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CAREER EXPERTISE ON A SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD



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WRITES ABOUT
HIS SCHOOL
GOVERNOR
JOURNEY FROM
A CAREER
DEVELOPMENT
PERSPECTIVE**

I first became a governor at City Academy Norwich (CAN), a mainstream state-funded secondary school in September 2018 which had recently transferred from a multi-academy trust to a single-academy trust. I was initially drawn to the governance model of being both a trustee and a governor and the invaluable opportunity to develop my strategic knowledge of leadership in mainstream education and to support the school and the local community.

I was aware from the *Governance handbook* (DfE) and conversations with national charity Governors for Schools and the University of East Anglia Governors Network, of three core governor strategic responsibilities:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the principal to account for the educational performance of the school and its students and the performance/management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the academy and making sure money is well spent.

On appointment to the board I was quickly introduced to the online platform 'Governor Hub' used to manage and facilitate communication between the school and governing board members and online CPD certified training from Educare. I was also introduced to a free governor induction e-Learning programme through Governors for Schools (all useful to evidence the 25 hours CPD required for CDI professional registration).

At the second meeting of the new CAN school governing board my initial responsibilities allocated were *Outreach and Partnerships (Careers)* and *Assessment and Progress* which involved liaison with the CAN Careers Lead and Vice Principal responsible for assessment and progress within the Academy. I was also made aware of governor requirements to support permanent exclusion panels and HR processes.

I shared best practice through sharing my knowledge of the Gatsby Benchmark Compass and Tracker tools provided by the Careers & Enterprise Company designed to address key areas of improvement. I also reviewed the school's statutory provider access statement/careers policy and shared an inclusive learning strategies grid to support students with SEN.

An opportunity to become Acting Chair of Governors

In May 2019 after seven months of being a school governor, an opportunity became available on an interim basis as Acting Chair of Governors which changed my responsibility to *Finance, Leadership and Management* and *Careers*. An Ofsted inspection within a few weeks of appointment followed and gave me, accompanied by two fellow governors, the opportunity to discuss the CAN careers strategy with Ofsted, alongside the wider school improvement plan and financial management.

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Top tips for career development professionals joining governing boards:

- Being a registered career development professional offers a strong representation of careers at both primary, secondary and specialist school/independent school level.
- Ask your chair of governors/clerk about e-learning for evidencing CPD (e.g. Educare, Learning Link, The Key etc.)
- You do not have to have a pre-existing relationship to a school to become a governor but you might wish to consider things such as travel distance, knowledge of the local community etc.
- The CDI offers a number of scheduled workshops, webinars and support resources throughout the year.

References

DfE (2019) *Governance handbook* https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788234/governance_handbook_2019.pdf

Governors for Schools
www.governorsforschools.org.uk/elearning/

Educare
www.educare.co.uk/educare-for-education

Learning Link
www.nga.org.uk/Training-and-Development/NGA-Learning-Link-e-learning.aspx

The Key for Governors
<https://schoolgovernors.thekeysupport.com/>



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