



## Thought Leadership – Headteachers' Standards



## Headteachers' Standards – What governors ought to know

In October 2020 the Department for Education (DfE) published the latest iteration of the [Headteachers' Standards](#). Professional standards apply in most if not all professions and school headship is no exception. Unlike the [Teachers' Standards](#) which are underpinned by [Statutory Regulation](#), these standards are non-statutory but set-out the “high expectations” of headteachers held by parents, communities and the wider public. The Standards act as guidance “to be interpreted in the context of each individual headteacher and their school”. So, whilst they are designed to be relevant to all headteachers, the sections of the Standards will have variable application and impact depending upon the heads experience and the nature of the school or academy they lead.

### So, what is the relevance for governors?

The Standards can be used in a variety of ways that are relevant to school governance. For example, they can be used in a heads performance/appraisal to shape a headteachers practice and professional development both within and beyond the school; the Standards can inform governors in the recruitment and appointment of a headteacher by setting a framework for a job description and/or a person specification and they can underpin governors approaches to the training of school leaders and aspiring headteachers.

### The Standards?

The standards are divided into two sections. The first deals with ethics and professional conduct as summarised in the [Nolan Principles of public life](#) which are equally applicable to governors.

The second section deals with ten areas of professional expectation including:

1. School culture
2. Teaching quality
3. Curriculum and assessment
4. Behaviour (of pupils)
5. SEND
6. Professional Development (of self and staff)
7. Organisational management (including safeguarding duties; financial and risk management).
8. Continuous school improvement (working with governors to set improvement strategies leading to sustained school improvement)
9. Working in partnership (both within school and with outside agencies) including parents, pupils and staff.
10. Governance and Accountability (upholding effective governance and regulatory compliance).

In order to undertake their role in headteacher recruitment and ongoing performance management it is recommended that those governors involved in these processes

familiarise themselves with the detail of the Headteachers' Standards to ensure optimal successful recruitment of school leaders and governors' ongoing role in professional development of Headteachers' resulting in better leadership and management for the school and better governance too.

## A note on Teachers' Standards in governance

Like most other professions, members of the teaching profession are subject to a set of standards addressing the expectations in professional practice and conduct of teachers. The current standards were introduced by the DoE in 2012 and apply to trainee teachers and qualified teachers in England (the devolved administrations have their own sets of standards). The Standards are underpinned by the [Education \(School Teachers Appraisal\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) and apply to teachers at every level (including headteachers) in Maintained schools. Teachers in Academies and Free schools are not required to apply the Regulations but Trustees may opt to incorporate the Teaching Standards in their contracts of employment for their teachers.

While the application of the Standards is primarily the responsibility of the school leadership team, a knowledge of the Standards (and the Regulations) are relevant for those governors who are or might be involved in stage appeals against capability, misconduct or pay progression.

## So what are the Teachers Standards?

In a nutshell the standards are in two parts and require teachers to:

### Part One

- 1.1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
- 1.2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
- 1.3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- 1.4 Plan and teach well-structured lessons
- 1.5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- 1.6 Make accurate and productive use of (pupil) assessment
- 1.7 Manage (pupil) behaviour effectively - ensuring a good and safe learning environment
- 1.8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities including:
  - Positive contribution to the ethos of the school
  - Developing and maintaining effective professional relationships

- Taking responsibility - through professional development - to improve teaching practice and respond to advice and feedback from colleagues
- Communicate effectively with parents especially about pupil achievement and wellbeing

## **Part Two**

2.1 Demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct including adherence to statutory frameworks, policies and procedures in school.

To gain a full insight you need to read the [Teachers' Standards Guidance for School Leaders, school staff and governing bodies July 2011 June 2013.](#)