

RISE

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION ON STATE EDUCATION

Seminar
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School Governance – what we know now and what will the future hold?

Report by David Gordon

Why the seminar?

In organising this seminar RISE trustees recognised that we are at a time of change and tensions about the role of school governors. There is a focus on school governance.

From September 2013 Ofsted inspectors have been required to evaluate the extent to which governors both “challenge and support the school and hold senior staff, including the headteacher, to account for the achievement of the pupils”. Ofsted Subsidiary Guidance has a long list of aspects of governors’ work which inspectors must evaluate. The Parliamentary Select Committee has investigated governance and made recommendations to which the Government has responded. New regulations on the composition of governing bodies and their role are in force.

Against this backdrop, participants at the seminar examined the changing role of school governors and put forward their views of what the future might hold.

Professor Chris James, Bath University

Opening the seminar, Chris James described it as a “timely and important meeting”. Addressing the first theme of what we know now about school governance, he went on: “This is serious business. It’s a lot like the overall conduct of education in this country. We’re facing particular challenges – some longstanding, some intensifying and immediate.”

He said that the current reforms will have long-term consequences, adding that: “It is at governing body level that the challenges being brought about by the reforms of the past three years are being experienced.”

He set out four pressures that he believed were creating the challenges facing governing bodies – challenges which he said were current, immediate and acting together:

1 The low profile of school governing:

“Despite giving a lot, they’re still not known about,” he said. He went on to say that his research suggested that the responsibility of governing is not widely acknowledged, the role of the governing body is not well understood and that the contribution of governing bodies is not widely recognised.

This low profile creates implications and challenges for governor recruitment and quality as well as policies on school governing.

2 The changing environment of school governing:

Despite the enhanced autonomy and increased isolation of schools, there is a “soft pressure” that is actually bringing schools together as they respond to the changing role of the local authority and the pressure to collaborate with other schools.

Sudden changes in “market conditions” can also affect

schools. For example, a stable market can be seriously disrupted by the opening of a free school. “The changes have to be dealt with now and they’re all coming at once,” he said.

3 Strengthened accountability:

The accountability burden has increased with stiffened requirements, raised stakes and increased expectations.

4 The already challenging nature of school governing:

There is still confusion over the role and responsibility of school governors, which have had many different definitions over the past 10 years. There is a continuing debate over the merits of small or large governing bodies. The appointment of the headteacher continues to be a challenging task and, with the weight of responsibility involved in being a governor, “the commitment required is massive”.

“Many of us have some serious anxieties about where all these changes are leading,” he concluded. But the answer to his own question of whether school governing will be sufficiently robust to cope with these challenges was, “My general sense is yes, but . . .”

Core values

A range of concerns emerged from discussions in nine small groups and raised a series of questions that were put to Chris James. One of these asked: “In a state of constant change, what are the core values that governors should hold onto?” Taking this along with a question on how governors can defend a broad and balanced curriculum in their schools, he said: “What kind of school do you want the school to become? You can’t scrutinise what the school is doing without having

Speakers' biographies

Fiona Carnie

is an educationalist with an interest in how schools can become more democratic in order to meet the needs of their key stakeholders. She has been involved in supporting schools in introducing parent engagement strategies and developing student voice.

Up until August she was Director of Partnerships at the RSA Academy in Tipton in the West Midlands. Prior to taking up this position she was a Visiting Research Associate at the Institute of Education, University of London where she was involved in projects on innovative school leadership and on student voice. From 1991-2002 Fiona was National Coordinator of the charity Human Scale Education and she is currently Vice President of the European Forum for Freedom in Education (based in Germany).

Publications include *The Parent Participation Handbook* (Optimus, 2011), *Pathways to Child friendly Schools: A Guide for Parents* (Human Scale Education, 2004) and *Alternative Approaches to Education* (Routledge Falmer, 2002).

Christine Gilbert

was chief inspector at Ofsted from 2006 until 2011. Prior to this, she was chief executive and director of education in Tower Hamlets. Christine spent 18 years in schools, eight of them as a secondary school headteacher.

Currently, Christine is visiting professor at the Institute of Education and interim chief executive in Brent. She is also involved in a number of local and national educational projects.

Chris James

is the Professor of Educational Leadership and Management in the Department of Education at the University of Bath. He researches the leadership and management in schools and colleges, the affective aspects of educational organisations, collaborative working in schools and school governing and governance.

Chris has worked with a range of public, private and not-for-profit organisations including numerous local authorities and schools. He has directed a large number of educational research projects and published over 200 items including six books. In the past six years, Chris has completed five research projects on school governing in England. Chris is the vice-chair of the governing body of Ralph Allen School in Bath, which his four children attended.

Emma Knights

took up the role of Chief Executive of the National Governors' Association in January 2010. The NGA is the representative organisation for school governors from both maintained schools and academies in England, seeking to influence policy at national level and providing independent information and support to governing bodies in order to improve standards.

Before joining the NGA, Emma was joint Chief Executive of the Daycare Trust, a policy and information charity working on early education and childcare for school-age children. Emma has had a number of roles in the third sector, particularly in the advice sector, including at Child Poverty Action Group and Citizens' Advice.

She has also previously worked for the Legal Services Commission and the Local Government Association, leading projects on performance management, child poverty and

educational attainment.

She has written on topics from child support to the costs of early education. Emma is vice-chair of governors at her children's secondary school in Warwickshire.

Brian Lightman

became General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders on 1st September 2010. Brian was Headteacher of St Cyres School – a large, mixed 11-18 comprehensive in Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan, from 1999-2010.

He taught Modern Foreign Languages for 16 years in three comprehensive schools in the South East of England before becoming Headteacher of Llantwit Major School in 1995. He was President of ASCL in 2008-9.

With his extensive experience as a teacher, school leader, external examiner, Estyn inspector and representative of school and college leaders, Brian is an acknowledged and high-profile authority on the English and Welsh education systems.

Siobhain McDonagh MP

was the Labour candidate for Mitcham and Morden in the 1987 and 1992 general elections, before eventually winning in 1997.

As a local MP, she has led a variety of campaigns, including ones to open a new train station at Mitcham Eastfields, to improve exam results by replacing three struggling schools with brand new Academies, to introduce new community "Safer Neighbourhood" police teams, and to tackle graffiti, abandoned cars, vandalism and other anti-social behaviour. Siobhain is a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education.

Bridget Sinclair

has been involved in school governance for 18 years. With a background in clinical biochemistry, research and education, she has taught in secondary and in further education.

Bridget currently works as manager of Swindon Local Authority's Governor Services, leading on governor training and development. She is chair of National Co-ordinators of Governor Services (NCOGS), which represents eight regional networks of governor services across 152 local authorities in England. Its membership includes co-opted members from the Church of England National Society and Catholic Education Service. A number of independent providers for governors and diocesan education services are also included in regional groups.

David Wolfe

works as a barrister, specialising in public law, particularly education law. For four years he was also an SEN Tribunal Judge. He is the author of the *acanofworms* blog which provides information for people concerned about academies/free schools and the law. He has acted in most of the legal challenges involving academies including, recently, the forced conversion of Downhills Primary School in Haringey.

David has been a school governor for over 20 years. He is currently a governor at a school in Suffolk (which his daughters attend) under threat from a free school which opened this term.

a clear sense in the governing body of what kind of school you want to become.” This meant it was important that governors should be asking “What kind of core values should underpin our decisions?”

On the subject of whether there should be greater clarification of the role of governors in law, he said he felt that attempts to clarify roles had “slipped into a classic error of talking about what people should do rather than what the task is”. He added: “The task is to be collectively responsible for the conduct of the school.”

He said that being a governor is something that touches people. “There’s something within people that gets awakened. It’s about making a contribution to the community. I’m just astonished at how people stick at the task and how much they sacrifice to do it. We incentivise them by telling them they’re doing good work.”

Fragmentation

A proposal was made that, in order to diminish the adverse effect of the current fragmentation of the system, it would be better for all schools to have the equivalent of voluntary aided status. Chris James said he favoured freedom for all schools. He added: “I think there’s something about the climate that’s been created around academisation that should be available to all schools.”

Addressing the issue of fragmentation, he said: “I think there’s a danger that the current fragmentation will impact eventually on the quality of governance. Having no common idea of what a governing body is will make reconstitution difficult. If you’ve got diversity in a system, the roles and responsibility will vary.”

On the subject of attracting governors, he said governing bodies should keep looking for good people: “Good governing bodies need to be continually looking for good governors.” He said he was a strong believer in stakeholder governance but that he favoured a mix of elected and appointed members for the best balance of continuity and democracy.

Siobhain McDonagh MP, Education Select Committee

Siobhain McDonagh, the Labour MP for Mitcham and Morden, gave her perspective on governance as a member of the Commons Select Committee on Education, which recently reported on the role of school governing bodies.

She said that when she was elected in 1997 expectations in Mitcham schools were very low. She had taken an interest in school governing as something that could improve the life chances of young people living in her area. Under the previous Labour government, schools had been rebuilt, GCSE results had improved and expectations had improved. But, she said: “I’m very concerned that the present government seems to be more concerned about the best schools in the most affluent areas.”

She said her starting point on governance was the need to focus on strategies at schools that needed the most. In her experience it was possible to have bad governors at a good school so it was important to focus on weaker schools where bad governance can have a much more significant effect.

She gave an example of a primary school where, “all the governors seemed either to lack the ability to bring the school to account or had a vested interest in not changing anything. As a result they took at face value the head’s perceptions that results were poor because of the school’s circumstances.”

She said it was a false dichotomy that you had to choose between having governors from the local area or with a high skill set. It was important for governors to know what questions to ask. The onus was to ensure that more is done to recruit from within the community. “There is an argument that there may be too many lawyers and accountants rather than too few,” she added. There were particular problems recruiting people from less affluent areas where there could be a perception that “being a school governor is just not for people like me”.

She said she was “only partially convinced” by the argu-

ment that people were put off being governors by denigration by politicians and constant government meddling. “Much of the problem of recruiting governors lies with schools,” she said. She stressed the importance of having effective clerks and giving governors the tools to do their job, but said she was not suggesting that governors should be paid.

She believed structures were a means to an end and said that what she wanted to see was “extending excellence rather than establishing and maintaining elites”. The thing that mattered most for governors was, “the kids come first”.

Mandatory training

In answer to a question on the need for mandatory training for governors, she said giving governors mandatory paid time off from work needed to be introduced before training could be made mandatory. On the subject of how much was known about what skills governors needed to have, she said that perhaps the most important skill was for governors not just to take and accept what they are told.

Responding to concerns that local authorities were now effectively shut out of schools but were still expected to be able to hold them to account, she said she regretted the decline of the involvement of LAs.

Fiona Carnie, Education consultant

The first speaker on the first of the two expert panels was Fiona Carnie. She said she was particularly concerned to address three of the questions that had just been raised: What kind of school do you want your school to become? Core values – what are they? and How do we make governance more democratic?

She focused on the role of governing bodies in encouraging parental involvement as well as what she called “the need for schools to initiate an ongoing inter-generational discussion”.

Although research continues to show that children perform better when parents are involved in their education, she believes most schools are not very good at engaging parents. “There is no real contact and parents are not consulted on policies that affect parents,” she said. She believes that the few minutes spent discussing children’s progress at parents’ evenings is not long enough for a meaningful dialogue.

She contrasted the British culture of “handing children over to school and parents getting on with their lives” with the culture of Scandinavian schools, where there was an expectation of parental involvement. She felt the way to address this deficiency was through parent councils so that parents could have a say in policy making. “There’s a big role for governors here, looking at how schools can set up parent councils so they can be genuinely consulted on issues that affect them,” she said. She pointed out that Scotland had replaced governing bodies with parent councils.

She added that it was not only parents who needed a voice. “Many disillusioned teachers feel they are not doing what they went into teaching to do, and many pupils feel they are not listened to or respected,” she said. She proposed that school leaders, teachers and governors should shadow children to see for themselves what their day was like. Schools could be strengthened by “setting up an antidote to the top-down culture that schools have become used to”.

She concluded: “I think the role of governors is massive in reaching out to all the key stakeholders in schools to really get their dialogue and participation going.”

Brian Lightman, ASCL General Secretary

Brian Lightman picked up on the idea of an “inter-generational ongoing conversation”, saying he really liked the phrase. He said it was “important to get the ethos we express as a governing body right”.

He added: “The governing body can play an enormously important part in establishing that ethos” and that it needed them to bring together the right elements of trust, support and challenge. He also said it was important for governors to be willing to take risks and try things out.

He said governors are working in a situation of great uncer-

tainty at the moment, dealing with enormous issues caused by the fragmentation of the system and changes to the National Curriculum. "We don't have a National Curriculum in secondary any more," he said, describing the new curriculum as vague and lacking in direction on what should be taught.

On the subject of governing body membership, he said he wanted people to have a stake and an interest in the school, but that he expected governing bodies to become more like company boards with an appointments committee inviting members according to their skills and what constituency they came from. "My experience has been that the electoral process is difficult because people come in with their own axe to grind," he said. He added: "We do not need accountants, we need people with the right skill sets and the ability to ask questions."

He warned that changes in the implementation of performance related pay were making human resources "an absolute car crash waiting to happen" and that governors "could face hundreds of grievances if they don't get their pay policies right".

He agreed that governors must have access to training and added that the relationship between the head and the chair of governors needs to be managed: "The head needs to be trained as well as the governing body so that they understand the importance of the relationship," he said.

Bridget Sinclair, NCOGS

Bridget Sinclair asked where support for governors would come from in the future. She explained the changes in the position of local authorities since 2010 and the diminishing of their role in the wake of the 2010 Academy Act. "Because of the declining influence of local authorities I think governing bodies feel very exposed," she said.

The Ofsted framework was now what holds governors firmly to account: "It's that big stick and it does have an impact," she said. She also felt that Ofsted's inspection of the CPD of governors meant that training was almost mandatory.

She described the "new middle tier" that is providing support for governors, pointing out especially the importance of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), with its involvement in the training and development of chairs and National Leaders of Governance. She said co-ordinators of governor services "are hanging on" with many now "fully traded and breaking even". LA services had shown "remarkable resilience" but a majority had lost expertise over the past three years.

Some LAs had cut too deep and were now seeking to build capacity to aid school improvement. There are now a large number of independent providers of governor services, but nevertheless, a survey in May 2013 showed that 88% of maintained schools (including academies) still subscribe to LA governor services.

She reported a steady and continuing rise in governor vacancies as a percentage of the total number of governors between 2007 and 2012. The total number of governors itself had dropped by 9.2% during the same five-year period, largely due to the amalgamation and federation of schools and academies, and the formation of multi-academy trusts. She said the recruitment and retention of high quality governors would be one of the continuing challenges for governing bodies.

Ending on a positive note, she said: "I am seeing a new generation of governors who are becoming much more authoritative, so there is some good stuff."

HR support

A question to the panel took up the concern about governing bodies receiving proper support on human resources issues. Brian Lightman said such support was "very, very variable". Some governing bodies still used LAs, which were very varied in quality, and were sometimes linked to corporate services rather than offering specific advice for schools. Some were using outside companies for their HR support and there was also a growth in legal firms offering HR services to schools.

A question put to the panel members described National

Leaders of Governance (NLGs) as "a core group of experienced governors currently not being deployed" and suggested that "the opportunity to use that expert group is currently not being taken up". Bridget Sinclair agreed that NLGs were an additional resource but said: "I think there's some confusion about the role of NLGs. I think it gets confused as to whether they are for hire generally." She added that governing bodies "should prioritise their own CPD and be prepared to spend money on what they need".

Christine Gilbert, former HMCI

Christine Gilbert opened the second panel presentation, saying, "I've always believed in the crucial importance of governors, but I believe the role of governors and governing bodies has never been as important as it is now."

She referred again to recent changes creating a fragmented system, although she said the Secretary of State would describe it as a diverse system. "The key thing – more than anything – that brings school governors together is a strong sense of moral purpose and a sense of social responsibility," she said. She added that it is important that the passion isn't knocked out of governors by what they have to do.

Speaking about the conclusions made in the report of the Academies Commission, which she chaired, she said that becoming an academy did not make any difference at all of itself.

(Unleashing Greatness: Getting the best from an academies system: <http://bit.ly/17VS8G9>).

She said "a forensic, core focus on teaching" was the most important role of the governor – are the things they're doing working? – what's working well? "How do you get that debate going in your school?" she asked. "I no longer believe that this is the job of professionals," she said, explaining that her position had changed over the years and that she now believed it was a crucial role for governors, along with talking to children and young people about what's going on in the school.

She talked about the need for fairness and accountability, saying that, "the problem with the system we have in this country is that the gulf between the haves and the have nots is still too huge".

She said governors needed to have confidence in their ability to question and that accountability was another important part of their role. "You are crucially responsible for making accountability in your school."

She added that governors should ask how they can make accountability a powerful force in their school. Results and Ofsted judgements are part of accountability but it is wider than that and governors are crucial to ensure that parents and the community are engaged.

Emma Knights, NGA Chief Executive

Emma Knights picked up the topic of accountability, saying that we might have "muddled up democratic accountability and stakeholder accountability".

She said Ofsted was important as it has "put urgency into the situation". She added: "It is going to pull practice up by reaching those schools that the rest of us don't reach for some reason."

She said performance tables were something that we as governors obsess about, but that we have to value other things as well. "We have to learn to measure what we do value and, where that proves impossible, to continue to value those things which are unmeasurable." She said the market also holds governors to account.

She said a governing body needed to be a diverse group of skilled people, but with a balance that includes parents. She believed that having stakeholder governors had been used as an excuse not to engage properly with groups such as pupils, parents and the community.

"We need to equip school governors so they can work effectively," she said. She also mentioned the challenges of fragmentation but added: "At the moment school governing bodies can do most of what we want to do if we have the nerve and the courage and the confidence. We need to have the right people."

David Wolfe, Matrix Chambers

David Wolfe ended the panel session with a counter blast in which he disagreed with the assumptions and analysis of most of the other speakers. He said he didn't see a homogeneous role for governors across all schools – especially with the growth of academies – as there was such a huge range of structures.

He divided academies into:

- the “rewarded succeeders”, who had been bribed with additional money to convert and were legal entities in their own right;
- the “punished failures”, forced because of poor inspection results, to convert with “sponsors” and becoming essentially local sites providing education while a “partner” at some distance makes decisions about how their schools are run;
- the “nearly-boiled frogs”, who were under pressure to convert before an anticipated poor Ofsted judgement forced them to do so under strict conditions, such as joining a specific academy chain, and encouraged to do so by DfE “enforcers” – or “jump before you are boiled”.

He said the governing body of an academy in a chain was merely a local committee delivering education, with policy set a long way from the school, and that the role of governors could be completely different according to which chain, or partnership, you got into.

He argued that there was so much difference in academy governing body structures because “every one is the product of the moment of its creation”. He said there was a need for mechanisms that deal with all these changes.

He said that the idea of giving all schools an equivalent to voluntary aided status had legal attractions, “but it's just not going to happen politically”. However, he felt that statutory intervention to require all schools to operate under the same regulatory structure might be worth arguing for, covering for example, employment, finance, the rights of the local authority to intervene, and admissions.

He concluded: “There seems to be a discussion about what are the core things that need to apply to all school structures. The whole thing is a complete jumble. There's no longer a notion of governance that has the historic relevance that it used to have.”

Discussion points

Each of nine small group discussions produced at least one question for the second panel to answer and indicated the

range of concerns participants had about the future of governance. The panel only had time to address some of the issues raised but all the concerns are reflected in the separate list of discussion points.

Christine Gilbert spoke of the importance of assessing governance and of looking at issues such as the quality of teaching and learning across schools. “I think you assess governance through the quality of the school,” she said. “I'm worried that we're not looking across schools sufficiently. There's not been enough discussion about the role of the NLG. This should be across schools and across groups of schools.”

Emma Knights picked up the subject of governance in groups. “There can be really good things which come out of that,” she said, citing examples such as managerial effectiveness and better governance in federations as well as multi-academy trusts. “We mustn't assume that chains are about to take over the world.”

She also spoke of the importance of ensuring priorities are right: “Looking at the vision that is meaningful and turning that into strategic planning. We need to get better at strategic planning.”

Moral purpose

Strong concerns about moral purpose and social responsibility had emerged from the discussions and all three speakers addressed them. One participant had said that the “rewarded succeeder” academies had taken money knowing full well that they were taking money away from the system and suggested that “they consciously abandoned social responsibility”.

David Wolfe picked up the subject from the perspective of a governor of a free school that was added to an area with falling roles. “We cared deeply about children in our school but not at all about its effect on the children in the seriously undersubscribed schools that suffered further from even more falling roles.”

He said there was a question to be answered about whether free schools were being funded on estimated or actual pupil numbers.

A Freedom of Information report was pending but this was potentially not good use of public money.

Christine Gilbert had no doubts about the moral purpose of governors: “I don't know why you would be doing what you do if you didn't have that about you as governors,” she said.

Emma Knights was in agreement, saying, “I meet a lot of governors and, by and large, they are people who care deeply about the children in their school.”

Themes for discussion

A number of themes emerged from the presentations and the discussion sessions, not least of which was the moral purpose and social responsibility involved in being a governor and whether current changes were threatening this.

This and other concerns that arose are listed below in the form of a series of questions, which we hope will prompt further discussion of the issues.

Should there be mandatory training?

This could give rise to the question of paying governors. Many large companies allow paid time off. But it is more difficult for smaller employers who need to be required/encouraged to allow paid time off. This issue affects who can be a governor, for example many parents may be employed locally by small employers.

What skills do governors need?

Soft skills are important; expertise can be taught but governors should have these skills. Is it easy for governing bodies to recruit people with the right skills? How do governing bodies balance skills and representation? Governors need the skills and confidence to challenge. Is it particularly difficult for parent and staff governors? Succession planning is important for governing bodies. How do governors ensure access and fairness? How can governors stand up to an authoritarian chair or a majority culture of no change? Governors need to be able to assess the impact of their work.

How should governors be regulated?

Should they be regulated differently from professionals? Is it right for non-professionals to be pressured in this way? Is it possible for Ofsted to make a judgement in such a short time and at such short notice? Should Ofsted inspect how much CPD governors have done?

What about the Local Authority's role?

Are we moving to a situation where schools are accountable at local level only to governors and at national level to Parliament and Ofsted?

Will we end up with fewer governors responsible for a larger number of schools? The middle tier needs support if it is to carry on a role. The National College may be able to support but would need a very wide reach to fulfil the role that local authorities carry out. Relations between the local authority and local schools are very variable across the country. Where do parents go with concerns if they are in an academy and are not satisfied with the answers from the staff – can they reach the governing body or the trust easily?

What support do governors need?

Governors don't always get the information they need to do the job. Where can governors get an independent external view? Getting advice and support from a clerk is increasingly important. Governors need to know what research is showing for example. Will they have to buy in commercial support? Does the National College of Teaching and Leadership fulfil this role? Are we using the National Leaders of Governance properly? They need coordinating.

There has to be investment if governors are to carry out their job properly. HR support is vital, particularly with performance related pay. There is a growth in legal practices looking for work in schools.

Is the National Governors' Association able to support governing bodies faced with DfE enforcers, whose legal powers are questionable?

How can governing bodies take risks when failure is not an option?

For example, how can governors defend a broad and balanced curriculum in the face of pressures?

Fragmentation of the schools system

Could all schools have voluntary aided status? Is this a step of reorganisation too far for any government? Instead perhaps a requirement that all schools face the same regulatory framework would make the situation clearer and fairer. Is fragmentation leading to a polarisation of governance? Where does the power lie in multi-academy chains and trusts? If governing bodies cannot appoint the head what is their influence? Can governing bodies stand up to an overarching trust? Would MATs be a passing phase if schools could withdraw? Are we heading to profit-making schools? What would happen to the role of governing bodies if schools were to become profit making? There is a real need for an impetus in requiring schools to work together.

The role and structure of governing bodies

What does it mean to be a governor in the current situation? Do we need a clearer legal definition of the role of the governor? Governors have to accept that we are in a process of transition. We must look to the future.

Why do we need diversity in the role and structure of governing bodies? Magistrates do not face such diversity. Can governance be more democratic? Was governance ever democratic? International comparisons seem to indicate that wholly elected parent boards can become unmanageable. Generally governing bodies are not good at strategic planning. Is the size of the governing body now not considered as important?

How can governors do a better job?

There is a need to focus on what kind of school governors want their school to become. Their incentive should be to do the best for their children. Governing bodies must be constantly on the look out for good governors. It may be that teaching schools will demonstrate what good governance looks like.

Is an inter-generational ongoing conversation possible?

Certainly young people are not involved in governance as pupils or students. This needs to change. Governors must find a way of interacting with the young people in their schools. Governing bodies must be able to hear from all stakeholders and speak to them.

Governing bodies and their moral purpose

Is this shown by schools taking money to become academies thereby reducing the amount for other local schools, or expanding or setting up free schools when there are sufficient places already? Was this demonstrating social responsibility and a moral purpose? Can governing bodies rediscover social responsibility if they have lost it? How can governing bodies come to agree their moral purpose?

**This report and further comments from participants can be found on the RISE web site
www.risetrust.org.uk**