

Three strands of leadership

A collaborative checklist for school leaders, governors and trustees

NGA, ASCL and ISBL's thought leadership report, [The three strands of leadership](#) sets out the benefits of effective joined-up leadership across governance, educational and business leadership.

We recommend that school leaders, working in partnership with governing boards, use the report to reflect on the leadership practice within their own school or trust. Use the questions below to determine current practice and areas for iterative improvement.

1. Does governance, educational, and business leadership have clearly defined but interconnected roles? How do you encourage and support the interaction and contributions from these roles with your organisation?
2. Is there a shared organisational vision and mission understood by all three leadership strands? How do you gain assurance of this shared understanding? Who from each strand of leadership is involved?
3. Do leaders meet regularly in cross-strand forums to make decisions? How do these discussions inform decisions and strategic direction at board level? How are members of the board linked to the different strands of leadership (through a finance link governor for example)?
4. Are financial, curriculum, and governance plans integrated (such as through ICFP)? What evidence is being used when making strategic decisions? Are the right people involved in providing information and context?
5. Is accountability for pupil outcomes shared across governance, pedagogy, and business functions? How is reporting and monitoring completed?
6. Do governance boards include both educational and business expertise? When was the last skills audit completed by the board? How is this used to develop and support recruitment activities?
7. Are staff across all leadership strands offered equal access to professional development? How is this information being monitored and reported?
8. Are stakeholder voices (pupils, parents, community) embedded into decision-making across all strands? How can this be evidenced?
9. Are wellbeing and workload considered across leadership roles to prevent concentration of responsibility? Is governance supporting this review as part of performance management processes?
10. Is success measured holistically, with the board able to link pupil outcomes with operational sustainability and governance strength?