

# Pathway to Governance

**An immersive learning  
programme designed to  
educate and inspire potential  
governors from all backgrounds**



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# Who are we?

Governors for Schools is a national education charity that finds and places skilled people on governing boards across England and Wales. We have over 20 years' experience in the sector, supporting high-calibre volunteers to apply their knowledge to school boards – and help younger generations thrive.

We're committed to supporting volunteers in their development as governors, running regular campaigns and an annual conference to improve governors' knowledge about the education sector. We also provide free eLearning courses and host regular webinars with experts in the field.

We work hard to encourage people from underrepresented communities to apply, as we know that diverse boards help schools deliver the best education possible for all pupils.

**5,779**

volunteers  
appointed in the  
last 3 years

into

**3,548**

schools

across

**171**

local  
authorities

### Our mission

We're committed to providing those responsible for appointing governors with the best governor and trustee recruitment service in the sector.

### Our vision

We're working to ensure that every school in England and Wales has excellent governance, driving improved educational outcomes for all children and young people.

**90%** of schools would recommend us

**90%** of volunteers would recommend us

"I had been a bit nervous about applying to be a governor, but the support offered by Governors for Schools encouraged me to take the leap. The process was really smooth. After filling in a simple application form, then a couple of short calls with Governors for Schools, I was put in touch with the school. I have found the webinars and resources offered by Governors for Schools really valuable in getting started as a governor."

**Chris Duffy,  
Governor, The Godolphin  
Junior Academy**



**Here's a  
heatmap of all  
our successful  
appointments  
nationally in  
2022-23**

# Who are we?

**GOVERNORS  
FOR SCHOOLS**  
Pathway to Governance



**Emma Harris**

Head of Governor  
Recruitment,  
Governors for  
Schools

“

One of the key challenges in the school governance sector is a lack of young volunteers sitting on school boards– and our Pathway to Governance programme is one way Governors for Schools is trying to change this. It is of real importance that school governance boards are made up of individuals with different experiences and who bring different perspectives to the work of the board.

”

Schools need governors with a broad range of skills to help them run effectively. This means bringing people with a diverse range of perspectives and experiences together and younger volunteers are an essential part of this equation.

Young people have more recent first-hand experience of the modern education system, allowing them to offer unique viewpoints on a range of issues affecting today's schools. For example, younger governors tend to be more sensitive to the importance of inclusion and sustainability.

Growing up in the digital era means younger volunteers understand the kinds of skills younger generations will need in their personal and professional lives. As the world and schools become more reliant on technology, these skills are crucial for governing boards looking to understand pupils' educational needs and potential future careers.



**Research shows that more than a third of governors are aged 60 or over, while only 1% are under 30.\***

Many young professionals assume they do not have the right skills and experience to be a governor simply because they may be just starting out on their career journey.

The Pathway to Governance programme is designed to empower young people to have the confidence to apply to school governance roles and lend their voices to boards across England.

The programme helps young people understand the valuable contribution they can make to their community through school governance while equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need in the role.

Participants are supported throughout the programme with a live online learning session to find out more about the role, independent study using exclusive Governors for Schools eLearning modules to deepen this understanding and a mock board meeting to apply their new skills and knowledge.

A 1:1 call with a member of the Governors for Schools team allows participants personalised support to help them navigate the application process, after which they receive a prioritised placement.

Governors for Schools research\* conducted on the experiences of governors working in professional fields revealed a close match between the skills used in a school governance context and in a corporate/professional context. In particular, governors recognised significant overlap in the following areas:

**Providing  
challenge and  
asking probing  
questions**

**Strategic  
planning**

**Developing  
professional  
relationships**

**Leading,  
persuading or  
influencing  
others**

Governors reported strong development in these transferable skills, which in turn has led to enhanced performance in the workplace. In addition to the areas set out above, governors also reported strong growth in:

**Preparation,  
flexibility and  
agility**

**Analysing  
performance  
data and KPIs**

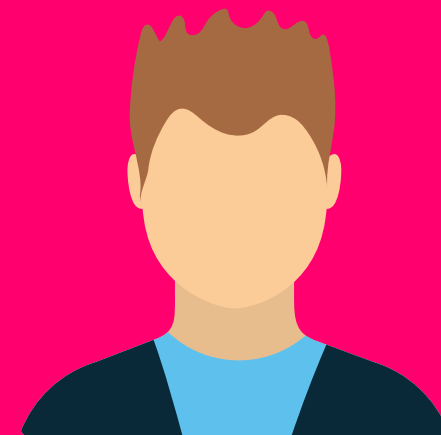
**Financial skills and  
value for money**



**Governors from professional backgrounds have told us...**

**“It has led me to become more involved at work in strategic questions – restructuring, re-organising ... thinking about impact.”**

**“I’ve learnt to seek the detail, rather than just nodding something through. This has helped me to carry out appraisals I do at work.”**



**“I feel more confident making a decision and asking for the right information to reach it.”**

## Why do you think it's important for people under the age of 30 to take on school governance roles?



“A balanced and diverse board with a range of ages and backgrounds brings the most effective form of governance, benefiting both the school and the community. The importance of under 30s taking on board roles provides a different perspective and helps secure a solid platform for the future of governance. From a personal perspective, this role has developed my strategic experience and increased my involvement of working with key stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds. I believe this exposure will help benefit my career both short term and in the long term.”

## What motivated you to become a school governor?

A key motivation was that through all the training I have received, I had the knowledge and useful skills that are in high demand within the governance space, and I knew I was in a position to give back and make a positive influence on my local community. From having a number of friends who are teachers, I was very aware of the challenges schools face today, and knew that my skill-set would be beneficial in helping overcome some of these difficulties. Deloitte were really supportive of my interest in becoming a governor. I spoke with my people leader and they put me in contact with senior members of the team who helped bring the role to light and further my interest in taking on the role.”

**Alex Langford-Pollard**

Manager - Large and Complex group, Deloitte

# Working with you

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FOR SCHOOLS**  
Pathway to Governance



Governors for Schools work with you to ensure the programme is right for your employees.

We provide materials to help you promote the programme within your employee networks and capture interest through a short application form to participate in Pathways to Governance so you can understand who is engaging with this opportunity.

We work alongside you to review applications and ensure the right cohort is selected for the programme. Once participants are selected, Governors for Schools manages coordination and delivery of the programme, while keeping you updated every step of the way.

Once the programme has been completed, a final report will be provided to you, including both a quantitative and qualitative overview based on pre and post programme surveys as well as participant feedback and engagement gathered throughout delivery.

Participants are supported through the governor application process to be matched with a school, and may be selected for follow up case studies where appropriate once they take up their roles. These would then be shared with you.

Governors for Schools help you understand the impact the Pathway to Governance programme has had on your employees through pre and post programme survey data, and a final application and placement report.

For example, our pilot programme showed a significant increase in confidence from programme participants in core professional skills, such as asking challenging questions.

**6.5**  
confidence asking  
challenging  
questions in  
meetings before the  
programme

**9.1**  
confidence asking  
challenging  
questions in  
meetings before the  
programme





# Benefits of working with us

Partnering with Governors for Schools allows you to support school communities while offering many benefits for you and your employees.



\*participants gain access to further online learning materials once placed as governor by Governors for Schools



# Online learning



**The course is very insightful on every aspect regarding schooling and how we can be more effective in fulfilling our duties. I will be going back to the modules that relate to my specific responsibilities during my time as a governor.**

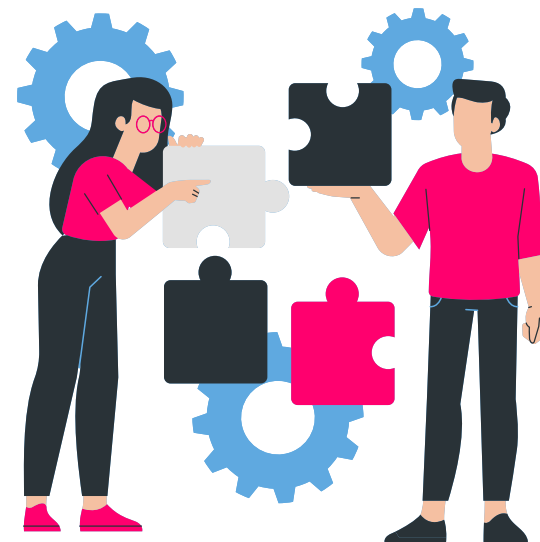
**I'm so glad this exists, I am finding it difficult to get on my local training course as they are all in work hours, so being able to do this in my own time and cover the topics I need to know about was so valuable. It is really easy to use and there are tonnes of links that I've jotted down to use in future. It tells you just enough, but not too much!**

# Next steps



Get in touch to find out more

Are you interested in widening the opportunities for your employees to learn and develop new skills?



**Get in touch with us today to find out more about Pathway to Governance .**

A member of our team will happily arrange a conversation to discuss the benefits of partnering with Governors for Schools to deliver the programme.

**William Durham**

Head of Impact and Corporate Partnerships

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Visit our website:

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Governors for Schools is a registered Charity in England and Wales. Our charity number is: 1078330.