

Questions for governors/trustees to ask about SEND

As a school governor or trustee it is important to have an understanding of how well all pupils benefit from the education provided in the school. For children and young people with SEND then, it is the responsibility of everyone on the governing board to understand enough to be able to offer the executive leadership constructive challenge and to be assured that these potentially vulnerable learners are achieving, attaining and progressing well.

Where there is a link governor or trustee with specific responsibility for liaising with the SENCO about SEND, the following resource is designed to offer ideas for discussion. These suggested questions can help as a starting point, particularly for a new governor or trustee, to get to know more about the policy, procedures, practice and outcomes for pupils in the school with SEND. They can also help to inform the governing body whether their legal responsibilities in this area are being fulfilled.

Questions for governors/trustees to ask about SEND

Question(s)	Points for action
<p>Who is the SENCO? Is the SENCO a qualified teacher employed at the school? Do they hold the National Award for SEN Co-ordination or are they working towards it? Are they part of the senior leadership team? If not, why not? Does the SENCO get sufficient time to manage all their duties?</p>	
<p>How inclusive is the school? How do you know? Is there SEN policy, either stand-alone or threaded clearly through all other policies, or both? How well does policy reflect and meet the needs of pupils? Is the Equality Act 2010 being followed in the school?</p> <p>How well are reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils being made? Are reasonable adjustments considered throughout all appropriate policies, including any for behaviour? Is there an up to date accessibility plan for the school? How are pupils with SEND enabled to attend all school extra-curricular activities and how are they ensured access to the same opportunities as pupils without SEND?</p> <p>What are the attendance rates like for pupils with SEND? What action is taken where this is of concern? How effective is this action?</p> <p>What are the exclusion rates for pupils with and without SEN? If there is a difference between the two groups, why is this? What action is being taken to address any concerns? How effective is this action?</p> <p>What transition arrangements are in place for pupils with SEN? How effective are these arrangements? How do you know?</p>	
<p>What is the quality of teaching like for pupils with SEN across the school? Does it meet the needs of all pupils with SEN? How do you know?</p>	
<p>How is SEN identified in the school? How many pupils are on the SEN register? How are parents and pupils involved in the identification process? How does the number of pupils identified compare to the national data? How do the numbers of pupils identified according to their primary needs categories compare to national data?</p>	

<p>What funding does the school receive for SEN? How is this spent? What impact is it having? Does this represent good value for money? Where pupils have SEN and are in receipt of the pupil premium, how is this money spent? How effectively are both streams of funding ensuring that pupils make good progress?</p>	
<p>What progress are pupils with SEN making in the school? How do you know? Is progress accelerated so that attainment gaps are closing between pupils with SEN and those without? How effective are any interventions? Are they delivering value for money? Where there is a lack of progress for pupils with SEN, what action is taken? Who is responsible for monitoring the progress of pupils with SEN?</p>	
<p>What use is made of external agencies for supporting the school's work with pupils with SEND? What impact does their input have?</p>	
<p>What training have staff had on SEND? What impact has this had? How does the cycle of staff CPD plan for equipping all staff to better meet the needs of all pupils? How is the universal classroom provision being improved across the school?</p> <p>Is SEN an integral part of the school's performance management process for staff?</p>	
<p>Is the school's SEN Information Report on the school's website? How well does the SEN Information Report represent the vision, practice and provision for pupils with SEN in the school? Are all staff familiar with the contents of the report? How accessible (eg. in terms of location, language and structure) is the report for parents, carers and pupils? Have parents been involved in the production and review of the report?</p>	
<p>How does the school use person-centred practice? What do parents think about the school's provision for their children with SEND?</p> <p>What do pupils think of their own educational experience? How are the views of children and young people with SEND and their parents used? How are children and young people involved in the decisions about their own provision? How are parents involved in the decision-making about the provision for their child?</p>	
<p>What support do you need from the Governing Body to help pupils with SEND make better progress?</p>	