

## BARNSLEY GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

# Improving School Governance

**Annual Governor Conference**  
**27<sup>TH</sup> April 2013**

# **OUTSTANDING GOVERNANCE**

**If you're tweeting today:  
#barnsleygovernors**

**See**

**[www.hamdoneducation.co.uk](http://www.hamdoneducation.co.uk)**

**Twitter: @hamdoneducation**

# OUTSTANDING GOVERNANCE

1. **Ofsted Priorities 2012-13**
2. **Skill-based Governance: What we need**
3. **Monitoring & Evaluating**
4. **Supporting & Challenging**
5. **Knowing your role**
6. **Moving towards “outstanding”**

## Ofsted Priorities:

- Outstanding teaching (nb Teachers' Standards)
- Quality of learning
- Pupil Progress (inc. use of the pupil premium)
- Performance management
- **The GB's support, challenge and holding to account**

## Ofsted Priorities

So what do you need to  
be able to do?

# What skills and knowledge are essential for . . .

- ❖ Everyone?
- ❖ Someone?
- ❖ The Headteacher?
- ❖ Not essential?

# Vehicles for Monitoring and Evaluating

- The Headteacher's report (*provided it ...*)
- Committees (*provided they . . .*)
- Visiting the school (*provided it . . .*)
- Attachment to areas (*provided it . . .*)
- Customer surveys (*provided they . . .*)

# Some techniques for supporting school leadership

- Ensuring policies and procedures are clear and followed by everyone
- Regularly checking what's going well, what could go better
- Brainstorming problems; Problem-solving, team-building
- Taking decisions, making policy at GB level ('lunchboxes & packets of crisps')
- Not expecting all the answers from the head (otherwise why are you there?)



## Providing challenge

### Assertive things to say

How will the final decision be made on this – and who will make it?

What outcome is needed from this item?

What evidence is there to support that claim?

I'd like to hear from (the teacher/staff/parent/LA governor/s) on this issue – perhaps they have a different perspective.

Is there a limit (or a structure) on talking about this item?

Could you summarise the decision briefly?

What is expected of individual governors in connection with this item/issue?

## More assertive things to say

Who can I share this decision with – and when?

Who needs to know this?

Who should know this?

I would like more time to think about/consult/hear other views before I decide.

I believe what's best for the children is . . .

I believe what's best for the school is . . .

I believe what's best for the governing body is . . . (on making unpalatable/uncomfortable decisions – e.g. proposing a new chair)

## **Even more assertive things to say**

Since we carry the ultimate responsibility/accountability for shaping the future direction of the school . . .

I want to congratulate . . .

I am very pleased that . . .

I believe . . .

What other alternatives/options are there to the action proposed?

Will this action (how will this action) help the school to meet its aims/mission/objectives/raise standards?

What have we done at this meeting to make things better for the children?

# Excellent governance

As Michael Barber once put it:

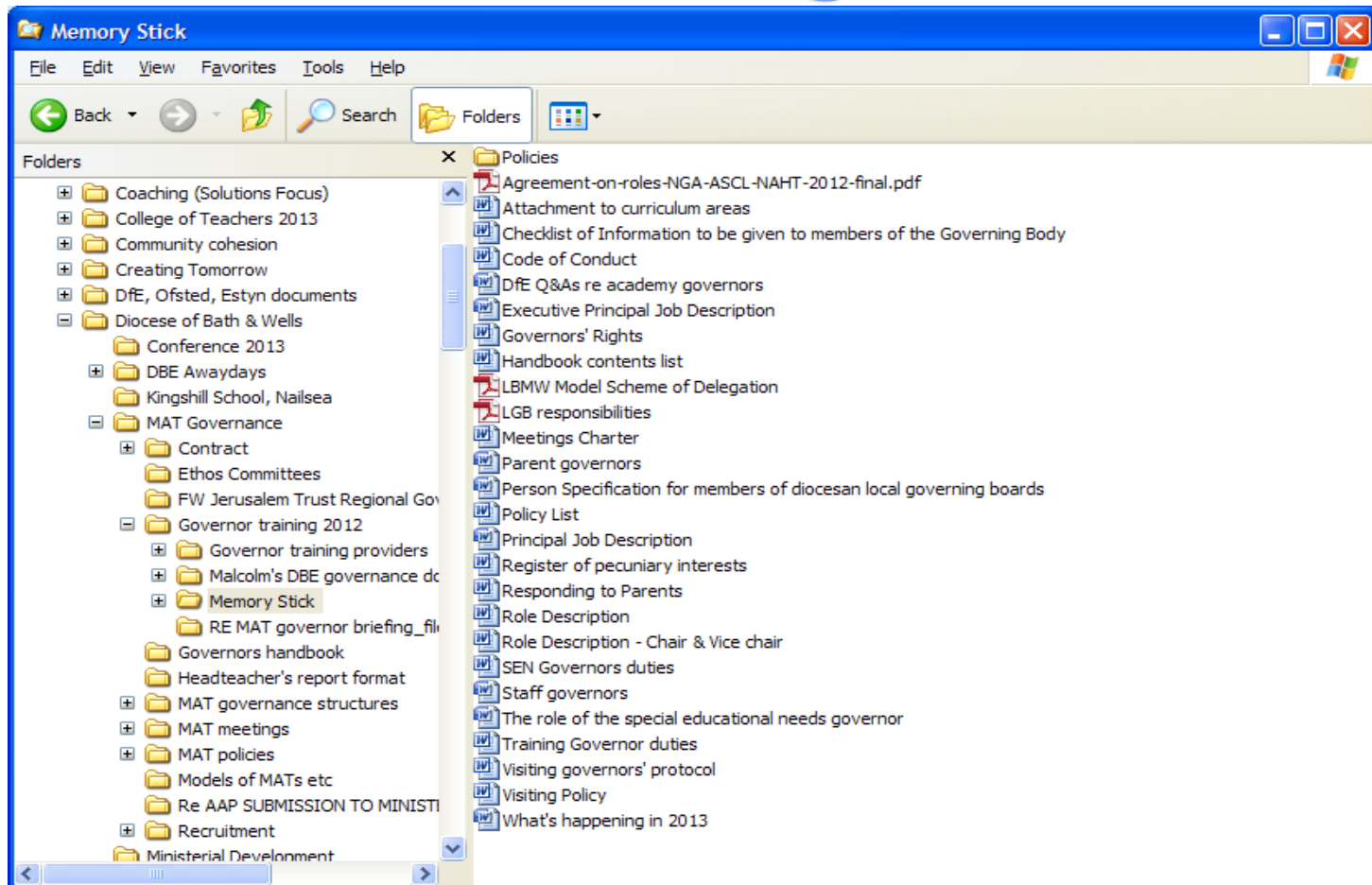
standardisation and prescription are simply what gets you from being awful to adequate rather than good to great

Performance beyond expectations embraces innovation, creativity, flexibility and risk – the essence of 21st-century knowledge economy aspirations

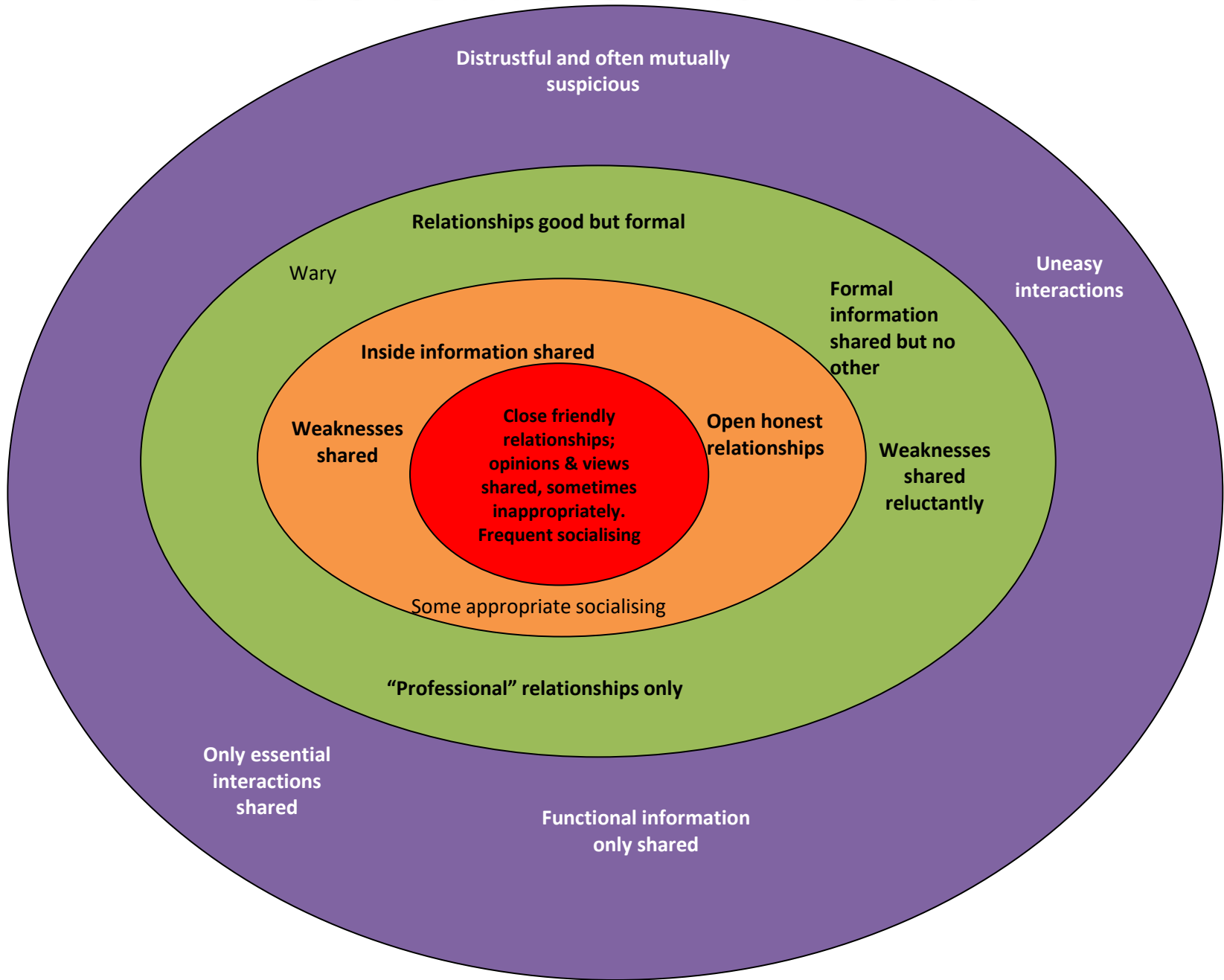
# Elements of Outstanding Governance

- Assertive questioning
- 360° self-evaluation
- Clarity about mutual expectations
- Clarity about procedures
- Clarity (but flexibility) about strategic/operational
- Clarity about what governors need to know
- Getting the roles right

# Information for governors

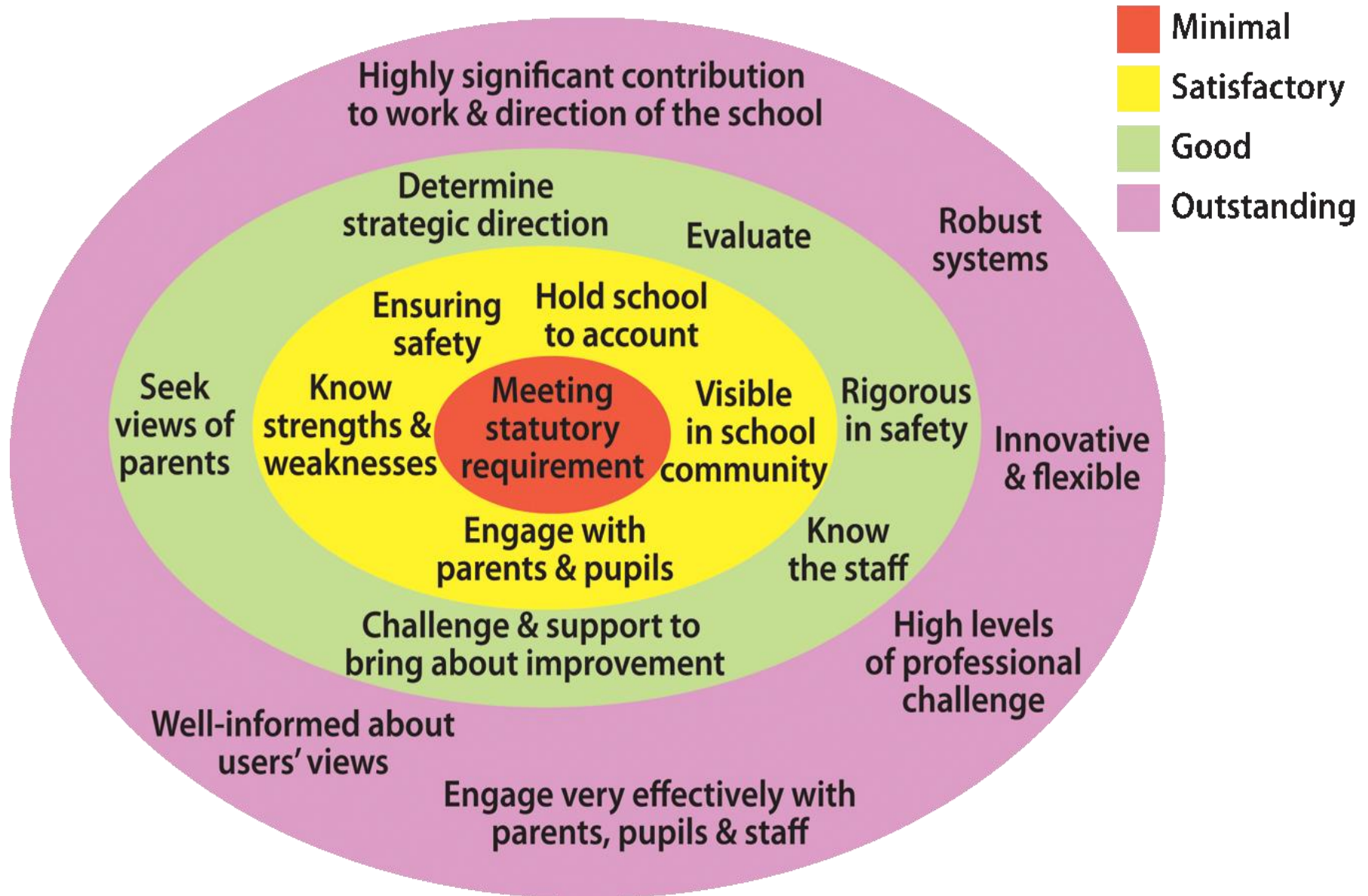


# Governors and Heads



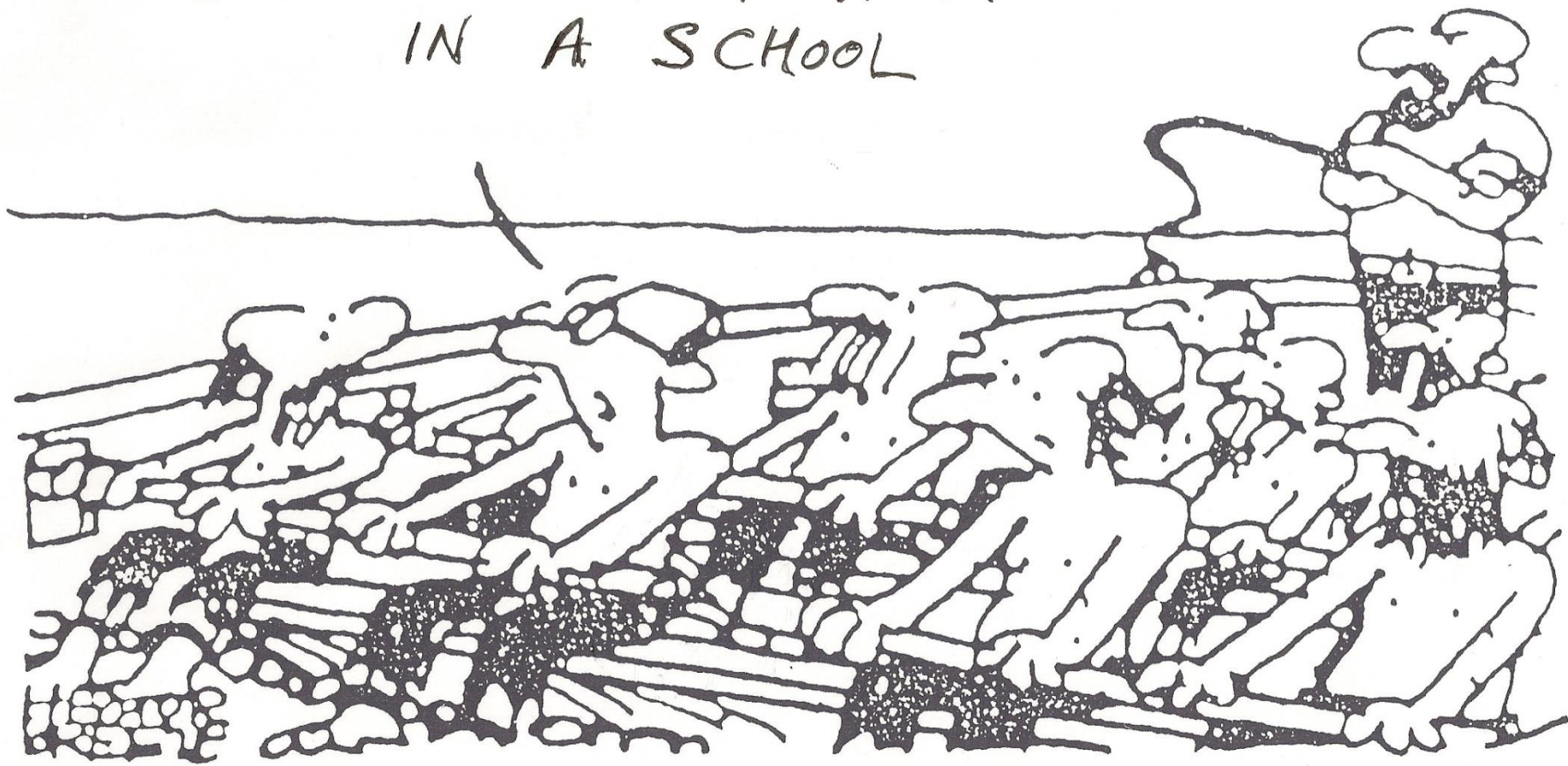


# The Outstanding Governing Body





MIND YOU, THIS JOB ISN'T  
SO BAD — I USED TO WORK  
IN A SCHOOL





## Quiz Break

Who said to headteachers:

**“If staff morale is at an all-time low,  
you must be doing something right” ?**

Was it?



Michael Gove?

Was it?



Michael Corleone?



Was it?



Princess Michael of Kent?

Or was it?



Michael Wilshaw?

## Wellbeing as the key provision of outstanding school

**Supportive activities** (to enable best performance): coaching, supervision, employee assistance

**Improvement activities** (fitting the school to enable best performance): auditing & improving procedures, improving the environment (e.g. consultative planning)

**Easing activities** (providing a less stressful work environment): removing tasks, offering services, providing relaxation activities

**Morale-raising activities** (celebrations): school awards, celebration activities

**Diversionary activities** (principally for bonding): Quiz night, Cheesecake Tuesday bake-off

## Maintaining school morale

Martin Seligman (“Flourish”) suggests that wellbeing comprises:

- Life satisfaction
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning and purpose
- Accomplishment

How does your school enable this for all the adults who work in it?



Ray Dalio's (the world's most successful money manager) principles:

- Maintain "baseball cards" and/or "believability matrixes" for your people. Imagine if you had baseball cards that showed all the performance stats. You could see what they did well and poorly, and call on the right people to play the right positions in a very transparent way (*perhaps use a good profiling instrument*)
- Probe deep to learn what to expect from your "machine". Know what your people are like, and make sure they do their jobs excellently. Constantly probe those who report to you, and encourage them to probe you.

*from the Guardian, 10.3.12*

*Are we getting it right?*

**Knowing your School**

**Supporting School Leaders**

**Providing Challenge**

**Knowing your role**



For Nigel Gann:

[nigel.gann@hamdoneeducation.co.uk](mailto:nigel.gann@hamdoneeducation.co.uk)

[www.hamdoneeducation.co.uk](http://www.hamdoneeducation.co.uk)

Twitter: @hamdoneeducation

For Worklife Support (wellbeing programmes)

- [www.worklifesupport.com](http://www.worklifesupport.com)

For Working in School:

- [www.workingschool.net](http://www.workingschool.net)
- Facebook: WorkinginSchool
- Twitter: @workinginschool