



Active Governance in a Time of Challenge

For Barnsley Governors Association Spring Conference
28th April 2012

Active Governance at work

Organising
School Trips

Running
A savings
club

Running
School
Discos

Organising
Sports
Days

Opening a
School Farm

Undertaking
School
Repairs

Running
School
Security

Social
Activities
for parents

Active Governance gone badly wrong

£250,000
In the red

Dangerous
Repairs to
the building

Bottom of
the national
league
tables

Put in
Special
Measures

The Chair
paid a salary
of £10k pa

The savings
club money
went
missing

Very poor
teaching

Very poor
learning
resources

So what should good Active Governance be like?

- ▶ Strategic Direction
- ▶ Critical Friend
- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation



What will OFSTED expect from governors?

Leadership and Management

“Effective work by the governing body that acts as a critical friend and hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school’s performance”



What aspects of school performance?

Four key judgements:–

- ▶ Achievement
- ▶ Quality of teaching
- ▶ Behaviour and safety of pupils, inc. attendance
- ▶ Quality of leadership and management

plus Overall effectiveness



Governance –Extract from supplementary OFSTED guidance

In assessing the role and impact of the governing body, take account of how well the GB:–

- ▶ Knows the school
- ▶ Supports and strengthens school leadership
- ▶ Provides challenge to school leaders; particularly with regard to the quality of teaching
- ▶ Works efficiently with the school



What else will OFSTED expect from governors?

- ▶ They will expect to see 'active governance' and evidence of governing body as critical friend, offering challenge and support
- ▶ Minutes and other evidence which reflects the above



Time versus Improvement

TIME

Less



More

I
M
P
R
O
V
E
M
E
N
T

More



Less

Summary of Key issues for Active Governance

- ▶ Agendas which focus on school improvement
- ▶ Minutes which record governor challenge in detail
- ▶ Records of time spent in school, particularly in secondaries
- ▶ In depth knowledge of school performance data
- ▶ Focus on the quality of teaching and support for robust performance management
- ▶ Look for outcomes rather than inputs



The importance of self-evaluation

