

Lambeth Governance Self-Audit Toolkit

For additional information please contact:

Peter Compton	Coordinator of Governor Services	020 7926 9636 pcompton@lambeth.gov.uk
David Jones	Governor Support Officer	020 7926 9669 dgjones@lambeth.gov.uk

The purpose of this paper is to inform governors and headteachers about Lambeth's new Governance Self-Audit Toolkit.

RECOMMENDATION: that the governing body

- makes arrangements to use the toolkit to carry out a self-audit of its effectiveness and submits the completed audit form to the LA by Friday 18 December 2015.
- draws up a governing body development/action plan to address any issues and/or areas for development arising from the self-audit.

1. Introduction

The DfE's [Governors' Handbook](#) and [statutory guidance](#) stress that governing bodies should evaluate "their performance regularly in the light of Ofsted expectations and other good practice" and make "changes as necessary to improve their effectiveness". The review should include "the extent to which their size and structure is fit for purpose and their members have the necessary skills".

All governing bodies should undertake an annual review of their own effectiveness and develop a governing body development/action plan to address any issues identified. This should usually be carried out towards the end of the academic year or early in the autumn.

2. Lambeth's Governance Self-Audit Toolkit

We have developed a simple governance self-audit toolkit, designed around the core functions of effective governance. These are:

- A. Working Strategically**
- B. Holding the headteacher to account**
- C. Ensuring school budgets are well spent**
- D. Effective Governance Practice**

3. Purpose

The purpose of the toolkit is twofold:

- For the Local Authority, to provide accurate information on the quality of school governance in the borough enabling us to RAG-rate our governing bodies; and
- For governing bodies, to improve the overall quality of school governance by enabling them to use the toolkit to identify areas for development.

However, for the individual governing body the benefits are many. By carrying out the self-audit the governing body will also:

- Have a better understanding of the issues around effective governance;
- Be able to review their performance against Ofsted expectations;
- Develop a shared understanding of its performance and the impact it is having; and
- Contribute to school self-evaluation and school development planning.

The self-audit toolkit can be organised by the governing body or facilitated by an external consultant. It is recommended that the session is run in the following way:

- Enable all governors the opportunity to study the toolkit before attending a whole governing body session;
- Begin the session by dividing the governors up into small groups (3/4 is best); decide who will lead each small group and who will record the group's agreed judgment;
- Each group considers each statement, agrees on what to write in the 'How do we know' column and then decides on a rating. (*If time is short then each group could cover one set of questions under one function only*);
- Finally, the whole governing body comes together and agrees the overall rating for each core function and then an overall rating
- It is anticipated that the whole session would last for about an hour.

Once completed, the Chair should sign off the completed proforma, scan it and send it to Peter Compton, Lambeth Governor Services, 10th Floor, International House, Canterbury Crescent, London SW9 7QE or email it to governor@lambeth.gov.uk by **Friday 18 December 2015**.

Proformas will be emailed to all chairs of governing bodies and will also be uploaded to the [Lambeth School Services website](#).

4. Action for the Governing Body

It is recommended that the governing body draws up a governing body development/action plan to address any issues and/or areas for development arising from the self-audit.

5. Further Sources of Information

Further resources for reviewing and improving governing body effectiveness:

- [National Governors' Association's Twenty Key Questions for the Governing Board to ask itself](#)
- [National Governors' Association/Welcome Trust Framework for Governance](#)
- [School Governance: Learning from the Best \(Ofsted\)](#)