

Purpose

The purpose of mentoring is to support newly appointed governors in developing the confidence, knowledge and understanding required to contribute effectively to the work of the Corporation.

Mentoring forms part of the Board's commitment to effective governance, continuous improvement and governor development. It complements formal induction, training and support arrangements.

This policy provides a framework on Mentoring arrangements available to governors appointed to the Governing Body of the Shrewsbury College.

The aim of the mentoring arrangements is to support the introduction of governors newly appointed to the Governing Body by:

- Providing ongoing support and information to the new governor.
- Helping the new governor develop into a committed member of the governing board.
- Supplementing the formal induction of the new governor to understand their role and understand the importance of effective governance behaviours as part of their role.
- Encouraging the new governor to participate in the college's Governor Development opportunities.

The parties should always support the aims of the Induction Policy and the Governing Body's commitment to effective and impactful governance.

Mentoring forms part of the Board's wider commitment to effective governance, continuous improvement and shared learning.

Terms

Mentoring

- is a supportive and developmental relationship and is distinct from training, performance management or formal governance advice.
- is not a substitute for advice from the Clerk or Chair, does not involve directing how a governor should vote, and does not form part of any appraisal or review process.
- complements the formal induction process and ongoing governor development. It provides an informal opportunity to support learning, reflection and confidence-building alongside structured induction activities, briefings and training.

A Mentor is an experienced member of the Governing Body with the capacity to carry out the role, who can be paired with a newly appointed Governor during the first year of office, to provide informal support throughout the formal induction process.

A Mentee is a newly appointed governor who has elected to be paired with a mentor.

Framework

At the commencement of the formal induction, the Clerk to the Board will offer the newly appointed governors the opportunity to be mentored by an experienced member of the Governing Body. It is not mandatory and newly appointed governors may choose not to take up the opportunity. Mentoring arrangements are flexible and may be tailored to the needs of the new governor. However, some of the steps a Mentor can take are as follows:

- arrange an initial introductory meeting with the governor to explain the background and workings of the Governing Body and to answer any questions.
- meet with the new governor before Governing Body meetings to go through the Agenda and papers, if the new governor needs this level of support.
- be available as a sounding board and someone to whom the new governor feels comfortable to contact – e-mail /phone contact for queries, questions and support.

Role of the Clerk and Chair

The Clerk to the Board supports the mentoring framework by facilitating mentor and mentee arrangements and providing advice on governance process where required.

The Chair retains overall responsibility for Board effectiveness. Mentoring does not replace or override the formal leadership role of the Chair or the advisory role of the Clerk.

The Clerk may seek feedback from mentors and mentees to support ongoing improvement of governor induction and development arrangements.

Focus of Mentoring Support

Mentoring discussions may include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding Board and committee papers
- Preparing for and contributing to meetings

- Understanding the difference between strategic and operational matters
- Board culture, protocols and expectations
- The wider context of further education and sixth form college governance

Confidentiality and Boundaries

Mentoring discussions are confidential to the mentor and mentee, except where issues arise that indicate a need for formal governance advice or support, in which case appropriate referral should be made to the Clerk or Chair.

Duration and Independence

Mentoring arrangements are normally time-limited and focused on supporting governors during their initial period of appointment. The aim of mentoring is to support governors to develop independence and confidence in their role as Board members. Either party may terminate the arrangement at any stage

Voluntary Nature of Mentoring

Participation in mentoring is voluntary for both mentors and mentees. Governors may choose the level of engagement that best supports their development and confidence.