

Work Plan Framework for School Governing Boards: Summer Term 2026

includes a suggested Full Governing Board Model Agenda

This document, titled "**Work Plan Framework for School Governing Boards**" is a resource created by Hackney Education - Governance Services. It is intended for guidance purposes only, assisting Chairs, Headteachers, Principals, and Governance Professionals in maintained schools or academies to plan the work for their Summer 2026 Full Governing Board (FGB) meetings, committees, and outside work.

The document is structured in four parts:

1. **Part I: Guidance Notes**
2. **Part II: Best Practice Tips**
3. **Part III: Planning Framework**
4. **Part IV: Full Governing Board Model Agenda**

The framework offers comprehensive coverage, but not every item needs to be discussed at every meeting; use the key and committee structure to ensure board time is focused only on strategic challenge, risk oversight, and key decisions.

Please email Governorservices@hackney.gov.uk with any feedback.

PART I: Guidance Notes: How to Use this Document and the Framework

The document contains both a **Planning Framework** (Part III) and a **Model Agenda**(Part IV), which serve different purposes:

- **The Framework (Part III):** This is the comprehensive, robust tool for governance planning. It provides a full set of agenda topics for Summer 2026, complete with accompanying notes and suggested papers for each item. This framework ensures the board maintains focus on strategic challenge and compliance oversight by balancing all components of effective governance: procedure, finance, compliance, strategy and welfare.
- **The Model Agenda (Part IV):** This is a suggested template that demonstrates how a meeting might be formatted. Users are advised to **tailor** the items in the Model Agenda to their specific needs. It is a resource to be used in conjunction with the framework and best practice tips.


Chairs, Headteachers and Clerks are advised that the items in the framework may need to be re-ordered based on urgency, importance, and practical considerations, and that non-applicable or board-specific items should be added or removed.


In addition, our **Best Practise Tips (Part II)** offer guidance on structuring work both inside and outside the meeting to ensure the board's and leaders' time is used effectively.


References to Headteacher throughout include CEO / Principal / as applicable to your setting.

KEY TO Part III

In Part III we designate the items where appropriate using the following key:

Statutory (a must): 

Best practise: 

Context-dependent: 

We also align the items with the Hackney Education Priorities 2026 - 2029:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion
- Additional and Alternative Learning Provision
- Strength and sustainability
- Sustainable school improvement
- Equity for children and families

We strongly advise you to use this resource together with our Chair's Update, now structured according to our Priorities, cross referencing information and ensuring your discussions are aligned with and informed by local/ national developments, strategy, and resources.

Ultimately, we advise using the framework and tips to focus board time on strategic challenge, risk oversight, and key decisions, while delegating detailed scrutiny to committees and using consent agendas for routine items.

For comments or help in using this resource please email: governorservices@hackney.gov.uk.

PART II Best Practice Tips: Make the Most of your Board's and Leaders' Time

1. *Before the Meeting*

- **Circulate all papers at least 7 days in advance** with clear executive summaries
- All papers should include:
 - Executive summary (1 page maximum)
 - Clear recommendation (approve/note/discuss)
 - Traffic light status (RAG rating)
- A lot of the organisational work should be done outside the meeting. Written reports should be prepared and circulated in advance as a norm.
- Ask Governors to **submit questions in writing** beforehand on routine items (3 days before); ideally with responses circulated a day before
- Policies should be reviewed in advance of the meeting and comments sent in writing.
- Use a **consent agenda** for non-controversial items (e.g. routine policy approvals, minutes of committee meetings)

Top Tip: Chair & Headteacher & Clerk Pre-meet

- Review all papers
- Identify items needing most discussion
- Agree time allocations
- Brief presenters on time limits

2. *During the Meeting*

- **Start with the most important strategic items** when energy and focus are highest
- Use the **"traffic light" system** for reports (red/amber/green) to identify areas for discussion
- We recommend you discuss link Governor reports / Governor visits and policies under the applicable item, not in separate items.

Top Tip For the Chair: Time-box discussions to maintain pace

1. Appoint a timekeeper (could be clerk or vice-chair)
2. Give 2-minute warnings before time expires on lengthier items
3. Park detailed discussions: "This needs more time - let's take it offline/to committee"
4. Presenter summarises (2 mins max) - assumes papers read
5. Governors challenge - focus on strategic questions
6. Decision/action agreed
7. Move on

3. *After the Meeting*

- Ensure the **action log is updated** and circulated promptly

- Follow up on any items deferred or requiring further information

The Planning Framework (Part III) offers the comprehensive, detailed list of agenda topics, statutory context, and papers needed for effective governance.






PART III Planning Framework: Agenda items for meetings, with notes - Summer 2026




Schools vary in having one or two Full Governing Board meetings per term and if just you only have one it may be early or late and so do adapt as appropriate.



Hackney Education Priorities 2026 - 2029:




1. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion
2. Additional and Alternative Learning Provision
3. Strength and sustainability
4. Sustainable school improvement
5. Equity for children and families

	Topic	Hackney Priority	Lead	Notes / Papers
✓	Welcome and Introductions <i>(Prayer and reflection for Church Schools)</i>		Clerk/ Chair/ All	<i>Note: Standard Item every meeting</i>
⚠	Apologies for absence <i>Clerk to report apologies, including reasons. Board to decide whether to accept.</i>		Clerk	<i>Note: Standard Item every meeting - check criteria for acceptance</i>
⚠	Declarations of interest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors/trustees should declare potential conflicts – financial or otherwise – in any agenda items discussed at the meeting 		Chair / all	<i>Note: Standard Item every meeting - interests, including those of related parties (eg family members, employers) specific to items on that agenda.</i>
⚠ / ?	Board organisational matters : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make any appointments to committee membership if needed • Appoint link Governors/trustee roles if needed • Date of future meetings • Governor visits schedule • To agree what, if any, items should be declared confidential and recorded under 'confidential 	3, 4	Chair/ Clerk	<i>Some matters may need to be confidential under GDPR requirements. However, confidentiality should always be carefully considered and a part 2 minutes will usually not</i>

	items' and recorded under 'confidential items' in Part 2 minutes.			<i>be needed with appropriate minuting.</i>
	Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm whether minutes are true and accurate record of previous meeting(s) • Address any matters arising from the minutes • Review and update the Action Log • Report any Chair's Actions 	4	Chair	<i>Note: Standard Item every meeting. Governors to ensure signature of minutes and documents agreed at all previous meetings are up to date and to assure themselves that the Board and school are compliant. Papers: Recent Minutes, Action Log</i>
 / 	Feedback from the <<insert name>> Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of most recent meeting for noting • Any item to be referred to FGB • Any policies under the remit of the committee 	4.	Chair of Committee	<i>Note: Name and number of committees specific to school, e.g Finance and Resources, Pupils and Curriculum Papers: past Minutes, policies recommended by the committee for approval</i>
	Financial Monitoring and Planning Budget Review and Approval: Year-End Position and Next Year's Budget Plan	3.	Chair of Fin Cttee / SBM	<i>Papers: Draft Budget Plan 2026/27 Clear budget assumptions Multi-year financial projections Risk analysis</i>
	Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School Improvement Plan / School Development Plan - review progress against objectives and expenditure - Review latest SIP Report - Considering the strategic use of AI - risks and benefits 	4	All	<i>Papers: SIP, SDP, SIP Report, AI Policy</i>

	<p>Estate Management and Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on Planned Building Works: Review updates on scheduled or ongoing capital projects. Consider implications for school operations and finances, including any delays or cost variations. • Health & Safety Compliance: Examine recent inspection reports and risk assessments. Ensure any identified issues are being addressed promptly and appropriately. • Impact on Financial Planning: • Assess how estate-related developments (e.g. emergency repairs, deferred maintenance, or changes in project scope) may affect the school's budget and future financial forecasts. • Governor visits • Link Governor reports • Policies to review and approve 	3	<p>EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal</p> <p>EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal / SBM</p>	<p><i>Note: Standard Item every meeting - topics under it will vary</i></p> <p><i>Papers: Headteacher's Report</i></p>
	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil Performance and Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil Progress - KS4 Mocks indications (secondary) - Year 6 SATs readiness (primary) - Pupil roll - Pupil Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour Report - Suspensions / Exclusions - Directions off site, Alternative Placements, Managed Moves - Pupil Well-being - review data and update on actions / training - Targets for 2025/26 - School trips and visits - Careers Provision (Secondary ONLY) Compliance and progress against the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks. - Governor visits - Policies (not presented via committees) to review and approve 	2, 4	<p>EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal / SBM/ Link Governor</p>	<p><i>Note: Monitoring progress on the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Reviewing attendance data, especially any identified priority groups. Understanding plans for 2026 tests or exams.</i></p> <p><i>Papers: Headteacher's Report, SIP Monitoring Data, Attendance Report.</i></p>
	<p>Statutory Compliance and Admissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admission Arrangements - Website Statutory Information and GIAS details statutory compliance assurance - Governor visits - Link Governor reports - Policies to review and approve 	3, 5	<p>EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal/ Clerk / Admissions Link Governor</p>	<p><i>Note: Determining admission arrangements for entry in September 2027(for VA/Foundation schools - deadline 28 Feb 2026). Reviewing arrangements</i></p>

				<p>for publishing the appeals timetable. Check website statutory information and Governor Details on GIAS</p> <p>Papers: Draft Admission Arrangements 2027 (if applicable).</p>
	<p>Staffing and Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree staffing establishment for 2026-27 • Staff recruitment. • Outstanding disciplinary, grievance, sickness, or other staffing procedures. • Staff changes • Performance management/appraisal • Staff wellbeing - review of survey results and assurance on engaging with the DfE's Mental Health Lead Training. • Implications of the Employment Rights Act - to be implemented over the next two years • Governor visits • Link Governor reports • Policies to review and approve 	3	EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal/ HR Lead / Wellbeing Link Governor	<p>Note: Discussing staff wellbeing and mental health (for staff and pupils). Reviewing recruitment processes ahead of key notice deadlines (e.g., 31 Jan for Headteachers). If applicable, reviewing and preparing to publish gender pay gap information (deadline 30 March 2026).</p> <p>Papers: Wellbeing Report/Survey Feedback, Recruitment Policy/Update, Gender Pay Gap Report (if applicable).</p>
	<p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update • Review 2025 LA Safeguarding Audit, and action plan, tracking progress on recommendations • Governor visits • Link Governor reports • Policies to review and approve • New DfE guidance on the use of restrictive interventions in schools, including use of reasonable force, from April 2026 	1, 5.	EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal / Safeguarding Lead/ Link Governor	<p>Papers: Headteacher's Report / Safeguarding Report</p> <p>Recommended wording: "A standing item for any updates (eg from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Link Governor).</p> <p>This is also an opportunity to</p>

				<i>raise broad safeguarding concerns. However, Governors are reminded that serious or individual safeguarding concerns must always be raised immediately through the usual channels (ie contacting the DSL)."</i>
	<p>SEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School update and questions. • Check Compliance / SENCO qualifications, training, support • Governor visits • Link Governor reports • Policies to review and approve 	1, 5.	EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal/ SENDCo / Link Governor	
	<p>Risk Management, Cybersecurity, AI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital strategy: risks and opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ AI: contact, content, academic integrity; human oversight • Quality and impact: educational outcomes monitoring, values for money assessment, staff workload/training, equity of access • Compliance oversight. Review and Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Risk Assessment Matrix ◦ Data Protection Impact Assessment Register and Breaches log ◦ FOI, SARs log ◦ Assurance on the Cyber Security framework / fitness for purpose ◦ Digital and Technology Standards Self-assessment / monitor recommendations progress • Policies to review and approve e.g. AI acceptable use • Governor visits • Link Governor reports 	3, 4	EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal/ DPO	Governing Bodies have ultimate responsibility for Data Protection Compliance (UK-GDPR, DPA 2018, FOIA 2000, DUAA 2025, PECR 2003), Equality and KCSIE compliance,
	<p>Stakeholder engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteacher/ CEO / relevant link Governors to present information on engagement/communication with parents/carers and the wider community • Annual Complaints Report : Trends / Lessons 	4, 5.	All	<i>Note: Can be standard Item every meeting but with key times in year more to report eg after surveys</i>

	<p>Learned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Stakeholder Engagement Strategy / Effectiveness 			<p><i>Papers:</i></p> <p><i>Stakeholder engagement data, e.g. parent survey</i></p>
✓	<p>Governor Visit Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name - Link Governor role / area reviewed - date of visit 	4	All	<p>Governors to present their written reports on recent visits to the school made in their Link Governor role or otherwise. Governors may speak verbally about visits made very recently or that are planned.</p>
✓	<p>Governance Review and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link Governor Reports Governor / Trustee Self-evaluations Discuss training needs in line with school priorities Report on any training undertaken and training needs still to be addressed Induction arrangements for new Governors 	3, 4.	Clerk / Chair	<p><i>Note: Familiarisation with the 2025 OFSTED inspection framework (to ensure Governors are 'OFSTED-ready'). Confirming Governor training arrangements (e.g., safeguarding, finance basics).</i></p> <p><i>Papers: Governor Training Log, OFSTED Framework Summary.</i></p>
?	<p>Educational / governance updates</p> <p><i>Local</i></p> <p>Hackney Area Based Partnership Update: Effective collaboration with the Hackney family of schools and key partners</p> <p>Focus for 2025-26 on the direction from LB Hackney to consider the development of effective area-based partnerships.</p>	1, 5.	Clerk / Chair/ EHT/ HT/ CEO/ Principal	<p><i>Note: Can be a standard Item every meeting - topics under it will vary. HGS will recommend some but HT can add.</i></p> <p><i>Please circulate</i></p>

	<p><i>National</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Paper implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SEND Reform ○ Parent/Carer engagement • New Curriculum from September 2028 • Child Poverty Strategy 			<p><i>our Hackney to the Board for more details</i></p> <p>Note Governor Conference on 24 June 2026</p>
✓	Governance Effectiveness Annual Review	3		
✓	Any Other Urgent Business		All	<i>Standard Item every meeting</i>
✓	<p>Closure of meeting <i>Closing prayer for faith schools</i></p>		Chair	<p><i>Standard Item every meeting</i> An opportunity to take a few moments to reflect on the strategic achievements of the meeting.</p>

The following Model Agenda (Part IV) serves as a practical demonstration of how to structure and prioritize a selection of these items—applying the Best Practice Tips from Part II—into a time-boxed meeting, ensuring the board’s limited time is focused effectively on strategic challenge and critical oversight. You should use the Framework as your source list and tailor the Model Agenda template to your specific school’s needs and practice.

PART IV: Full Governing Board Model Agenda Summer 2026 (2 hours)

Date/Time: <<insert details>>
Venue: This meeting will be held virtually / in school / in a hybrid format . Please follow these instructions on joining: <<insert details>>
Members: Name / Initials / Category / Role / Term of Office Dates / Attendance
Additional Attendees: E.g., Clerk, SBM, DHT, any guest presenters
<i>The quorum for this meeting is <<insert details>></i>

Notice on Attendance: *If you are unable to attend, please send your apologies to the Chair and Clerk as soon as possible. Governors are reminded that in case of absence, they may still be able to participate in the meeting by submitting questions in relation to any agenda item to the Chair, Headteacher, or the Clerk.*

Hackney Education Priorities 2026 - 2029:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion
- Additional and Alternative Learning Provision
- Strength and sustainability
- Sustainable school improvement
- Equity for children and families

School vision, mission, and priorities: <<insert details>>

PART 1: Non-Confidential Items

Item	Topic	Type / Lead	Time (minutes)
0-3	Meeting Opening Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introductions • Apologies • Declarations of interest 	Procedural	10 mins

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board organisational matters 		
4	Minutes & Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve previous minutes • Review action log • Chair's actions 	Decision	5 mins

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ITEMS (when focus is highest)

Item	Topic	Type / Lead	Minutes
6	BUDGET APPROVAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-end position • 2026/27 budget plan • Multi-year projections 	DECISION	25 mins
7	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against objectives • Latest SIP report • Strategic use of AI 	Discussion & Challenge	20 mins
9	HEADTEACHER'S REPORT (Strategic elements) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil performance & progress • KS4 mocks/Year 6 SATs readiness • Pupil roll projections • Targets for 2025/26 	Discussion & Challenge	15 mins

COMPLIANCE & SAFEGUARDING (critical oversight)

Time	Item	Topic	Type/ Lead	Minutes
19:15-19:25	12	SAFEGUARDING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSL update • LA Safeguarding Audit action plan • Mossbourne review response • New restrictive interventions guidance 	Discussion & Assurance	10 mins
19:25-19:35	11	STAFFING & WELLBEING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026-27 staffing establishment • Staff wellbeing survey results • Employment Rights Act implications 	DECISION & Discussion	10 mins

SHORT BREAK (optional but recommended)

| 19:35-19:40 | - | Comfort break | - | 5 mins |

MONITORING & OVERSIGHT

Item	Topic	Type / Lead	Minutes
8	ESTATE MANAGEMENT & H&S <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building works progress • H&S compliance • Financial implications • Link Governor reports 	Information & Challenge	10 mins

13	SEND • Update from SENDCo • Compliance check • Link Governor report	Information	7 mins
14	RISK MANAGEMENT & CYBERSECURITY • Digital strategy update • AI acceptable use policy • Risk register review	Information & DECISION	5 mins

CONSENT AGENDA (*items approved without discussion unless flagged*)

Item	Topic	Type/ Lead	Minutes
5, 10, 15	CONSENT ITEMS • Committee minutes (note only) • Statutory compliance confirmation • Stakeholder engagement report • Policies recommended by committees	DECISION (if no questions)	3 mins

GOVERNANCE & CLOSING

Item	Topic	Type / Lead	Minutes
16-17	GOVERNOR EFFECTIVENESS • Key visit reports (brief highlights) • Training update	Information	5 mins

18	EXTERNAL UPDATES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hackney Area Based Partnership • White Paper implications • Curriculum changes 	Information	5 mins
19-20	AOB & MEETING REVIEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any urgent business (Clerk and Chair to be notified in advance) • Reflection on meeting effectiveness 	Closing	3 mins

PART 2: Confidential Items

If any.