile sheet.

0-30	Grade 7
31-65	6
66-99	5
100-120	4
121-150	3
151-180	2
181-200	1

This needs to be completed before the RDA's visit in the Summer Term.

The process will help governing bodies to improve as a collective body.

# Governing Body Self Review

*All good organisations should continually ask themselves the question, 'How well are we doing?'*

Norfolk LEA is committed to self-review which plays a central role in the process of school improvement. School Self-Review has been successful; it has provided useful information to schools and has assisted them in improving their own practices.

Governors have an important part to play in the development of schools. The governing body itself needs to work effectively in order to fulfil its responsibilities. Therefore, following the success of the school self-review process, a natural extension is to provide a self-evaluation framework for governing bodies. By enabling them to analyse their present position in a succinct way, it will allow them to focus their efforts on those areas which need further development. It will be a useful tool in helping each governing body to evaluate its own effectiveness. In addition, it will be helpful in prioritising the governor training needs which emerge and it should make a significant contribution to the school improvement programme.

At the Norfolk School Self Review (NSSR) meeting in the Summer Term, the Review and Development Adviser (RDA) will meet with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors, or another governing body representative, to discuss the school's self review grades. There is now a separate grade for school governance (Section 7a). This Governing Body Self-review (GBSR) document is intended to assist governors to agree a grade for governance, which will be discussed with the RDA.

Please see the accompanying guidance notes, which will outline how the form should be completed.

		SCORE	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
<b>Key Area of Governance: WORKING PARTNERSHIPS</b>			
REPRESENTATION	A complete governing body which contains and ensures a full range of representative views	10	
PARTICIPATION	All governors are involved and work to enable and support the active participation of other members	10	
COMMUNICATION	Written and oral communication to and from the governing body is appropriate and clear	10	
ACCOUNTABILITY	The governing body accepts its accountability for the performance of the school.	10	
ADVOCACY	The governing body actively promotes the interests of the school and the school's contribution to the well being of the community	10	Score 50
<b>Key Area of Governance: SOUND PRACTICE</b>			
COMMITMENT	All governors are involved and committed to the aims of the school and have a clear understanding of their role. This includes a commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all	10	
TEAMWORK	The governing body maintains effective working relationships, characterised by shared high expectations, and satisfies the requirements of confidentiality and corporate decision making	10	
MEETINGS	Governing body meetings make good use of time and ensure that governors fulfil their responsibilities	10	
ORGANISATION	The governing body has appropriate committee structures that enable efficient and effective governance	10	
DEVELOPMENT	The governing body reviews and promotes its own development	10	Score 50
<b>Key Area of Governance: STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>			
DIRECTION	The governing body is influential in helping to shape a clear direction for the development of the school within the community. Through a shared vision, it is involved in the planning, implementation and review of the School Improvement and Development Plan	10	
IMPROVEMENT	The governing body accepts its leading role in helping to decide the school's strategy for improvement, so that pupils learn and achieve most effectively	10	
DOCUMENTATION	School documentation meets statutory requirements, is clear and accessible, reflects the school's aims and values and is regularly reviewed	10	
DECISION	The governing body has a clear meeting and agenda structure that ensures timely and effective decision making	10	
STATUTE	Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities	10	Score 50
<b>Key Area of Governance: ENSURING PROGRESS</b>			
MONITORING	The governing body ensures that: i) it is informed about the quality and standards of education in the school ii) policies, procedures, budgets and plans are monitored iii) monitoring data is used in strategic planning	10	
TARGET SETTING	The governing body ensures that the results of assessment are used to target improvement in all aspects of pupils' achievement	10	
EFFICIENCY	The governing body has a proactive strategy for resourcing the school to match the school's aims and priorities	10	
EFFECTIVENESS	The governing body monitors spending decisions and evaluates their effectiveness and impact	10	
BEST VALUE	The governing body follows the principles of Best Value when reaching decisions about the commitment of resources	10	Score 50