

Gaining Governor Mark Accreditation – **Our Experience**



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Our Governing Body had been working hard to develop effective processes and systems. We wanted to know how else we could improve and felt that the Governor Mark would be a good way to find out. The whole process took about 18 months – for us it was a gradual process and a great exercise in maximising our impact.

Our first step was to consult with other schools that had been through the process to find out more about what it would entail. We then established a working group open to all Governors. This group started meeting regularly to complete an evidence matrix around areas such as Strategic Leadership, Statutory Responsibilities and Support and Challenge.

Over the next few months, we built up a really good evidence base and highlighted areas where we were working well, and also (more importantly) those where we were falling short of the expectations. As a result, some minor but important improvements in our working practices were made.

Next, we divided up the writing of three impact statements about the work of the Governing Body in the areas of Pupil Safety and Wellbeing, Partnership Working and School Improvement. Having completed the evidence grid, we found it easy at this stage to focus on impact.

Through the hard work of Governors along with some exemplary work by our Clerk, we then reached a point where we felt ready to apply.

The final step was an interview with two Governor Mark assessors who went through our application and asked some testing questions about our ways of working. An absolutely essential tool in this part was the evidence file. Thanks to the efficiency of our Clerk who cross-referenced all our meeting minutes, we could easily find all the evidence to back up our answers. A few weeks later, we were told we had passed and we now proudly display our Governor Mark.

The whole process was very enlightening. Firstly, our meetings are now a lot more structured around the actions we can take to have a positive impact. It was also an excellent opportunity to assess our ways of working, strengthen our procedures, highlight our strengths and weaknesses and discover what we can do to move forward as an effective, cohesive Governing Body.

We are all very proud of the outcome. It was not an easy process, but we all got a lot out of it and would certainly recommend it to other Governing Bodies. Three things are essential: teamwork, the willingness to change and a good Clerk!

Information and downloadable guidance documents can be found at http://glmpartnership.org/governor_mark