

# Questions Ofsted might ask governors

Prepare for an inspection with suggestions for what an inspector might ask you. Also see ideas about what evidence you can provide to support your answers.

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## How to use these questions

- The questions cover:
  - Your understanding of your role and school
  - Quality of education/curriculum
  - Use of funding
  - Safeguarding
  - Personal development, behaviour and attitudes
- We can't tell you what to say or what an inspector will be looking for, as that will depend on your school's context. However, for some questions, we've included pointers on which documents and/or evidence you could use as practical examples to back up your answers
- Try to link your answer and your evidence back to the specific criteria in the inspection framework
- This isn't an exhaustive list, but it includes the most common or likely questions you'll be asked. You could be asked about almost any aspect of your school's provision
- Inspectors could phrase questions in different ways, so try to understand the point of the question rather than preparing for specific wording
- **Tip:** delegate these questions to the relevant governors, then combine your answers into a master document covering all the questions

## Your understanding of your role and school

QUESTIONS	EVIDENCE YOU CAN USE	YOUR NOTES
<p>What is the governing board's vision for the school and how is this shared?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vision statement, values and aims</li> <li>● School development/improvement plan</li> <li>● School policies, and evidence of how these are linked to the school's vision</li> <li>● Feedback from staff, parents and pupils</li> <li>● Evidence of consultation around development / redevelopment of the school's vision</li> </ul>	
<p>What are your school's priorities? How do you, as a governing board, ensure the priorities are moved forward?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School development/improvement plan (SIP)</li> <li>● Self-evaluation forms (SEFs)</li> <li>● Monitoring schedules</li> <li>● Records of school visits</li> <li>● Minutes from governing board meetings</li> </ul>	
<p>How do you hold the headteacher to account?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minutes from governing board meetings</li> </ul>	
<p>Tell me about your safeguarding training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training logs/records</li> </ul>	

Do you have any gaps on your governing board?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrument of government (if you're a maintained school)</li> <li>• Article of association (if you're an academy)</li> <li>• Governor recruitment plans</li> </ul>	
How do you meet the Equality Act 2010?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality policy (if you have one)</li> <li>• Evidence of equality impact assessments (if you've done these)</li> </ul>	
<p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the school?</p> <p>What issues does the school face?</p> <p>How do you know?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes from governing board/committee meetings</li> <li>• SEFs</li> <li>• Records from work with school improvement partners or collaboration with other schools</li> <li>• Evidence related to leadership structures and responsibilities</li> <li>• National performance data (such as SATs results or GCSE results)</li> <li>• Internal assessment data</li> </ul>	

## Quality of education/curriculum

QUESTIONS	EVIDENCE YOU CAN USE	YOUR NOTES
<p>What do you want for your pupils by the time they leave the school?</p> <p>What do you want the pupils to be?</p>		

How do you monitor the curriculum?		
<p><b>For link governors</b></p> <p>What is your link subject?</p> <p>How are you linked to the subject leader?</p>		
How do you know the needs of disadvantaged pupils are being met?		
How were governors involved in planning the curriculum?		
How well do your pupils achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trends in pupil progress and attainment over time</li> <li>● How your school's data compares to national averages</li> </ul> <p><b>You don't need to be able to list data or progress figures for specific groups of pupils, or for specific subjects.</b></p>	

## Use of funding

QUESTIONS	EVIDENCE YOU CAN USE	YOUR NOTES
<p>How are you kept up-to-date with school spending?</p> <p>Are you aware of how the school's finances are being managed, or how staff are recruited?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reports from the headteacher/school business manager (SBM) to the board or the relevant committee</li> <li>● Minutes from the finance/personnel/other relevant committee</li> <li>● Minutes from full governing board meetings</li> <li>● Safer recruitment policy and procedures</li> <li>● Evidence related to budget benchmarking</li> <li>● Financial reports</li> </ul>	
<p>How is the pupil premium funding being spent?</p> <p>What impact is this spending having?</p> <p>How do you know?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pupil premium spending and impact reports</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> <li>● National attainment data</li> <li>● Internal assessment data</li> </ul>	
<p>How was the coronavirus catch-up premium spent? How is any carried-forward premium being spent?</p> <p>What impact is this spending having?</p> <p>How do you know?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coronavirus catch-up premium spending and impact reports</li> </ul>	

<p><b>For primary schools only</b></p> <p>How is the additional funding for PE and sport being spent?</p> <p>How effective is this?</p> <p>What impact is this funding having on pupils' fitness and health? How do you know?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PE and sport premium spending and impact reports</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> <li>● Internal assessment/tracking information</li> <li>● Feedback from parents, pupils and staff</li> </ul>	
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## Safeguarding

QUESTIONS	EVIDENCE YOU CAN USE	YOUR NOTES
<p>How do you make sure that policies are kept up to date?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence that your policy complies with the requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021</li> <li>● Evidence of governor training on safeguarding</li> <li>● Evidence of any information or advice the school has taken (from your local authority (LA) or others) on safeguarding issues</li> <li>● Evidence that your policy is reviewed regularly</li> </ul>	
<p>How do you make sure that policies are put into practice?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Notes from governors' meetings with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)</li> <li>● Evidence from governor monitoring visits</li> <li>● Reports from the headteacher/senior leadership team (SLT)</li> </ul>	

<p>How do you make sure welfare requirements are met?</p>		
<p>How is safeguarding training monitored? Have you made sure that all staff have read KCSIE?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CPD records/training logs</li> <li>● Record sheets</li> <li>● Governor training logs</li> <li>● Reports to governors on safeguarding</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> </ul>	
<p>How effectively have possible risks to pupil safety, such as female genital mutilation (FGM), radicalisation and sexual exploitation, been addressed in training, policies and procedures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Governor and staff training logs</li> <li>● Reports from the headteacher or DSL</li> <li>● Audit forms</li> <li>● Behaviour and safeguarding records</li> </ul>	
<p>How do you make sure safer recruitment practices are followed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Single central record</li> <li>● Evidence of monitoring of the single central record by governors</li> <li>● Policies on recruitment and vetting, and evidence that these are followed consistently</li> <li>● Record of which governors have had safer recruitment training</li> </ul>	
<p>How does the school manage safeguarding for pupils off-site, such as those on work experience placements or on residential visits?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health and safety policies and procedures</li> <li>● Risk assessments</li> </ul>	

<p>How safe do children feel? How do you know?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feedback from pupils and parents</li> <li>● Behaviour and safeguarding incident reports/records</li> <li>● Evidence from governor monitoring visits or learning walks</li> </ul>	
<p><b>For secondary schools only</b> How is health and safety monitored in workplaces where pupils undertake work experience?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health and safety policies and procedures</li> <li>● Risk assessments</li> </ul>	
<p><b>For special schools only</b> Does the school keep a record of its use of restraint with pupils? How does the governing board monitor this record?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relevant records/logs</li> <li>● Risk assessments</li> <li>● Health and safety policies</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> </ul>	
<p>Are you aware of Ofsted's report on sexual abuse in schools and colleges? How has the school responded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sexual harassment and sexual violence within the relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum</li> <li>● Record-keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence incidents</li> <li>● Governor and staff training logs</li> </ul>	



## Personal development, behaviour and attitudes

QUESTIONS	EVIDENCE YOU CAN USE	YOUR NOTES
How does your school ensure consistent behaviour management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behaviour policy and procedures, and evidence that it's applied consistently</li> <li>● Headteacher's reports on behaviour incidents</li> <li>● Evidence from monitoring visits or learning walks</li> </ul>	
How do you monitor attendance and persistent absence figures? How effective have efforts to address persistent absence been?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attendance policy and procedures</li> <li>● Headteacher's reports</li> <li>● Evidence on leadership/responsibility for this issue</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> </ul>	
How do you monitor your school's effectiveness in ensuring that pupils don't bully or harass others on the basis of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Behaviour or anti-bullying policy</li> <li>● School-wide events or initiatives (and governor involvement with these)</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from link governors</li> <li>● Evidence from monitoring visits or learning walks</li> </ul>	
What are the current exclusion rates for your school? How do you monitor these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Headteacher's reports</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> </ul>	
How is the school promoting pupils' appreciation and understanding of difference and diversity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relevant policies (e.g. equality, behaviour)</li> <li>● School-wide initiatives/priorities</li> <li>● Records from monitoring visits or learning walks</li> <li>● Curriculum information related to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, spiritual, moral,</li> </ul>	

	social and cultural (SMSC) development, or British values	
<p>How do you monitor how the school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain?</p> <p>What do you know about how well pupils have developed respect for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The values of democracy?</li> <li>● The rule of law?</li> <li>● Individual liberty?</li> <li>● Tolerance of those with different faiths or no faith?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence related to the school's curriculum (in particular PSHE and SMSC)</li> <li>● Evidence from assembly/collective worship plans</li> <li>● Feedback from parents, pupils and staff</li> <li>● Minutes from governors' meetings</li> <li>● Reports from the headteacher or senior leaders</li> <li>● Reports by link governors</li> <li>● Evidence from monitoring visits or learning walks</li> <li>● Behaviour and safeguarding records</li> </ul>	
<p>How do you manage the wellbeing of the headteacher and staff?</p> <p>Can you give an example?</p>		

## Sources

Gulshan Kayembe is an independent consultant who has experience of inspecting schools. As a consultant, she provides mentoring for senior leaders and has worked as an external adviser on headteachers' performance management.

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