



Buckinghamshire SEN Governors – Best Practice Guidance  
*Adapted from 'The Key' Online resource*

## **You should have a SEN link governor or committee**

All schools should have either a member of the governing board or a committee with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for special educational needs and disability (SEND). This is set out in the SEND Code of Practice (see page 92), although it doesn't specify what the role involves.

### **The role doesn't differ in special schools**

The role of the SEN governor in special schools and mainstream schools is largely the same.

The key differences are that in a special school:

The link governor will be monitoring arrangements that affect all pupils, as every pupil in a special school has SEN

The full governing board should take responsibility for the progress of pupils with SEN, monitoring the SEN funding and holding the headteacher to account for the school's SEN provision

## **Understand SEN**

As the SEN link governor, you need to make sure you understand the school's, and your boards, legal obligations and the context.

## **Hold the school to account**

### **Meet the SENCO regularly**

The SENCO is the member of staff responsible for overseeing SEN provision in the school. This is a statutory role for mainstream schools, and they must be a qualified teacher working at the school. They will be your key contact at the school, and you should meet them on at least a termly basis to discuss the school's SEN provision, budget and resources.

While you're there, focus on strategic oversight and the school's systems and processes for supporting pupils with SEN, rather than supporting the SENCO in their day-to-day role.

It's important for you and the SENCO to develop a strong and trusting relationship, so the SENCO feels comfortable talking to you, and confident that any sensitive information they share will remain confidential.

### **Ask challenging questions**

Refer to the list of questions to ask to the SENCO while you're on visits.

**Key point to remember:** You don't need to know which pupils receive SEN support and should not assess or comment on provision for individual children. This is your school leaders' job, and oversteps your strategic, monitoring role. It also breaches data protection principles - you shouldn't share personal information unless there's a specific reason to do so.



## Report to the governing board

As a link governor, you should report back to the full governing board if you've been delegated responsibility of an area.

This is set out in regulation 20 of The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 (for maintained schools) and article 106 of the model articles of association (for academies).

There are no guidelines on how often link governors should report to the full governing board. It's for your board to decide.

If you're a link governor and you're not sure how often you should be reporting, ask your chair if there's any guidelines or a monitoring/school visits schedule you need to follow.

## Help your board drive high-quality SEND provision

As the SEND link governor, you could also push your board to make sure your school does the best it can for your pupils with SEND.

You could use the [SEND Governance – SEND Governance Review Guide](#), created by Whole School SEND and the Driver Youth Trust in partnership with the DfE. It draws upon the 6 features of effective governance to set out a framework for ensuring that learners with SEND access high-quality provision.