Breakthrough in governance

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Mission

The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust works to give practical support to the transformation of secondary education in England by building and enabling a world-class network of innovative, high performing secondary schools in partnership with business and the wider community.

THIS PUBLICATION

Audience

Leaders at all levels of education

Aim

To describe and illustrate a breakthrough in the understanding of governance in schools arising from research in seven countries, and to provide guidelines to help every school to become as successful as the best

Preface

There can be few more important topics in education than governance, generally considered to be the structures and processes by which authority is exercised and decisions are made. The stakes are high, for the quality of decision-making determines in powerful ways the life chances of students and the wellbeing of society.

Our work with schools and school systems in many countries over the last three years has led us to the view that the 'structures and processes' view of governance is much too narrow. Many of the problems that currently bedevil our schools and the profession will be alleviated in significant ways if we take a different approach. A deeper understanding of successful experience in governance in schools that have been transformed or have sustained a high level of performance has led to a breakthrough in our understanding. It is the purpose of this publication to describe and illustrate this breakthrough and provide guidelines to help every school become as successful as those that have led us to this point.

As we shall see, a more uplifting view of governance is that it is the process through which a school builds its intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and aligns them to achieve its goals.

What are the problems that bedevil our schools and the profession and that can be alleviated through good governance? In systems of public, state or government schools, there are too many accounts of how success has been difficult to secure or sustain. One or more kinds of capital are weak and these schools suffer in comparison to those where capital is strong and the four kinds of capital are welded together through good governance.

Changes in personnel have created problems in governance for some schools and school systems. In many schools with a religious foundation, there has been a dramatic decline in the number of priests and religious orders that have until now had a pivotal role in governance, and this has led to uncertainty and often a crisis in determining the way forward. New structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities must be determined. These are necessary but the long-term solution lies in the purpose of good governance, as implied in the more expansive view of the process.

There are too many accounts of principals (headteachers) who experience high levels of stress that at times overwhelms satisfaction in what should be the noblest of professions. They have welcomed higher levels of autonomy in recent times but they lack the support that can be achieved through good governance, at the system as well as the school level.

This endeavour was 'by schools, for schools', in the phrase that characterises the work of SSAT. We especially acknowledge the principals (headteachers) and other leaders from more than 40 schools in seven countries who allowed our research teams to gather information about outstanding practice in their schools. There are too many to acknowledge at this point. They are named in the rich descriptions in the following pages.

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Impressive developments in research, policy and practice over the last decade have led to a robust and dependable body of knowledge and strategies for achieving success for all students in all settings. How can these strategies be brought together and made effective? This is the primary purpose of governance.

Strategic complexity

Some experts specialise in particular fields and highlight related strategies in their presentations, publications and consultancy support for policymakers and practitioners. Their expertise has helped achieve the transformation of schools. A review of developments in recent years reveals that the spotlight has shifted between particular strategies. One might be a curriculum for the 21st century, which enables every student to find a pathway to success while addressing the needs of society. Another might be applying to pedagogy the extraordinary advances in scholarship about how the brain functions and young people learn. It might be a matter of money, because quality and equity cannot be addressed without appropriate allocation of funds to schools and within schools. It might be to attract, reward and sustain the best teachers and other professionals. It might be to replace the run-down and obsolete stock of school buildings that are no longer fit for learning and teaching. It might be to build the support of the community for public education.

The key to success is to bring together all of these strategies and more, and to make them effective. Leadership is required at all levels – for a system of schools as well as within schools. New concepts of leadership are emerging: system leadership, but not in its traditional form, and distributed leadership, but not constrained to a simple sharing of tasks to lighten the load of the head. Outstanding governance is also required, but there must be a breakthrough in how we understand the concept. It is time to draw together what we have learnt from schools that have been transformed. That is the purpose of this publication. We intend to show that a breakthrough has been achieved.

Beyond structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

A review of recent literature on the topic reveals an increasing number of reports and recommendations on governance. Most suffer from a significant shortcoming in their preoccupation with structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. Questions addressed include:

• 'How should parents be involved in the decision making processes of the school?'

- 'Should a school have a governing body that includes representatives of different stakeholders, and what should be the role of the principal in such an arrangement?'

- 'Should the governing body set policy and approve the budget for the school?'

- 'Which of the various arrangements are likely to have a direct or indirect effect on improving the learning outcomes of students?'

- 'How should meetings of the governing body be organised?'

- 'How are legal obligations to be met when the governing body has the powers of a board of directors?'

Securing answers to such questions is necessary if governing arrangements are to work. But they are far from sufficient.

A new definition of governance

There is agreement that governance is important. There is no agreement on its definition. The common element is that it refers to how authority is exercised and decisions are made. Our work over the last three years in a number of countries, working closely with policymakers and practitioners, has yielded a more fundamental but expansive and uplifting definition. Expressed simply:

Governance is the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals.

Intellectual capital refers to the level of knowledge and skill of those who work in or for the school. Social capital refers to the strength of formal and informal partnerships and networks involving the school and all individuals, agencies, organisations and institutions that have the potential to support and be supported by the school. Spiritual capital refers to the strength of moral purpose and the degree of coherence among values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning (for some schools, spiritual capital has a foundation in religion; in others it refers to ethics and values shared by members of the school and its community). Financial capital refers to the money available to support the school.

Capital has several meanings that are relevant in this context. According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, capital refers to 'accumulated goods devoted to the production of other goods' or 'a store of useful assets or advantages'. Intellectual capital, for example, may be viewed as 'accumulated goods' ('the level of knowledge and skill of those who work in or for the school') devoted to the 'production of other goods' (state-of-the-art curriculum and pedagogy). High levels of capital in each of the four domains constitute 'a store of useful assets or advantages'. The most important function of governance is to build these assets and align them to achieve the goals of the school.

It is important to note the parsimony of this new definition. There is no reference to it being a decision making process or to the structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of participants and stakeholders. Of course it is a decision making process and structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities must be specified. However, these are part and parcel of every process in leadership and management. To define governance exclusively or substantially in these terms is to miss the essence of governance.

Alignment for transformation

Those who have read our previous publication in the iNet series, *Alignment* (Caldwell, 2007) will be immediately familiar with the four forms of capital and the concept of alignment. Their relationship is illustrated in figure 1. A more detailed account is provided in *Raising the Stakes: From Improvement to Transformation in the Reform of Schools* (Caldwell and Spinks, 2008). *Raising the Stakes* contains self-assessment instruments on governance, resources and an aspect of intellectual capital (knowledge management). However, the current publication is the first opportunity to redefine governance in the context of the school, with a focus on strengthening and aligning its capital. It draws on recent work that identified sample indicators and provides self-assessment instruments for each form of capital. Drawing from a recent landmark international study, it includes short studies of governance in outstanding secondary schools in six countries.

Figure 1 Alignment of four kinds of capital for the transformation of a school
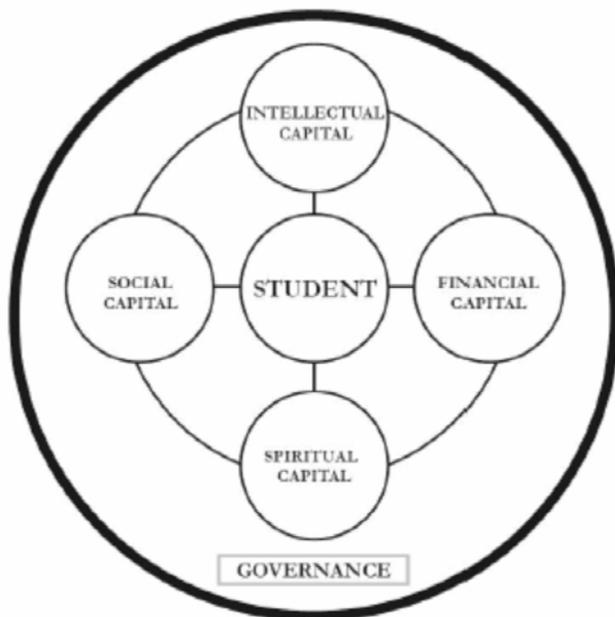
Constructing the model

The model was developed and tested from late 2005 to early 2008. The development and enrichment of the model used an innovative approach. We combined findings from case studies (49), masterclasses (4) and workshops (60) involving school and school system leaders in 11 countries where there was an agenda for or interest in transformation and where schools had a relatively high level of autonomy. Forty of the 49 case studies were contributed by school leaders. Several workshops were incorporated in conferences and postgraduate programmes in leadership and management.

A feature of most of the workshops was the invitation to school and school system leaders to respond to key questions on the design, implementation, issues and outcomes of efforts to achieve the transformation of schools. Transformation was considered to be significant, systematic and sustained change that secures success for all students in all settings. An interactive computer based technology enabled large numbers of individual and group responses to be gathered for subsequent analysis. The interactive technology was used in 50 of the 60 workshops, with approximately 2,500 participants generating more than 10,000 responses.

The first round of 14 workshops was conducted in 2005 in Australia, Chile, England and New Zealand for the International Networking for Educational Transformation (iNet) project of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. An initial model of emerging practice in self-managing schools was constructed and published in Re-imagining Educational Leadership (Caldwell, 2006). This model provided the starting point in 2006 for further investigation in 19 workshops hosted by the Australian College of Educators (ACE) in every state and territory of Australia. Five more workshops conducted in England for iNet in 2006 were concerned with resources. Outcomes included a broader view of resources, redefined as capital, and the model illustrated in figure 1, as reported in *Raising the Stakes: From Improvement to Transformation in the Reform of Schools* (Caldwell and Spinks, 2008).

The applicability of the model in different countries was explored in 22 workshops in 2007. Eighteen were conducted for school and school system leaders from Australia, Croatia, England, Malaysia, Mauritius, Netherlands, Philippines, Singapore and Wales. The final set of four workshops was conducted for the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) in three Australian states (Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia) in late 2007.

The model in figure 1 was the focus of a further study to explore its application to developments in six countries: Australia, China, England, Finland, United States and Wales. The purpose was to investigate how successful secondary schools align the four kinds of capital.

There were two stages. The first called for a review of literature on the four kinds of capital and how they are aligned through effective governance. An outcome of this review was the identification of 10 sample indicators for each form of capital and for governance. The second stage called for case studies in five schools in each country. The project was funded by the former Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) of the Australian Government and the Department of Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS) of the Welsh Assembly Government. It started in mid-2007 and the final report was submitted to the funding agencies in early 2008.

The project was carried out by Melbourne based Educational Transformations with different components conducted by international partners including the Wales Institute of Applied Education Research at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) led by Professor David Egan; SENTE – the Research Unit for Urban and Regional Development at the University of Tampere in Finland – led by Dr Toni Saarivirta; SSAT in England led by Mike Goodfellow; and the US-China Centre for Research on Excellence in Education, based at Michigan State University (US) and Beijing Normal University (China), led by Professor Yong Zhao.

Chapter outline

The purpose of this chapter was to establish the need for a breakthrough in our understanding of governance, such is the complexity of making effective the many strategies we now know are important if a school is to be transformed. It is our opinion that such a breakthrough has been achieved and the starting point is a new view of governance, considered to be the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals. Each kind of capital was defined and a model showing their coherent focus on the student was presented. The three-year research and development project that led to the breakthrough was summarised.

Chapter 2 provides a brief review of the traditional but still important approaches to governance with their focus on structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. These are necessary but not sufficient considerations if governance is to be effective in the transformation of schools in the 21st century. The connection between new forms of governance and the autonomy of schools is explored.

Chapter 3 contains four short case studies of schools in three countries, each with different structures, in which different approaches have been taken to allocate roles and responsibilities. These include governance in a federation of schools in England and governance in a school in Chile in which the governing body consists of a board of directors of teachers.

Chapter 4 draws from the international project in Australia, China, England, Finland, United States and Wales, which provided a test of the framework (figure 1) in 30 outstanding secondary schools, five in each country. An important part of the project was to devise 10 sample indicators for each form of capital and of governance, a total of 50 sample indicators. These indicators are listed along with a guide to their use as the starting point for assessing a school's capacity for transformation and the quality of its governance. A self-assessment instrument is contained in annex A. Roles and responsibilities must be assigned for each set of indicators and a second instrument is provided to guide this task in annex B.

Chapter 5 draws from studies in the six countries to illustrate in more detail how approaches to governance may vary, even within the same country, but the focus is always on building the four forms of capital and aligning them to achieve the goals of the school. One school is selected from each country to illustrate how this is achieved.

Chapter 6 summarises the major themes of the pamphlet and suggests strategies for schools and school systems that seek to enhance the quality of governance.

2   Necessary but not sufficient

Our breakthrough in understanding governance came with realisation that the traditional preoccupation with structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities did not necessarily lead to transformation or sustained high performance in schools. These features are critically important, and developing optimal arrangements for the school is necessary for good governance. This is self-evident given that the following questions must be addressed from the outset: what are the powers of the governing body? Who constitutes the governing body? What are the powers of the headteacher (principal) in relation to the governing body and her roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the operation of the school? In this chapter we deal with the matter of structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities but also consider other issues such as governance and school autonomy.

Earlier work

In several of our earlier pamphlets in the iNet series (Caldwell, 2004, 2006a, 2007) and in recent books (Caldwell, 2006b; Caldwell and Spinks, 2008), we selected a definition of governance and a framework for assessment of its practice based on work for the Human Resource Development Working Group of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) consortium on *Best Practice Governance: Education Policy and Service Delivery* (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005). The following definition was chosen, adapting one provided by the Governance Working Group of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (1996):

- Governance refers to the process whereby elements in a society wield power and authority, and influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life, and economic and social development

- Governance is a broader notion than government, whose principal elements include the constitution, legislature, executive and judiciary. Governance involves interaction between these formal institutions and those of civil society

This definition suggests that descriptions of governance should include but go beyond accounts of how policies are determined and decisions are made. The idea that governance is concerned with the interaction between these and civil society suggests a broader approach. Civil society is the network of mutually supporting relationships between government, business and industry, education and other public and private sector services, community, home, and voluntary agencies and institutions.

The significance of this broader view of governance is apparent if one compares arrangements in stable societies in 'successful states' with the instability of what are often called 'failed states'. In the former there are clear roles for legislature, executive and judiciary and there is acceptance of these roles and healthy if not robust engagement of these institutions with broader society. There are checks and balances that ensure orderly transitions as elections are held and governments come and go. In failed states, there may be a constitution and functioning legislature, executive and judiciary, but instability arises because the checks and balances are fragile, and there is a breakdown in law and order. Public institutions are poorly developed and there may be high levels of corruption. The reader will have no difficulty identifying examples of each and other instances of strong governance and weak governance in different fields of endeavour.

The applicability of the concept to schools is readily apparent if one takes account of the extent to which successful schools have developed and used links with civil society in recent years. In the past, most schools had few connections: they were, to a large extent, stand alone institutions. Governing bodies did not concern themselves with notions of governance because they could get by with relatively closed approaches to decision making. Examples of schools that have made the transition to strong governance are contained in other chapters.

In addition to the adoption of this view of governance our earlier work included a framework for assessment of governance in school settings. A 20-item checklist was included in Caldwell (2006a); Caldwell (2007) and Caldwell and Spinks (2008).

Our further work in the six-country international project described in chapter 1 suggested that an even broader view of governance was required. It is not just the connection between decision-making processes and civil society. It became clear that the connections involved each of the four forms of capital in figure 1 and that a richer definition was at hand: governance is the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals.

Structures, roles and responsibilities must be clearly specified and implemented successfully if such a process is to succeed, and that is why considerable effort has gone into their design, as illustrated below.

Structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities

The processes of developing policies, setting priorities, preparing plans and budgets, building partnerships to support the effort, making decisions on the basis of good data and being transparent throughout are far more demanding than ever before. The four kinds of capital must work together in a coherent and consistent manner. This is why governance in a school is just as complex as governance in other fields of public and private endeavour.

What a contrast to the days when there were few if any partnerships with other entities, no delegated budgets, staff may well have been assigned to schools by a central authority, schools were largely data-free environments, and there were few demands to ensure success for all students in all settings. Governance was not an important consideration under these conditions. Leadership in the classic heroic tradition was valued, as was running a tight ship, but most decision-making was routine.

There are important implications for governing bodies. The former Department for Education and Skills in England published A *Guide to the Law for School Governors*. The following summarise the status and powers of governing bodies, as adapted from the indicated sections of the 2006 edition of that guide:

- The governing bodies of community, community special and maintained nursery schools are corporate bodies (3-1) (chapter 3 paragraph 1).

- The governing bodies of foundation, foundation special, voluntary controlled and voluntary aided schools are corporate bodies with exempt charitable status (3-2).

- Because it is a corporate body, individual governors are generally protected from personal liability as a result of the governing body's decisions and actions (3-4).

- At a school with a delegated budget, the governing body has general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement (3-7).

- The governing body must exercise its functions with a view to fulfilling a largely strategic role in the running of the school. It should establish the strategic framework by settings aims and objectives for the school, adopting policies for achieving those aims and objectives, and setting targets for achieving those aims and objectives (3-18).

- The headteacher has responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and for the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing body (3-20).

- The governing body is responsible to the local education authority for the way a school is run (3-24).

- Governing bodies are required to set and publish targets for their pupils' performance in key stage 2 and 3 on national curriculum tests and in public examinations at 15 (3-26).

- The governing body as a whole should take out insurance to cover its potential liability for negligence in carrying out its responsibilities. Cover must now be regarded as essential. Although legal action against teachers and schools for breaches of professional duty is still rare, claims (for example for 'failure to educate') are becoming more frequent (3-37). Personal claims against school governors are very rare indeed (3-38).

- Maintained schools are able to federate under one governing body (21-1). A federation shall not contain more than five schools (21-2). More informal collaborative arrangements between maintained schools and non-maintained schools such as academies and independent schools are possible but these may not include federation of the governing bodies or formal joint committees of the governing bodies (21-3).

Governing bodies are required to adopt an instrument of government that complies with constitutional regulations that came into force in 2003. Legislation that provides for schools to acquire a trust, employ their own staff and manage their own assets has major implications for governing bodies that choose to take up the new arrangements.

Chapter 3 contains case studies of two schools in England with exemplary arrangements for governance: Park High School and the Haberdashers' Aske's Federation, both in London. They illustrate how structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are determined and made effective. Two case studies from other countries that are successful in different national settings are also included: Maria Luisa Bombal School (Santiago, Chile) and St Monica's College (Melbourne, Australia).

Autonomy and governance

These case studies are from schools where there is a relatively high degree of autonomy. Issues in autonomy are inextricably linked to issues in governance. A shift in the balance of centralisation and decentralisation inevitably involves a change in arrangements for governance, including changes in the structures and processes for decision-making. Ron Glatter, Visiting Research Professor in Education and former Professor of Educational Administration and Management at the Open University in England, suggests that changes in governance in school systems lead to a number of tensions: between system coherence and fragmentation, between institutional autonomy and the wider community and public interest, between diversity and equity, between competition and collaboration, and between central and local decision-making (Glatter, 2003, p. 229).

Glatter described four models of governance (competitive market, school empowerment, local empowerment and quality control), which reflect different patterns of autonomy. He puts forward a fifth to reflect emerging interest in learning organisations (learning system). The five models are summarised in table 1.

At first sight, some of the early initiatives in school autonomy are consistent with the local empowerment model. More recent developments appear to be an amalgam, with the addition of elements of the competitive market, school empowerment and quality control models. Recent calls for an evidence base for policy and practice, encouragement of innovation, and networking professional knowledge suggest that the learning system (LS) model should be added to the amalgam. In a presentation to a conference of the Presidency of the European Union, some four years after his initial proposal, Glatter recommended the LS model in the following terms while endorsing aspects of the other models:

'The picture of the school in this model is of a creative unit, well connected to the wider system. The main focus or centre of gravity is not any one unit, whether the school or the centre, but the connections between the various interest or stakeholder groups and also those between the different levels of the system. However you should not see this as a utopian model, purely rationalist and technocratic. It is nothing of the kind. There must be ideological and political dispute within it. The tensions and dilemmas … are real and will remain, as will differences of power and ideology. This is not a recipe for bland consensus seeking because the contest of ideas and solutions plays a vital role in the enhancement of learning. But it assumes a climate of trust and tolerance. The emphasis is on the quality of relationships' (Glatter, 2007).

Glatter's advocacy of the LS model is consistent with the broader view of governance that emerged from our recent international research, which captured outstanding practice in successful schools. Earlier straightforward definitions that focused on structures for decision making, characteristic of the stand alone school, were superseded by those that emphasised the importance of local empowerment, and this is the connection with civil society and social capital seen in the contemporary writing we drew on for our earlier publications in the series. The capacity of people to work well together and be able to make sound decisions based on good evidence calls for a high level of knowledge and skill – intellectual capital – and a coherent set of values and beliefs about life and learning – spiritual capital. While these may be evident in other models of governance, they come to the fore in the LS model. According to Glatter, the integrating force is 'a climate of trust and tolerance', as confirmed in the studies of governance in the pages that follow.

Table 1: Models of governance reflecting different patterns of autonomy
(based on Glatter, 2003, p. 230 and p. 234)

Models	Competitive market (CM)	School empowerment (SE)	Local empowerment (LE)	Quality control (QC)	Learning systems (LS)
Indicative policies	Pupil number led funding, e.g. by vouchers	Authority devolved to school on finance, staffing, curriculum, student admissions	Authority devolved to locality on finance, staffing, curriculum, student admissions	Regular, systematic inspections	Reform by small steps
	More open enrolment	Substantial powers for school council/ governing body	Substantial powers for local community council/ governing body	Detailed performance targets	Focus on evidence-informed policy and practice
	Published data on school performance			Mandatory curriculum and assessment requirements	Tolerance of divergent views – minimal blame/ derision
	Variety of school types				Creation of test beds for innovation
					Genuine partnerships built on trust
					Reduction of conflicting incentives
Main perspective(s)	Commercial	Political and/or managerial	Political and/or managerial	Bureaucratic	Developmental
How the individual school is viewed	As a small business	As a participatory community	One of a family of local schools	As a point of delivery/local outlet	As a creative, linked unit within the wider system
Main focus within the system	The relevant competitive arena	The individual school	The locality as a social and educational unit	Central or other state bodies	The connections between stakeholder groups and between system levels

Hot topics

There are hot topics in governance that arise in most settings. One is the extent to which parents should be involved in governance, either formally as members of a governing body or less formally but importantly through consultation and participation in the programmes of the school. We undertook a comprehensive review of these matters in a study of parental engagement in state schools in Queensland, Australia (Educational Transformations, 2007). Using Epstein's framework we reviewed research and conducted case studies in six fields of engagement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Our conclusion could not be clearer in respect to decision making: 'no evidence has identified a relationship between parental engagement in school decision making processes and improved student outcomes'.

We found that there are benefits for both schools and parents through participation in governance but these tended to lie in other fields. Expressed another way, there are good reasons to involve parents but there should be no expectation that such involvement will have a direct effect on student outcomes across the school.

Another hot topic connected to the first is related to membership of the governing body. What should be the balance of the professional staff of the school and members of the wider school community, including parents and others with a stake in the outcomes, or who have expertise that can enhance the process? One conclusion will be clear from the schools in seven countries reported in chapters 3 and 5. There is no formula that will result in an optimal balance for all schools, even like schools in similar settings in the same system. There are some basic rules of thumb where there is a formally constituted governing body with decision-making powers. One is that the balance in membership should reflect the ownership of the school. It is to be expected that the owners will seek to have a controlling interest, so there will be different arrangements for state (public, government) and private (non-government, independent) schools. This hot topic becomes even hotter with new models of schooling such as trust schools in England and charter schools in Canada and the United States.

The breakthrough is that the focus should shift to the new richer definition of governance adopted in this pamphlet, which supports the amalgam of models proposed by Glatter, underpinned by a climate of trust as cited above.

3   Schools that get it right

Some schools have been recognised for outstanding governance. This chapter provides accounts of four. Two are from England, where different frameworks for governance have been encouraged in recent years. Park High School in London is a stand alone school whose governance has been praised by inspectors. Haberdashers' Aske's Federation is an example of the new arrangements, in this instance a federation of two schools, one of which is also a new breed, namely, an academy. We then turn to other countries. Maria Luisa Bombal School in Santiago, Chile, is a rare example in which the governing body is composed of teachers. It has received national awards for the quality of its management and the achievement of its students. St Monica's College in Melbourne, Australia, is a systemic Catholic school, subsidised from public funds, nominated at the central level for the quality of its governance.

The framework for school governance differs from country to country, and account should be taken of this in drawing conclusions and implications for policy and practice in other settings. The particular approaches to governance illustrated in this chapter have been shaped at the local level. However, some can be adapted to other settings. Special attention is paid to descriptions of structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities but, in each case, these have enabled the school to strength its intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and align them to achieve its goals.

Park High School, London

This state school in England was chosen because of its identification by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 2006 as outstanding in the quality of its governance. Approaches include the clearly defined roles of head and chair of the governing body and the systematic approach to the preparation of reports and briefing papers.

Park High School, in the London borough of Harrow, had 1120 students aged 12–16 in 2006. It has been a specialist technology college since 2002, and added a sixth form in 2007. It is a multicultural school with about 40 languages spoken, although most students speak English fluently. The largest ethnic group, about 60% of students, is Asian. About eight per cent of students (just less than half the national average) receive free school meals (FSM), and the proportion with special education needs (SEN) is about the national average. In 2006, 74% of students received at least five A*-C grades at GCSE, most including English and mathematics, which is a record high for the school. As a result, the school was described by the former Department for Education and Skills (DfES) as one of the most improved and successful in London. The school is significantly oversubscribed.

The school is aware of the need to meet challenging national targets on pupil achievement but is keen to do so in a way that supports students as lifelong learners. Managing this dilemma is the key leadership concern and is included in the school's strategic aims. There were two key thrusts for school development in 2005 and 2006:

- Development of the school's tracking of individual pupil progress, and the effective use of this both by teachers in the classroom and by those in curriculum leadership roles

- Deepening of teachers' understanding of how students learn, and how 'deep learning' can be supported throughout the school

Supporting both these developments were the influence of student voice and the extent and quality of professional development for teachers.

The Ofsted report of March 2006 included: 'the school is very well led and managed. The headteacher (Tony Barnes) has an innovative and successful approach to raising standards. For example, 'Building Learning Power' (based on a programme developed by Guy Claxton) and the staff professional development programme are beginning to raise achievement across the school. These initiatives have focused the school's attention on improving learning for all students.

The way in which the governing body has been involved in these developments is an example of their outstanding work. They provide challenge, rigour and a clear strategic direction. The headteacher is well supported by a very able senior leadership team. Resources are used well. The whole school community is effectively consulted on key issues' (Ofsted, 2006).

A feature of governance, explained Tony Barnes, is a systematic approach to planning. Senior staff prepare review and planning papers, each no more than five pages long, which guide the work of staff and serve as reports to the governing body. They have a common format: context and review of the previous year, strengths, weaknesses, and priorities and targets.

The schools' Review and Planning Paper 13, prepared in February 2006 before the inspection in March, was concerned with equity. It summarised past efforts and described the government's new contextualised value-added (CVA) database on student achievement. This had different classifications: all learners; girls at three levels of prior attainment; boys at three levels of prior attainment; and learners classified according to FSM, SEN, first language of English, and 10 different ethnic groups. A student focused approach ensures more effective tracking of progress for all students. Particular students were identified for support through a coaching initiative at key stage 4. Plans were made for staff development on the impact of social class on underachievement and provision of one-to-one support for students with particular needs, even if they were not on the SEN register.

A review and planning paper after the inspection summarised strengths identified in the inspection report and areas for improvement. Action plans were prepared, with particular attention being given to a more systematic approach to review. A review and planning paper on teaching quality, one of 21 to be scheduled for 2006-2007, was considered by governors in October 2006.

The school has a four-year improvement plan that is updated each year. It is summarised on an A4 page, which makes it readily accessible to staff and other stakeholders. Strategies and targets are set in three areas: pupil outcomes; learning and teaching; and leadership, management and professional development. The wider context is the school's plan for the allocation of resources. A more detailed document that maps past, current and future plans for improvement is also prepared using a format developed by Professor David Hopkins.

John Wise, chair of governors, acknowledges the value of the review and planning papers. He explained the approach to governance that was rated so highly in the Ofsted report: 'Governors understand that they are there to set the strategic direction for the school, to oversee planning and major strategic decisions and to be accountable for statutory duties and financial responsibilities. They are there ultimately to hold the headteacher and his staff accountable, but not to interfere in the management and organisation of the school. This leaves the governing body free to focus on the governance issues that are really important and to make their contribution to a successful school without being distracted by unnecessary detail' (Wise, 2006).

Haberdashers' Aske's Federation, London

The Haberdashers' Aske's Federation of two schools is included because its arrangements for governance illustrate three aspects of educational reform in England. One is that a federation of two schools has been created. The second is that one of these schools is an academy, a category of school that has struggled in the past, normally in a disadvantaged setting, but reopened in new state of the art premises with a private contribution to construction costs. The third is that the two schools are specialist schools, each offering a different specialism, with both also addressing the broad curriculum for secondary schools in England.

New approaches to governance in England are especially noteworthy in the case of federations, which are formal partnerships between schools. This federation, formed in 2005, comprises Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College, which has a long association with the Haberdashers' Livery Company that has supported education for more than 300 years; and the Knights Academy, formerly Malory School. They offer specialisms in music and sport, respectively, operating as separate 11-18 schools with separate delegated budgets from the federation but with a shared sixth form.

There is frank and open acknowledgement that this is a federation of the strong and the weak. Of Hatcham's 1384 students, 94% achieved five good passes in GCSE in 2006, up from 73% in 2001. FSM are provided to 18% of students, 15% of whom have English as a second language (ESL). It was judged to be an 'excellent school' in an Ofsted inspection in 2003. By contrast, Knights Academy has 750 students, just nine per cent of whom achieved five good passes in GCSE in 2005. This rose to 29% in 2006, one year after federation. At Knights, 52% of students receive FSM and 20% are ESL students. There is a single admissions process, with no more than 10% of students selected by aptitude in the two areas of specialism.

Dr Elizabeth Sidwell is the chief executive officer, that is, the senior educational leader serving both schools. She describes the relationship between the two schools: 'this is our federation: the very strong and the very weak. Together, we are raising the bar and narrowing the gap. Both schools now thrive and both will be strong. It's all about having a vision and sticking with it.' That vision 'is one where all students are inspired to reach their full potential, no matter their ability or background'. Improvement at Knights in 'narrowing the gap' in just one year is impressive.

The federation has a single governing body whose role and that of the chief executive officer are clearly defined in a formal statement. 'The governors' role is comparable to that of non-executive directors. The chairman's role is that of a non-executive chairman of a company, but of necessity he is required to have a close working relationship with the chief executive, who will in particular circumstances need to refer to him for ad hoc decisions or endorsements in respect of matters of urgency which arise. These may require action between governors' meetings, but their nature is not such as to necessitate a special meeting of the board of governors.

'Fundamentally, the main role of the governors is, in close consultation with the chief executive, chief financial officer and the principals of Hatcham and Knights, the formulation of policy and strategy for federation. Governors do not take direct responsibility for the implementation of policy, although they do have a role in the monitoring of targets (as outlined in the development plans) and achievements. The governors are accountable to students, to parents and to the local community, as well as to sponsors, for the overall performance of the federation'.

The governing body has three committees: finance, premises and general purposes; standards; and liaison. As well as the two principals, each of the constituent schools has two deputy principals with federation-wide responsibilities, including information technology, timetabling and assessment for learning. Dr Sidwell described her role. 'I am not a head any more. I am a CEO. Some may flinch at the corporate language. But what other title will do? My bursar is a CFO. My job is largely strategic but I still do assemblies – fewer – and lesson observations.'

She administers two schools over three sites, and is in negotiations for two primary schools to complete the set. She already leads over 300 staff and 2500 children, and works as a consultant to other academies in transition. She also heads a teacher training consortium of 10 schools, both state and independent. The federation's annual budget is thought to put it in the top 10% of all charities in England.

It is clear that Dr Sidwell is an example of a 'system leader', as that role is emerging in England. She considers the federation to have a number of benefits, as summarised in these excerpts from a presentation:

'A federation can offer both economies of scale and the advantages of scale – I can retain senior managers within the federation who would normally have to range from school to school for the right promotions. I don't lose them but rather see them develop: deputy principals to principals, site managers to facilities managers. My chief financial officer is of a quality that the budget of a single school could not afford. Most of all, a federation gives a head who has reached the top and still looks upward to a further, final challenge: one that can expand to the limit of your vision. Working within a team, everything is made possible.

'A federation is a way of becoming much bigger without losing the personal scale at each school. It disseminates best practice quickly between sites that still have enough autonomy to innovate and experiment.

'Federations are about the long term. Bound together in law. Schools with informal ties can be fair weather friends: when the pressure drops, there is no reason for them to stand by you in the storm. A federation is bound together for better or worse: that incentive commits us all to seek the best for the future. A federation recognises that a school is strongest in partnership with other schools'.

There are several categories of executive heads in England. Some take on responsibility for schools in difficulties while remaining heads of their own schools. There is no formal federation in these circumstances. Dr Sidwell sees particular advantages in a federation. 'I have seen super heads brought in and ground down by schools in my area. They were expected to do it all on their own. A federation of the strong and the weak gives a firm shoulder for a school in difficulties to lean on as it pushes itself upwards'.

Dr Sidwell explained how different forms of capital are aligned at the Haberdashers' Aske's Federation. As far as intellectual capital is concerned, she highlighted the way the federation can retain its most experienced and skilled staff. She believes the federation 'inspires staff to greater heights and levels of involvement'. A long-serving head of department in one school was challenged and extended in ways not possible in the past because he could take up a key post across the federation. The financial capital of the two schools is made more effective in a federation, with economies of scale in areas like ICT and reprographics. 'Pump priming' also occurs, as when the income from sixth form enrolments in the stronger school can be used to stimulate enrolments in the other. There is one overall income stream but each school has its own budget; virement between budgets ensures finances are effectively used. Spiritual capital is displayed in the embedding of 'respect and responsibility' in the Haberdasher brand. And the federation has close links with the community and is an active participant in several networks (social capital). It is a two-way arrangement, with the federation gaining from and contributing to others. It coordinates primary and secondary sporting activities in the Lewisham borough and the initial teacher training consortium referred to earlier.

The shared culture is enhanced in a number of ways. Students in the two schools are linked by membership of houses that span both schools. The uniform is the same, and curriculum, learning ethos and pedagogy are shared. Staff in different learning areas in the two schools meet together, identifying and applying their respective strengths and priorities for development. Each supports the other, with cross-school visits, observations, joint ventures and 'job swaps'.

Maria Luisa Bombal School, Santiago

The Maria Luisa Bombal School (MLBS) is a public (state) school in the commune (municipality) of Vitacura, a suburb of Santiago, the largest city in Chile. While constitutional powers to make laws in relation to education lie with the national government, the administration of schools is a municipal responsibility. The school has been recognised in national awards for excellence. It has a rare form of governance: the teachers form the governing body.

In 2006 there were 520 students at MLBS, from pre-school to senior secondary, with one class for each of the 14 grades. It was established as a primary school in 1958, with the addition of a pre-school in 1991 and secondary years from 2000. Only five schools in Chile share its distinctive feature of a governing body consisting of the teachers at the school. The school submitted a successful bid to the municipality for such an arrangement, with the legal entity being a public educational corporation. The school has autonomy in respect to curriculum, pedagogy, finance and administration. It is therefore a publicly funded self managing school. The principal is Nilda Sotelo Sorribes.

While Vitacura is a higher socioeconomic community, significant numbers of students at MLBS come from lower socioeconomic families and 20% of students have a disability (neurological 7.1%, emotional 5.4%, learning 5.4%, and language 2.1%). A majority (65%) come from the local community.

The school has been highly successful on a number of indicators. It has received the academic excellence award of the Ministry of Education on four successive occasions. This provides a monetary reward to members of staff. The school was one of the first in the country to receive the prestigious certificate of quality in management awarded by Fundación Chile. It is the top ranked school in the commune in student achievement at fourth and eighth grade, and achieves well above national average scores in key learning areas at fourth, eighth and tenth grade. At completion of high school, 72% go on to higher education, 11% to intensive preparation programmes for university selection, and 18% directly to employment (numbers are rounded).

Of particular interest is the special arrangement for governance, the initiative for which was taken by the municipal authority led by the mayor. A committee of teachers prepared the proposal, which included administrative and financial arrangements. Legal services were provided by the commune. The public educational corporation consists of the 32 teachers at the school, who are the stockholders and partners in the enterprise, with each teacher holding one share. The corporation appoints a board of directors consisting of three teachers who serve a two-year term. All policies for the school are approved by the board. The arrangement started in March 2002.

The school's mission is to 'give a scientific-humanistic education of excellence, oriented toward higher education and the creation of people with visions of the future'. Attitudes to be inculcated include self responsibility, self respect, honesty, solidarity, freedom, love and equality. This school is highly strategic in the way it goes about its work, with its own models for curriculum planning and quality assurance, including performance evaluation of teachers.

The organisational structure resembles a private school more than a public school. The principal has responsibility for implementation of every aspect of the school's operations which are organised on a project basis. There are six areas of operation: administration and finance, curriculum and pedagogy, teaching, research and training, family counselling, and behaviour and conduct regulations. The school receives a grant from the Ministry of Education and the municipality to operate the school, with the latter providing the larger share. The initial capital of the corporation in 2002 was US$5,926. It was US$215,205 in 2006.

Principal Nilda Sotelo Sorribes described the advantages of the approach. The school designs its own curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning, but generally follows the programmes of the Ministry of Education. The school also offers its own complementary programmes in an extended school day. The profiles for every position are designed by the school. Staff are contracted to the school and are assured the same salaries, professional development opportunities and other benefits as their counterparts elsewhere in public education. In addition, they receive bonuses for reaching pedagogical and administrative targets, and special bonuses for national holidays. Professional development is fully funded. Where income exceeds expenditure, budget surpluses are allocated to projects to support the achievement of higher academic standards. Some may be distributed to staff.

All services that are not directly related to teaching and learning are outsourced, including accounting, legal, cleaning and security. Expert consultants are employed to support staff in areas of the curriculum where improvement in teaching and learning is sought. A consulting company is employed to evaluate programmes in English, language, mathematics and science. Additional funds obtained from a number of foundations have been allocated to science laboratories, the media centre and the learning resource centre. Professional development is intensive and targeted at areas of high priority for the school.

A high degree of alignment is evident among the four forms of capital, made effective through its unusual approach to governance. Some observers, on initially learning of the arrangement wherein the governing body and shareholders are the teachers themselves, might expect the school to be inward looking, with the most powerful alignment to be found between the policies approved by the board and narrowly defined professional interests. Instead, one finds a high level of social capital, indicated by the alignment of school programmes and a national framework, complemented by local design that reflects the interests and aspirations of students and their parents. Support is sought from a range of public and private sources, with surpluses (profits) ploughed into the further development and refinement of academic programmes but also shared among staff. Intellectual capital is made strong with powerful professional development programmes for teachers but also the outsourcing of particular functions to expert consultants. Spiritual capital is strong as far as a unifying set of values is concerned. Everything is geared to providing the best possible outcomes for all students, with success indicated in the Ministry of Education awards and comparisons with like schools. The quality of its governance, leadership, management and administration is indicated in the school being an early recipient of certification by Fundación Chile.

St Monica's College, Melbourne

St Monica's College was nominated by senior staff in the Catholic Education Office Melbourne for the outstanding quality of its governance. As a Catholic school it receives public funding from both national and state governments on criteria that mainly reflect the socioeconomic status of its students. Catholic primary schools in Australia tend to be connected to individual parishes. If not operated by particular religious orders, secondary schools are governed under special arrangements involving a consortium of parishes. St Monica's in Melbourne is such a school.

St Monica's is a non-government (private) fee-paying Catholic high school located in Epping, a predominantly working-class outer suburb. The school was founded in 1964 for female students from grades 7–12 (approximately aged between 12 and 18) and expanded in 1978 to include male students and a second campus. Currently, St Monica's serves as a co-educational school with two sites in the Epping area. One site, Dalton Rd (DRC), caters for students in grades 7–9. The other site, Davisson St (DSC), is for grades 10–12.

The school also has a rural campus, named Ostia after an ancient Roman seaport, which is used for educational, spiritual and social purposes by all members of the college community and for special educational programmes for students in grades 10 and 12. There is a good gender balance in student population, the composition of which reflects the cultural diversity of Australia. In response to the diversity in the student body and school community, St Monica's is the only Catholic school in Australia to offer Modern Greek as a subject option.

The Catholic foundations are fundamental to each area of the school life, as seen through the school motto 'pray and persevere'. The school serves six local Catholic parishes, members of which sit on the college board to help in policy decisions at the school. The Catholic Education Offices in each diocese in Australia distribute funds received from the federal and state governments to Catholic schools, like St Monica's. Levels of funding reflect the socioeconomic status of the school community. In addition to fees and government funding, the school successfully bids for funds for projects on aspects of education and infrastructure. As a result St Monica's is a well-resourced school with a high quality environment for students and staff.

In the 1980s, St Monica's faced a significant decline in enrolment: the school population reduced to 1049 students resulting from a perceived lowering of educational standards. Under the leadership of Brian Hanley for the past 16 years, the school has again expanded to a population of over 1,800 students, with a waiting list for most year levels and around 230 full time members of staff.

With such a large number of full time staff on the two school sites, whole-school staff meetings are rare events at St Monica's. The governing body is the college board, which includes representatives of the six parishes it serves; representatives of the staff, parent and student body; and Brian Hanley as college principal. Each of the sites is managed by a campus director, also known as a deputy principal, who reports to the principal. Supporting the principal and campus directors in the school's day-to-day operation are three committees: business and finance; administration; and curriculum.

The business and finance committee is responsible for the ongoing development of college sites and facilities. The school's frequent upgrading and expansion of facilities are evident in the 'new development' page on the college website. During 2007 and 2008 the school is carrying out a AUD$6 million project to build two new environmentally sustainable buildings on the DRC campus, including flexible learning spaces and classrooms for students in grade 9 and six new science and technology laboratories.

The administration and curriculum committees are led by assistant principals, who are responsible for general organisation and the updating of curriculum and planning of curriculum based projects, respectively. The assistant principals meet regularly with the principal, senior teachers and other relevant staff members to facilitate the day-to-day management of the college. Also helping the curriculum committee are the campus directors and three cluster coordinators – leading teachers who are responsible for communication between the committee and members of the science and technology, arts or targeted education programme 'clusters' of faculties within the school.

There are two outstanding aspects of the governance arrangements for St Monica's. Although Brian Hanley is a member of each of the committees, the school has a high level of distributed leadership and a bottom-up process for making decisions that affect the school community. In addition to the senior leadership group, other staff members take on leadership roles as year-level leaders or faculty coordinators.

The level of distributed leadership in the school is empowering for teaching staff. It also allows a more strategic role for the principal that is similar to the senior educational leader or CEO role in the Haberdashers' Aske's Federation. Brian Hanley works with the teams to plan the school's future, releasing a strategic planning document for the school community every five years. The current strategic plan for 2005-2009 outlines the school's commitment to provide a holistic education with a relevant, enriching curriculum supported by high quality resources and facilities. A number of specific goals are attached to each commitment to be achieved in this five year period.

The second notable aspect of governance at St Monica's is that almost all decisions about the school are made by consensus. Staff members can voice their opinions about issues faced by the school in faculty or year-level meetings. The school has developed a culture where decisions in these meetings are not made by vote but rather discussed until a consensus is reached. Should members of these meetings not be able to reach a consensus, leaders decide on the course of action. This contingency, however, is rarely used. Brian Hanley states that teachers and staff within the school 'have to own the decisions and plans that we put in place. If they have been active in the decision making process they get behind them.'

A good example of all staff being actively involved in school processes is the staff professional code of practice, which was written and approved by staff. This document demonstrates the dedication of the staff to the school and students through statements such as 'St Monica's College staff will take an active role in being part of a supportive network, which has the responsibility of putting the wellbeing of students first'. Staff also wrote of their aim 'to create a stimulating, challenging and accessible learning environment which addresses each student's unique learning needs'.

The college has active links with both the local and international communities. In addition to its close ties to the Catholic parishes it serves, students in each grade level actively participate in fundraising and community service for charitable organisations. Student activities in community service include raising funds for a breakfast programme at John Pujajangka-Piyirn Catholic School in Western Australia, which serves an Indigenous population, and knitting scarves and collecting donations for the support of homeless shelters in their local community. The school supports the Presentation Sisters Catholic order in Pakistan and organises exchanges, with members of the order regularly being sponsored to visit the school in Melbourne. Sister school arrangements with schools in Japan, Greece and Africa encourage students at St Monica's to learn about and engage with different cultures.

More studies

More case studies of schools are contained in chapter 5. These were prepared as part of the International Project to Frame the Transformation of Schools described in chapter 1. One purpose of the project was to explore how schools that had been transformed, or had sustained high levels of performance, had created strong intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and aligned them through good governance to achieve their goals. Another purpose was to develop indicators for each kind of capital and for governance. It is helpful to explain how these indicators were developed and validated and this is the purpose of chapter 4.

4 Building a capacity for good governance

How does one assess a school's capacity for good governance? What strategies should be undertaken to build such a capacity? How should roles and responsibilities be assigned? Answers to these questions emerged from the six-country project described in chapter 1. In summary, the project in Australia, China, England, Finland, United States and Wales aimed to gain greater understanding of how schools strengthened and aligned intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and what approaches to governance were used to ensure that the schools' goals were achieved. Governance was considered to be the process through which a school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals. Chapter 5 contains illustrations from each of the six countries where studies were conducted in secondary schools that had been transformed or had sustained high performance.

The purpose of this chapter is to list indicators of good governance as validated in the international project and describe how schools can assess their capacity in this domain. A framework for planning the allocation of roles and responsibilities is introduced. Annex A (assessment) and annex B (roles and responsibilities) contain instruments to guide these activities in the school setting.

Indicators

Sample indicators were devised for each kind of capital and of governance. They served as a guide to researchers in each of the six countries in the selection of schools and to help build a common understanding of what was meant by each of the four concepts. There was no expectation that information on each indicator would be systematically gathered at every site.

The 50 indicators – 10 for each kind of capital and for governance – are listed below. Those with an asterisk (*) were illustrated in each school in each of the six countries. Indicators marked with a hash symbol (#) were illustrated in the majority of schools in each of the six countries. The remaining indicators were evident in at least one school in each country.

It is important to re-state a key theme in what we have described as a breakthrough in our understanding of governance. Some may seek a further explanation of why, for example, indicators of intellectual capital are included in a list of indicators to help form a judgement on a school's capacity for good governance. After all, it may be argued, is not governance concerned with structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities? That is so, as explained in chapter 2, but the most important consideration is that these must be established for a purpose: to help a school achieve its goals. Our research is consistent with a generation of studies that highlight the importance of intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital. To illustrate the point, consider the first indicator of intellectual capital: 'the staff allocated to or selected by the school are at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies'. A low rating is an indication of a shortcoming in governance at the system level or at the school level. We acknowledge the role of a systemic authority where staff are to be allocated to a school. However, our focus is on the role of the school.

Intellectual capital

1. *The staff allocated to or selected by the school are at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies

2. *The school identifies and implements outstanding practice observed in or reported by other schools

3. *The school has built a substantial, systematic and sustained capacity for acquiring and sharing professional knowledge

4. Outstanding professional practice is recognised and rewarded

5. *The school supports a comprehensive and coherent plan for the professional development of all staff that reflects its needs and priorities

6. #When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff

7. *The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields, to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources

8. *The school ensures that adequate funds are set aside in the budget to support the acquisition and dissemination of professional knowledge

9. #The school provides opportunities for staff to innovate in their professional practice

10. The school supports a no-blame culture which accepts that innovations often fail

Social capital

1. #There is a high level of alignment between the expectations of parents and other key stakeholders and the mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and programmes of the school

2. *There is extensive and active engagement of parents and others in the community in the school's educational programme

3. Parents and others in the community serve on the governing body of the school or contribute in other ways to the decision making process

4. #Parents and others in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances

5. *The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs

6. *The school accepts that support from the community has a reciprocal obligation for the school to contribute to the building of community

7. *The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources

8. *Partnerships have been developed and sustained to the extent that each partner gains from the arrangement

9. #The school allocates resources, both financial and human, to building partnerships that provide mutual support

10. *The school is co-located with or located near other services in the community and these services are used in support of the school

Financial capital

1. *Funds are raised from several sources including allocations by formula from the public purse, fees, contributions from the community, and other money raised from the public and private sectors

2. #Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school

3. #The financial plan has a multi-year outlook as well as an annual budget

4. *Allocation of funds reflects priorities among educational needs that take account of data on student achievement, evidence based practice, and targets to be achieved

5. There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process

6. *Appropriate accounting procedures are established to monitor and control expenditure

7. #Money can be transferred from one category of the budget to another as needs change or emerge

8. Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure, allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs

9. #Educational targets are consistently achieved through the planned allocation of funds

10. The funds from all sources are sufficient and sustainable to meet educational needs

Spiritual capital

1. #There is a high level of alignment between the values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning held by the school and members of its community

2. *The values and beliefs of the school, including where relevant those that derive from a religious foundation, are embedded in its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum

3. #The values and beliefs of the community are taken into account by the school in the formulation of its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum.

4. *The school explicitly articulates its values and beliefs in publications and presentations

5. *Publications and presentations in the wider community reflect an understanding of the values and beliefs of the school

6. #There are high levels of trust between the school and members of its community

7. #Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school

8. *The values and beliefs of the school are evident in the actions of students and staff

9. Staff and students who are exemplars of the values and beliefs of the school are recognised and rewarded

10. The values and beliefs of the school have sustained it or are likely to sustain it in times of crisis

Governance

1. *Authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities of the governing body and professional staff are clearly specified

2. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that obligations in respect to legal liability and risk management are addressed

3. *There is a clearly stated connection between the policies of the school and intended outcomes for students

4. #Policies have been prepared after consultation with key stakeholders within the school and the wider community

5. #Policies have been formally approved by the governing body

6. Policies are consistent in their application across the school so that students with the same needs are supported in the same manner

7. *Data are used in making decisions in the formulation of policies and making judgements about their effectiveness

8. *Data are gathered across the range of intended outcomes

9. #Information about policies and their implementation is readily available to all stakeholders

10. #All stakeholders have a strong sense of commitment to policies and their implementation

Relationships between indicators

Examination of these sample indicators highlights the relationships between the four kinds of capital. There are several indicators that could be listed in more than one kind of capital. The relationships are best illustrated as intersecting sets as in figure 2.

Figure 2 Relationships between the four kinds of capital
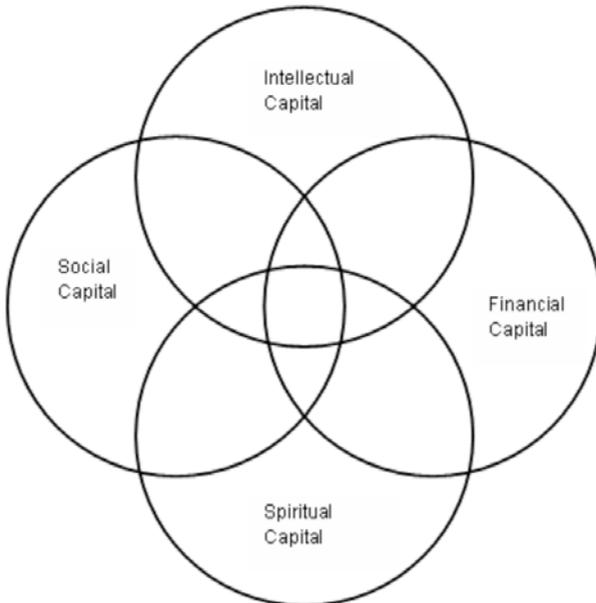
Assessing capacity

Annex A contains an instrument to assess a school's capacity for good governance. For each indicator, respondents are invited to provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development. The respondent might consider the school as a whole or a particular unit within the school.

While each indicator has been validated either in prior research or in the international project and therefore ought to be considered important, it is acknowledged that there will be relativities among them in each setting. The first set of ratings gives respondents an opportunity to assess these relativities. Clearly, however, the second rating is critical: 'how well your school is performing'. The third set of ratings gives an opportunity to reflect on another set of relativities. Ratings of performance may be less than optimal but action on some indicators may be more urgent than on others. We take the view that a school should not attempt to address too many priorities at once, or over a year, hence the invitation for each set of indicators to nominate the top three priorities for action.

The instrument may be used in a variety of contexts. We incorporated it in 22 workshops in which participants, including school and school system leaders, rated their own schools or school systems. Where there was a group of leaders from the same school, they completed their ratings individually and then compared responses, or worked through the list as a group. The instrument may be completed in the school setting by a leadership team or a group of staff working in the same area.

The instrument seems to travel well across international borders. We have used it with leaders from several countries, including Australia, England, Malaysia, Netherlands, Philippines, Singapore and Wales. Participants have not baulked at the inclusion of any indicator and have been able to work through the entire set of indicators in the context of their own schools or school systems.

Roles and responsibilities in governance

While we have been concerned about the preoccupation with structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in matters of governance, we have been clear in acknowledging that clarity in their specification is critically important. It is absolutely necessary, but it is not sufficient to ensure good governance to achieve transformation or sustain high performance.

Annex B contains an instrument to help the school to specify roles and responsibilities for the governing body and the principal/headteacher. We list each set of indicators for each form of capital – intellectual, social, spiritual and financial – and invite respondents to suggest a distribution of roles and responsibilities for each. It is assumed that the school has a governing body but the matter of membership is not addressed. We illustrated different approaches to membership in the four schools included in chapter 3 and provide more illustrations from the international study in six countries in chapters 5 and 6. This instrument assumes that the principal consults with staff and others about issues within her role or responsibility.

Respondents are invited to select from seven modes in determining a response for each indicator:

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

The instrument lends itself to use in seminars and workshops independent of the school setting; or as a process to be undertaken by a governing body seeking to improve its capacity.

5   Exemplary governance in six nations

One of the best ways to learn about effective governance is to share rich descriptions of how particular schools have achieved successful transformation or sustained high performance. Such accounts can act as a guide for all schools to succeed. This chapter gives an overview of approaches to governance in the six countries in the International Project to Frame the Transformation of Schools (Australia, China, England, Finland, USA and Wales). Consistent with the definition of governance adopted in this pamphlet, the focus is on how successful secondary schools from these countries align the four types of capital through high quality governance to achieve transformation.

Five secondary schools were selected for study in each country; findings common to each set of schools are summarised. One school is selected from each country to illustrate a particularly noteworthy approach. The chapter concludes with the identification of common features across each of the six countries, and an account of how these findings illustrate the sample indicators described in chapter 4.

Australia

School governance in Australia
• Leadership structures are developed to best suit school needs, but each school has a principal who should have a vision for the school
• The schools all have high levels of autonomy and consult with members of the community
• Principals are able to select and appoint teaching and non-teaching staff according to local needs
• Data are used to inform the school's annual planning, monitoring of school performance and accountability processes

The constitutional responsibility for education in Australia lies with the states and territories. Each of the six Australian states and two territories formulates policy and administers schools through departments of education. Three of the five secondary schools in the project were government (state) schools in Victoria, a system which provides relatively high levels of school autonomy. The principals in each case study have high levels of autonomy within a centrally determined framework of goals, standards, curriculum and accountability. The freedom to recruit and appoint high quality staff to meet the needs of the local community is reported to be a significant benefit. The other two secondary schools were publicly subsidised non-government schools.

School data are widely used to evaluate and monitor changes in the school and identify areas that need further attention. Schools use formal and informal data, drawing information from a wide range of sources that may include the results of standardised tests and surveys of the school community. The case study schools illustrated how school reports and annual implementation plans help in setting direction for the school and the goals and targets that need to be achieved.

Principals have a strong vision for their schools and a solid understanding of the educational processes required to achieve them. While the governance structures were tailored to suit the needs of the local community, all Victorian government schools are required to maintain a formal body, the school council, which approves plans and budgets but is not involved in day-to-day management. The school council generally comprises representatives of the school community, with parents forming a majority. Schools indicated that there is a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of their councils and there is a high level of support for approaches to improve student achievement. Koonung Secondary College provides an example of how shared understandings of roles and practices can support effective school governance.

Koonung Secondary College

The governance structure at Koonung Secondary College, a government school in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, comprises a leadership team and the school council, which includes representatives of the school community. The transformation of this school is demonstrated by sustained above average achievement of students in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and the high ratings achieved by the school in student, parent and staff surveys. The success of the school's transformation, which has seen its enrolments double to over 870, is described as being the result of the school leaders' vision and the governing body's direction for the growth of the school. The school council and the principal are seen as important elements in effective governance; they have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities in supporting the school's transformation.

The principal and other leaders are responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. The school's ability to successfully negotiate changes in the community, such as the closure of a nearby school, has been enhanced by the principal's trust and consultation with members of the school community. He consults widely with the community, supports a system of distributed leadership and has articulated a clear vision for the school's development over the next five years. The school council, on the other hand, is largely responsible for school policy decisions, which are made in consultation with other members of the school community. The business of the council, as with leadership teams in the school, is efficiently conducted with a clear agenda and purpose. The stated core purpose of the school is to meet the needs of all students and to support staff in the delivery of high quality teaching.

A number of strategies have helped Koonung recruit, support and maintain high quality teaching and non-teaching staff. The school has employed a human resources manager to help with recruitment, management and professional development, working with the curriculum coordinator to ensure that programmes meet staff needs and the school's goals. Several new committees reflect the school's distributed leadership structure. The finance committee monitors and maintains a surplus in the school budget, while consulting with the school council on major budget decisions. A number of parents show their support for the school through active involvement in the fundraising committee.

An outstanding aspect of governance at Koonung is the clarity of roles and responsibilities in the shared leadership of this school. There is strong social cohesion and collaboration with the school community, all working together to realise the vision for the next stage of the school's transformation.

China

School governance in China
• There is a balance between central and autonomous decision making
• The school principal is supported by other leaders in the school
• School leaders, including the communist party secretary in the school, play a role in school decision making
• The school principal is responsible for overall school development

The case studies from China comprised three secondary schools and two middle schools in the city of Chongqing. They illustrate a balance of centralised and decentralised governance. Secondary education in China is administered by local district or municipal governments under the guidance of the state council. The Ministry of Education for China establishes education policy. Within this framework, the provincial governments are responsible for assessment and planning for secondary teaching. The district and municipal governments are involved in the management of schools, including the appointment of school principals and teachers.

The decision making body in each school comprises the principal and deputy principals. The principal is ultimately responsible for the operation of the school. Deputy principals are generally given responsibility for particular areas of the school's operation.

A number of other stakeholders play a role in the governance of the case study schools in China. Representatives from the teaching staff and student body and the communist party secretary, a role which may be filled by the principal in some schools, contribute to decision making and support the work of school leaders.

Chongqing 37th Secondary School

Chongqing 37th Secondary School is one of the largest schools in the city of Chongqing, with approximately 5000 enrolled students. Teachers and parents are actively involved in governance and regularly meet with school leaders to discuss progress. They are encouraged to share their views and provide feedback on the school's goals and plans. An association with Southwest Normal University supports the school. So the direction and progress of the school are considered to be the result of the collaborative effort of parents, staff, school leaders and other stakeholders.

The principal has played a critical role in the school's efforts to enhance the creativity, coherence and strength of other school leaders. When he started at Chongqing 37th Secondary School in 1998, he proposed the idea of governing the school with 'humanity'. The goal of governance with humanity in this context is to give teachers respect and a feeling of autonomy so that they can reach their potential as educators. The principal has taken the lead in encouraging teachers to be creative and reflective in their teaching and to conduct school-based research. As a result, a number of teachers have initiated action research projects and published their findings in education journals.

Among significant efforts to support teaching staff, the school has an induction programme for all teachers in their first three years of teaching, which includes specialised professional development activities. It has also established a three-stage programme to help new teachers gain their qualifications in four years and to become 'excellent teachers' within six years of employment. An incentive system encourages teachers' participation in professional development. All teaching staff are paid for their attendance at professional development activities and receive additional financial rewards for achievements in research and teaching. Senior teaching staff have the option to reduce their teaching load and take on greater responsibilities for teacher training within the school, while maintaining their salary.

Members of the school community share the belief that teachers can be motivated to work more effectively if they are shown respect. As a demonstration of this respect, the school praises its teachers in public forums. Any advice or feedback on their teaching practices, on the other hand, is provided in a one-on-one setting.

The school provides a number of activities and events to entertain and support teachers outside school hours. Activities have included a tai chi club, poets' night and counselling service. These activities give teachers the opportunity to interact and encourage informal peer support between members of staff. Chongqing 37th Secondary School has used all of these strategies to attract and retain high quality teaching staff and, as a result, to further improve the performance of the school.

England

School governance in England
• The schools generally have distributed leadership structures but a strong head, who leads with vision, commitment and energy
• The schools are able to appoint staff who have a high level of expertise and match school needs
• The schools are innovative and enterprising and have a high degree of flexibility with the curriculum

The school system in England is managed at both national and local levels. The central (national) government is responsible for planning, policy formulation and the provision of education across the country. While the statutory powers of the local authorities in relation to education have been progressively reduced, they are still generally responsible for the supervision of schools' implementation of national policies and the distribution of government funding to schools. Around 90% of funding is now delegated for local decision making by the schools' governing bodies.

The English case studies provided detailed illustrations of the structures and processes in specialist schools throughout the country. Each of the case study schools has a governing body, leadership team and headteacher with vision, commitment and energy to strengthen and align the four forms of capital. In general, these schools reported a preference for distributed leadership structures. In every school, however, one has the sense that the headteachers, who demonstrate passionate involvement and interest in all aspects of operations, have a powerful influence on approaches to governance and the success of their schools.

These high performing specialist schools have also appointed, in addition to teachers, non-teaching staff members who bring valuable expertise. School leadership teams often include bursars, finance managers and site managers. Most now employ teaching/ learning assistants who work alongside and support teachers.

The national curriculum has become increasingly flexible in recent years. Each school studied has embraced this freedom with an innovative and enterprising spirit which is evident in approaches to governance.

Ringmer Community College

The governing body at Ringmer Community College, a specialist technology and vocational community college, is reported to be 'challenging and active'. The headteacher reported that, some years ago, there were concerns that the governing body would accept her proposals without question. Changes in the governing body have encouraged active and challenging discussions about proposals for change. The governing body, which includes staff members, parent governors, community governors and the head boy and head girl of the school, are involved in the approval and updating of all school policies. The school employs a non-teaching member of staff to manage and evaluate school data, which feature prominently in all of the college's planning and evaluation.

Since 2003, the current principal has restructured the college's leadership. Most staff and parents approve the new delegated leadership model. Changes in the leadership model have been accompanied by a restructure of the pastoral care system. The previous system was based on year levels, and led by heads of year. This has been replaced by a house system with small age-vertical mentor groups for pastoral care, led by teaching and associate staff. The new heads of house hold non-teaching appointments, which releases teaching staff from many pastoral care activities. While initially received with some trepidation, this reform has had a positive effect on behaviour and attitudes within the school.

The leadership team at Ringmer College consults widely within the school and wider community. All teaching and non-teaching staff are actively involved in some aspects of decision making and planning, and this applies at all levels. This approach has been highly effective: staff members report feeling ownership of school decisions and accept responsibility for maintaining and improving the quality of the learning environment. Students are also actively involved in the development of college policies and are consulted in all initiatives, including the development of new school buildings. The implementation of students' suggestions for improving the sustainability of the school, such as the harvesting of rainwater, has led to the students and school being awarded the Eco Schools green flag three times.

The college holds regular meetings of stakeholders, including parents, community members and partner organisations to discuss its vision, policies and practices. It supports community projects, an outstanding example being its management of a local swimming pool, in association with the local council and Freedom Leisure, a non-profit organisation. The partnership between Ringmer College and Freedom Leisure has given the community a fully staffed and maintained pool that can be used free of charge by local schools within school hours.

Finland

School governance in Finland
• Schools follow a national curriculum which provides little room for flexibility at the school level
• Schools have considerable autonomy in making decisions about day-to-day school management
• Schools use data to internally evaluate and monitor their progress
• Principals and staff are committed to education and student wellbeing

The schools from Finland that were studied in the project are all secondary schools located in the city of Tampere. Schools follow a national curriculum developed by the Finnish National Board of Education, a parastatal body contracted by the Finnish Ministry of Education. The National Board also functions as an advisory body to the schools and 420 municipal authorities in Finland. Municipal education authorities are responsible for providing school funding and setting the school year, and can add local detail and focus to the national curriculum. Reforms in 1994 devolved the decision making responsibilities to 'where the skills are', namely, the schools. These reforms have provided schools with greater autonomy in their day-to-day management. In terms of curriculum, however, schools have limited capacity to make changes once the curriculum has been approved by the municipal authority.

Teachers have considerable freedom in selecting their pedagogical styles and the order in which topics are taught. Teachers hold a highly trusted role in Finnish society. They are valued as professionals and are expected to have expertise in pedagogy and their subject areas. As such, there is a belief that it is not necessary to evaluate teachers' work.

Schools in Finland are not externally evaluated in the same way as schools in other countries. The primary goal of the education system is to provide equitable access to high quality education for all Finns. There is little desire, therefore, to rank schools. The National Board of Education carries out national school evaluations, which provide an overview of how the nation's schools are performing but do not identify individual schools. Schools are active in undertaking self-evaluations and comparing their results with the results of the national evaluations, in order to identify areas in which they can improve.

In the past, the National Board of Education was actively involved in all school management decisions. The municipal education authorities, however, are now responsible for schools' administration and have devolved a number of decision making responsibilities to the school level. Principals reported that this devolution of responsibilities has greatly increased their workload and changed their role. They stated that they now spend a significant amount of time focused on administration and the provision of data for the municipal authorities, and less time with teachers and students.

Ristinarkku School

Ristinarkku School is a secondary school in Tampere with about 360 students. The principal reported that in the last decade he has more power and independence in the management of the school. In the early 1990s, the National Board of Education was highly directive and actively involved in all school decisions. The devolution of responsibilities to the school level in Finland has substantially increased the workload for school leaders in a number of areas. The principal believes that experience enables school leaders to become more efficient and better able to prioritise tasks. Nevertheless, he is sometimes frustrated that he is unable to spend more time with teachers and students as he is now responsible for new areas such as finance and the selection of school staff.

Previously, the local board of education in Tampere was responsible for the interviewing and selection of school staff. While the municipal board is still responsible for employing staff, the principal now has the ability to interview candidates for vacant positions. The school can choose the candidate who best meets its needs and recommend their appointment to the local board. As a reflection of their focus on the holistic care of all students, Ristinarkku School employs a curator (counsellor) and specialist teacher, in addition to other teaching staff, to help students with particular difficulties.

Despite increases in responsibility in the management of schools, schools have limited ability to choose what will be taught, except for some of the non-compulsory subjects. The principal at Ristinarkku School is not concerned about the limitations of the curriculum framework as he did not believe that the previous more flexible curriculum was more effective for student learning.

School development and improvement in Finland are based on school self-evaluation. The local board of education in Tampere collects some information from schools, but this is primarily used for social science related studies. Municipal authorities are also interested in the culture of schools. The National Board of Education carries out a survey-based national evaluation of schools. Although this survey does not evaluate or identify individual schools, schools are able to order the same tests and independently evaluate their own practices. These self-evaluations can then be directly compared to the national results.

United States

School governance in the United States
• Schools have different governance structures
• The principal is the leader of the school in formulating vision and transformation processes
• Schools have distributed leadership with delegated decision making

As with Australia, the responsibility for school education in the USA lies with the states, although regulations and policies for school administration are set by school districts. There are, therefore, significant differences in the systems of schooling in each state and differences in the regulatory frameworks for districts within a state. One exception is Hawaii, which has only one school district authority to administer all schools in the state. The five secondary schools in this project are located in different states including Hawaii, New York and Michigan. Although they are all public schools, their governance structures differ significantly. Some have high levels of autonomy, while others must function within a tight decision making framework set by district authorities. Despite the differences, the governance structures in each of these schools support the central role played by the school principal.

Principals have embraced their role as the leader of the school's transformation processes. Each has worked with staff, students, parents and community to establish a vision for their school. They have communicated this vision and encouraged members of the local community to support the school in its efforts to achieve it.

While principals are central to the school transformation processes, they are not autocratic. They rely on others in the school leadership teams and all staff to collaboratively work towards the schools' goals. Distributed forms of leadership are promoted, with vice-principals and other staff members sharing responsibilities for some tasks. It was also reported that principals actively seek feedback and assistance from members of the school and wider community.

James Campbell High School

With 2200 students, James Campbell High School serves a culturally diverse community in Ewa Beach on the western shore of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The principal encourages members of the school and wider community to be actively involved in decision making processes. Parents and community members are invited to participate in the school community council, which generates ideas for change and approves plans for the school. The school has also established a democratic governance model that requires 80% of the faculty to vote to approve any changes at the school. The principal indicated that the school has 'set up our governance structure for decision making through our leadership team. Creativity and imagination evolve from the diversity and strength of the group process, analysis of data, truce and collaboration.'

While the school has a highly inclusive and collaborative model of governance, the principal is ultimately responsible for decisions. Significant changes have been made to the school's structure, which have aided its transformation from a low performing school to being selected as a 'Breakthrough High School' in 2004. The school governance team altered the timetable to enable staff to participate in professional development each day. The new schedule enables every teacher to undertake professional development activities for one of the four 80 minute classes. The school hired consultants to train teachers to manage these extended lessons, collaborate in lesson planning, carry out classroom observations and form small learning communities.

The establishment of small learning communities has also been used in changes to the internal structure of the school. When the principal was appointed, the school had a very traditional structure: students were separated into three groups, supervised by one of the three vice-principals and two school counsellors. The school now maintains small learning communities inside each academic department. The departments currently have small learning communities, referred to as 'academies', for 9th and 10th grades and five learning communities for students in grades 11 and 12. There are department heads for the 9th and 10th grade academies, and each of the small learning communities in the upper levels has a chairperson.

All departments in the school collaborate in selecting three goals to be the focus for the school. Individual departments, however, can decide the methods that they will employ in meeting their goals. If they are able to maintain levels of student enrolment and meet their achievement goals, departments are awarded additional funding which they can choose how to allocate.

Wales

School governance in Wales
• Schools have an inclusive distributed leadership structure, with a strong role for the head, who is closely involved in school improvement and pedagogical developments
• Financial capital has been used to adapt school management, including the appointment of support staff such as bursars and site managers
• Learning support staff and non-teaching staff support student learning and wellbeing

The system of education in Wales is managed at a national and local level. While many of the Acts of Parliament in Britain apply to schools in both England and Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government has the power to implement secondary legislation for education and training. The Welsh Assembly Government is also responsible for the development of the national school curriculum. The local responsibility for schooling in Wales is with children's services departments, although local education authorities have been maintained to distribute funding and provide support for their schools.

The Welsh case studies provided descriptions of three comprehensive and two high schools, one of which is a voluntary-aided Catholic school. One feature of the governance structures in each school was the strong, purposeful and inclusive leadership of the headteacher. Heads were all closely involved in school improvement and pedagogical developments. It was reported that headteachers try to maintain their professional knowledge and understanding of research developments that can help their school.

Schools have used their financial capital to create positions for additional support staff. Most have appointed more non-teaching staff. Bursars and/ or site managers enable the leadership team to focus more strongly on learning and teaching. Increased numbers of learning support staff are helping teachers in the classroom and relieving them of many pastoral care duties. These schools are exemplars of how to effectively support staff and develop strong middle leadership skills.

While each school has adopted a form of distributed leadership, the extent of the distribution of responsibilities varies between schools. The style of governance in each school reflects the school's culture and context. In two of the five schools, there appears to be strong leadership from the top in particular areas of school improvement.

Barry Comprehensive School

Barry Comprehensive School is a large secondary school with 1465 boys age 11–16, which provides joint provision for students from 16 to 19 years of age through the neighbouring girls' comprehensive school. The headteacher of this school was described as 'an inspired and inspiring leader' in a recent inspection report. He prides himself on knowing the names of almost all members of the student community and being actively involved in all aspects of the school, including working in the school tuckshop (canteen) and making frequent classroom visits.

The headteacher has strongly focused on the transformation of the school culture. The school has worked towards eradicating a culture of aggression and moved towards one in which strong values are recognised and reflected in the work of staff and students. Several steps have been taken to achieve this goal, including the reintroduction of a school uniform, which has helped to create a stronger sense of school identity. The provision of subjects like drama, the performing arts and catering have been highly successful in supporting this change. The school also maintains an open-door policy for parents.

The cultural change within the school has been further supported by the use of learner-centred approaches to teaching and learning. The local authority provides one of the lowest levels of funding in Wales. The school has successfully sought external funding and carefully manages its financial capital to maintain small class sizes and personalised attention for all students. The school has also introduced learning mentors, non-teaching staff who have been appointed to work with the heads of year and heads of faculty to manage pastoral care and to support students with specific learning needs.

All professional development activities have been linked to performance management and are monitored closely by the school leadership team. While the headteacher believes in specifying the school's professional practice, the leadership style at Barry Comprehensive is highly democratic, built on a distributed leadership structure. The headteacher works with a leadership team involving a deputy headteacher, four assistant headteachers, heads of years and heads of all school faculties. The leadership team is empowered and supported by the headteacher to continue the school's transformation, which has seen the school win the award for the most improved school in Wales in successive years, from 2003 to 2005.

Common features of governance in six countries

All of the schools described in these case studies have established strong governance structures, which are used to align the four forms of capital and meet their goals. It is interesting to note that each school has developed its own structure, which range from traditional top-down approaches to more distributed, democratic and inclusive forms of leadership. Analysis identified two broad features shared by all of the schools in each of the six countries.

Shared practices in school governance
• Schools have developed leadership structures that address the needs of the school community and are led by a principal with vision and commitment
• Schools have high levels of freedom in day-to-day management

Schools have developed leadership structures that address the needs of the school community and are led by a principal with vision and commitment

The schools from each country have developed strong governance structures to suit the needs of their school community. The development of effective governance structures was identified as a significant factor in the success of all schools involved in the project. The syntheses of governance practices in each country have indicated that most of these schools have some form of distributed leadership. School principals share their roles, responsibilities and authority with assistant heads and heads of departments or other units. Many have established new positions on the school leadership team to help with the effective management and transformation of the school. Cardiff High School in Wales, for example, has created the positions of 'Head of thinking for learning' and 'Head of school research and international links' to strengthen the intellectual capital of the school. Leadership is also a shared responsibility at Crownpoint High School in the United States, with the principal reporting that 'every adult wears multiple hats'.

While each of these schools has a strong leadership team, the case studies indicate that the school principals show vision. They are described as leaders of teaching and learning and are closely involved in school improvement.

Schools have high levels of freedom in day-to-day management

School leaders have a high degree of freedom in the day-to-day management of their schools. In addition to managing the school budget and selecting staff, schools have been able to implement innovative and entrepreneurial plans. They have established strong relationships with other organisations. Furthermore, some schools in Australia, China, England, the United States and Wales have used the flexibility in the curriculum to develop personalised learning programmes to suit their individual students' needs.

It has been noted that schools in Finland do not have a high degree of freedom in changing the curriculum. The case study of Ristinarkku School, however, indicates that teachers have the freedom to choose the methods that they use in their classrooms. Teachers are, therefore, able to tailor their teaching methods to suit the needs of individual student cohorts. While Finnish schools are required to follow the national curriculum, the National Board of Education no longer gives schools direction on day-to-day management. These schools have high levels of freedom to make decisions on day-to-day operations to suit the needs of their community.

Relationship to sample indicators

A set of 10 sample indicators was devised for each kind of capital and for governance, as listed in chapter 4 and incorporated in instruments contained in annex A and annex B. Researchers in each of the six countries referred to these to develop a common understanding of each concept. While there was no expectation that information on each indicator would be systematically gathered for all case studies, many of the sample indicators were illustrated by the rich accounts of practice in each school. The two features were identified in each of the case studies from the six countries as described in the previous section. Closer examination, however, reveals that these broad descriptions reflect four of the 10 sample indicators for governance.

All of these schools have implemented models of governance that most effectively address the needs of the school and local community. Each model of governance described in these case studies, however, indicates that all school staff and members of the governing body are aware of their roles and responsibilities. In some cases, such as Koonung Secondary College in Australia and Barry Comprehensive School in Wales, new roles in the leadership team and middle management have been established, with clearly stated goals, responsibilities and accountabilities (indicator 1).

School policies have also come under the spotlight in these schools. Some schools, like James Campbell High School in the United States, have radically restructured policies and practices to improve student learning and staff professional development. Policy changes at Chongqing 37th Secondary School support and encourage staff to research and implement innovative teaching and learning practices. One common feature of policy changes in these schools is that they are intended to improve school performance and support students' needs (indicator 3).

All of the schools involved in this project are active in gathering data to monitor, evaluate and improve their practice (indicator 8). Each uses its own data and evidence from research in the development of school policies and practices (indicator 7). Improvement and evaluation at Ristinarkku School, like many schools in Finland, are based primarily on self-evaluation. While they are able to order evaluation surveys from the National Board of Education, the staff at Ristinarkku collect, collate and examine their own data to monitor the school's performance and identify areas for improvement. Ringmer College in England has appointed a non-teaching member of staff to collect and manage all school data, which are used to help in decision making processes.

6   Leadership and governance

A common theme in all the case studies described in chapters 3 and 5 is the importance of leadership in good governance, especially by the principal/headteacher, even though that person may not be the head of the governing body. There is a further breakthrough here, for discussion about the role of the principal is more often than not concerned with the balance of leadership and management. There are in fact three processes at work – leadership, management and governance – and there is common ground in the exercise of each.

The purposes of this short concluding chapter are to explore issues in leadership implied but not explicitly addressed in earlier chapters, notably system leadership, and to suggest what the next steps might be for those who seek to build a capacity for governance.

System leadership

Outstanding practice reported in chapters 3 and 5 does not happen through energies and expertise generated at the school level alone. What occurs in schools is framed by governance at other levels, including national, state or district authorities, depending on the context. In Finland, for example, the remarkable commitment to building intellectual capital in schools, invariably highlighted as a factor in explaining the success of students from Finland in international tests, has been made possible by national policies that now require every teacher to have a master's degree, and municipal policies that permit applications for appointment to be made directly to schools that then forward recommendations to the municipal board. What is reported for schools in England and Wales has been made possible by national policies that have increased the level of autonomy of schools and are encouraging even more. National policies have also facilitated the development of specialist secondary schools, each having a partnership with business, to the point where more than 90% of the country's approximately 3100 secondary schools have this status.

System leadership is shown in other ways. In addition to higher level frameworks for governance, there must be frameworks of support that help schools build a capacity for outstanding governance. Returning again to Finland, principals require certification from the National Board of Education and requirements reflect their expanding roles in the selection of staff. In England, the National College for School Leadership, arguably a world leader in its field, was established for the same purpose. The expectation that secondary schools will have partnerships with business requires new knowledge and skill for school leaders, especially in strengthening the social and financial capital of their schools. But they need other kinds of support, and this is where the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust comes in. Among its many functions, it helps schools establish these partnerships.

It also offers hundreds of programmes around the country to build intellectual capital in areas of specialisation. Support of the kind described here is thus available from a wider range of organisations and institutions than in the past, with non-profit bodies such as SSAT joining local authorities in ensuring the requisite capacities are strengthened and sustained.

System leadership has taken on a new connotation in England, such that headteachers become leaders in the system. Hopkins describes system leadership in these terms in a pamphlet in the iNet series (see also Hopkins, 2007): '"System leaders" are those head teachers (principals) who are willing to shoulder system leadership roles: who care about and work for the success of other schools as well as their own. System leaders measure their success in terms of improving student learning and increasing achievement, and strive to both raise the bar and narrow the gap(s). They look both into classrooms and across the broader system, they realise in a deep way that the classroom, school and system levels all impact on each other. Crucially they understand that in order to change the larger system you have to engage with it in a meaningful way' (Hopkins, 2006).

The role of system leader in this image is already taking shape in England, as illustrated by Hopkins:

- Partnering another school which is facing particular difficulties, ie to run two schools. This role is now commonly referred to as being an executive head, or when more schools are involved in a federation as the chief executive

- Choosing to lead a school that is in extremely challenging circumstances or becoming an Academy principal

- Acting as a civic leader to broker and shape the networks of wider relationships across communities that can support children in developing their potential. In England this role currently relates to leading an education improvement partnership or a cluster of extended schools

- Working as a change agent within the system, such as a consultant leader with a school leadership team to improve levels of attainment, or operating as one of the new school improvement partners (Hopkins, 2006)

Chapter 3 includes a description of a system leader in action with a focus on governance (Dr Elizabeth Sidwell, chief executive officer of Haberdashers' Aske's Federation).

Next steps

The next steps for school and system leaders may include:

- Conduct an audit of current capacity for governance using the instrument in annex A. The focus might be the system as a whole, a region or district, a school, or a unit within a school. The end point is the identification of priorities

- Determine strategies for action based on the indicators in annex A

- Review structures, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities using the instrument in annex B

- Design and deliver related professional development programmes to help build understanding and capacity in governance. These programmes might include site visits to schools and systems with outstanding governance or masterclasses by leaders who have excelled in this domain

Annex A

Governance: A self-assessment for schools

Governance is the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals

Schools that have been transformed or have sustained outstanding performance have been effective in building strength in four kinds of capital – intellectual, social, spiritual, financial – and aligning them through good governance to achieve their goals.

- Intellectual capital refers to the level of knowledge and skill of those who work in or for the school

- Social capital refers to the strength of formal and informal partnerships and networks involving the school, parents, community, business and industry, indeed, all individuals, agencies, organisations and institutions that have the potential to support or be supported by the school

- Spiritual capital refers to the strength of moral purpose and the degree of coherence among values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning. For some schools, spiritual capital has a foundation in religion. In others, it may refer to ethics and values shared by members of the school and its community

- Financial capital refers to the money available to support the school

- Governance is the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, financial and spiritual capital and aligns them to achieve its goals
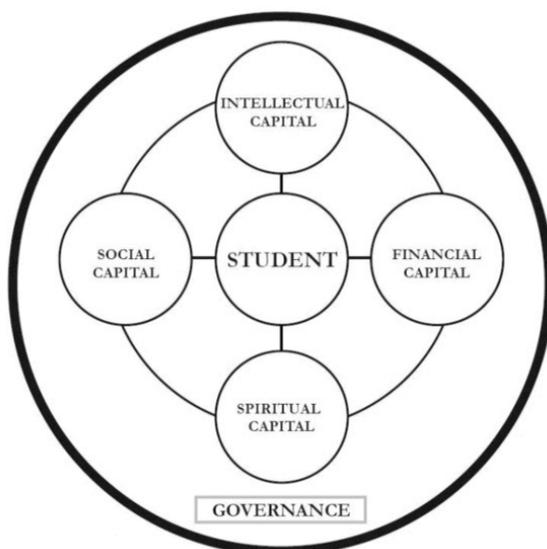
Assessment

Research has validated 10 indicators for each kind of capital and of governance. These are set out in the pages that follow, providing a starting point for assessment of the strength of each.

For each indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Intellectual capital

For each indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low		High	Low		High	Low		High
1. The staff allocated to or selected by the school are at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies									
2. The school identifies and implements outstanding practice observed in or reported by other schools									
3. The school has built a substantial, systematic and sustained capacity for acquiring and sharing professional knowledge									
4. Outstanding professional practice is recognised and rewarded									
5. The school supports a comprehensive and coherent plan for the professional development of all staff that reflects its needs and priorities									

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low		High	Low		High	Low		High
6. When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff									
7. The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields, to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources									
8. The school ensures that adequate funds are set aside in the budget to support the acquisition and dissemination of professional knowledge									
9. The school provides opportunities for staff to innovate in their professional practice									
10. The school supports a no-blame culture which accepts that innovations often fail									
TOTAL	/50			/50			/50		
							☐ ☐ ☐		
							Top 3 priorities		

Social capital

For each indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
1. There is a high level of alignment between the expectations of parents and other key stakeholders and the mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and programmes of the school									
2. There is extensive and active engagement of parents and others in the community in the school's educational programme									
3. Parents and others in the community serve on the governing body of the school or contribute in other ways to the decision making process									
4. Parents and others in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances									
5. The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs									

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			**1 2 3 4 5**			**1 2 3 4 5**		
	Low		**High**	**Low**		**High**	**Low**		**High**
6. The school accepts that support from the community has a reciprocal obligation for the school to contribute to the community									
7. The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources									
8. Partnerships have been developed and sustained to the extent that each partner gains from the arrangement									
9. The school has allocated resources, both financial and human, to building partnerships that provide mutual support									
10. The school is co-located with or located near other services in the community and these services are used to support the school									
TOTAL	**/50**			**/50**			**/50**		
							☐ ☐ ☐		
							Top 3 priorities		

Financial capital

For each indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
1. Funds are raised from several sources including allocations by formula from the public purse, fees, contributions from the community, and other money raised from the public and private sectors									
2. Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school									
3. The financial plan has a multi-year outlook as well as an annual budget									
4. Allocation of funds reflects priorities among educational needs that take account of data on student achievement, evidence based practice, and targets to be achieved									
5. There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process									
6. Appropriate accounting procedures are established to monitor and control expenditure									

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
7. Money can be transferred from one category of the budget to another as needs change or emerge									
8. Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure, allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs									
9. Educational targets are consistently achieved through the planned allocation of funds									
10. The funds from all sources are sufficient and sustainable to meet educational needs									
TOTAL	**/50**			**/50**			**/50**		
							☐ ☐ ☐		
							Top 3 priorities		

Spiritual capital

For each indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
1. There is a high level of alignment between the values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning held by the school and members of its community									
2. The values and beliefs of the school, including where relevant those that derive from a religious foundation, are embedded in its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum									
3. The values and beliefs of the community are taken into account by the school in the formulation of its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum									
4. The school explicitly articulates its values and beliefs in publications and presentations									
5. Publications and presentations in the wider community reflect an understanding of the values and beliefs of the school									

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
6. There are high levels of trust between the school and members of its community									
7. Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school									
8. The values and beliefs of the school are evident in the actions of students and staff									
9. Staff and students who are exemplars of the values and beliefs of the school are recognised and rewarded									
10. The values and beliefs of the school have sustained it or are likely to sustain it in times of crisis									
TOTAL	/50			/50			/50		
							☐ ☐ ☐		
							Top 3 priorities		

Governance

For each of indicator, provide ratings of (1) importance in the context of your school, (2) how well your school is performing, and (3) the priority you attach to further development.

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			**1 2 3 4 5**			**1 2 3 4 5**		
	Low		**High**	**Low**		**High**	**Low**		**High**
1. Authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities of the governing body and professional staff are clearly specified									
2. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that obligations in respect to legal liability and risk management are addressed									
3. There is a clearly stated connection between the policies of the school and intended outcomes for students									
4. Policies have been prepared after consultation with key stakeholders within the school and the wider community									
5. Policies have been formally approved by the governing body									
6. Policies are consistent in their application across the school so students with the same needs are supported in the same manner									

Sample indicator	Importance			Performance			Priority		
	1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5			1 2 3 4 5		
	Low	High		Low	High		Low	High	
7. Data are used in making decisions in the formulation of policies and making judgements about their effectiveness									
8. Data are gathered across the range of intended outcomes									
9. Information about policies and their implementation is readily available to all stakeholders									
10. All stakeholders have a strong sense of commitment to policies and their implementation									
TOTAL	**/50**			**/50**			**/50**		
							☐ ☐ ☐		
							Top 3 priorities		

Annex B

Roles and responsibilities in governance

Background

- Governance refers to the process through which the school builds its intellectual, social, spiritual and financial capital and aligns them to achieve its goals

- Effective governance calls for an unambiguous specification of roles and responsibilities for the governing body of the school and the principal (headteacher) who normally serves as its chief executive officer

Action

- Assuming the school has a governing body, and setting aside the issue of membership, suggest a distribution of roles and responsibilities for each form of capital for your school. Assume also that the principal consults with staff and others

- Choose from the following modes in determining your response

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

- Choose the number that matches your judgement for most decisions of the kind related to the indicator. Make a comment on exceptional cases

Intellectual capital

Mode

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
1. The staff allocated to or selected by the school are at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies		
2. The school identifies and implements outstanding practice observed in or reported by other schools		
3. The school has built a substantial, systematic and sustained capacity for acquiring and sharing professional knowledge		
4. Outstanding professional practice is recognised and rewarded		
5. The school supports a comprehensive and coherent plan for the professional development of all staff that reflects its needs and priorities		
6. When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff		
7. The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields, to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources		

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
8. The school ensures that adequate funds are set aside in the budget to support the acquisition and dissemination of professional knowledge		
9. The school provides opportunities for staff to innovate in their professional practice		
10. The school supports a no-blame culture which accepts that innovations often fail		

Social capital

Mode

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
1. There is a high level of alignment between the expectations of parents and other key stakeholders and the mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and programmes of the school		
2. There is extensive and active engagement of parents and others in the community in the educational programme of the school		
3. Parents and others in the community serve on the governing body of the school or contribute in other ways to the decision making process		
4. Parents and others in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances		
5. The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs		

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
6. The school accepts that support from the community has a reciprocal obligation for the school to contribute to the community		
7. The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources		
8. Partnerships have been developed and sustained to the extent that each partner gains from the arrangement		
9. The school allocates resources, both financial and human, to building partnerships that provide mutual support		
10. The school is co-located with or located near other services in the community and these services are used in support of the school		

Spiritual capital

Mode

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
1. There is a high level of alignment between the values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning held by the school and members of its community		
2. The values and beliefs of the school, including where relevant those that derive from a religious foundation, are embedded in its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum		
3. The values and beliefs of the community are taken into account by the school in the formulation of its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum.		
4. The school explicitly articulates its values and beliefs in publications and presentations		
5. Publications and presentations in the wider community reflect an understanding of the values and beliefs of the school		
6. There are high levels of trust between the school and members of its community		

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
7. Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school		
8. The values and beliefs of the school are evident in the actions of students and staff		
9. Staff and students who are exemplars of the values and beliefs of the school are recognised and rewarded		
10. The values and beliefs of the school have sustained it or are likely to sustain it in times of crisis		

Financial capital

Mode

1. Governing body decides without reference to externally determined frameworks or consultation with others

2. Governing body decides within a framework set by a systemic authority

3. Governing body decides after consultation with principal or others

4. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority and reports to the governing body

5. Principal decides within a framework set by a systemic authority without reference to governing body

6. Principal decides without reference to a framework set by a systemic authority

7. Unit of the school decides within a school-wide framework

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
1. Funds are raised from several sources including allocations by formula from the public purse, fees, contributions from the community, and other money raised from the public and private sectors		
2. Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school		
3. The financial plan has a multi-year outlook as well as an annual budget		
4. Allocation of funds reflects priorities among educational needs that take account of data on student achievement, evidence based practice, and targets to be achieved		
5. There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process		
6. Appropriate accounting procedures are established to monitor and control expenditure		
7. Money can be transferred from one category of the budget to another as needs change or emerge		

Indicator	Mode (for most decisions)	Comments (exceptions, explanations)
8. Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure, allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs		
9. Educational targets are consistently achieved through the planned allocation of funds		
10. The funds from all sources are sufficient and sustainable to meet educational needs		

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iNet, International Networking for Educational Transformation, is the international arm of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust