

A Quantitative Assessment of The Work of the Governors For Schools Charity

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pro Bono Economics have prepared this report to support Governors for Schools (GfS) in building their understanding of the efficiency and effectiveness of their service to place skilled volunteer governors in schools that need them.

Background

GfS is a not-for-profit charity that was set up in 1999 and exists to support schools in recruiting governors and trustees. In the last 5 years, GfS has placed over 11,600 governors and served more than 8,600 schools.

In July 2018, GfS conducted an online survey of the volunteers and schools they have worked with. The aim was to develop the evidence base around the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they offer.

Scope of this study

The report uses evidence from the survey of schools and volunteers to explore the following questions:

- How satisfied are volunteers and schools with the service GfS provide?
- How does the service provided by GfS compare to alternative routes to filling governor vacancies?
- How effective are the volunteers provided by GfS compared to other Governors in terms of participation and impact on the school?
- What is the value of the services provided by GfS volunteers provided to the school?

Key findings

The key findings from the analysis of the survey results are:

- 9 out of 10 volunteers would recommend being a governor to a friend, and 9 out of 10 schools would recommend GfS.
- 50 per cent of schools stated it took at least two terms to fill their last governor vacancy, with 29 per cent of schools outside of London saying it took more than a year to fill their last governor vacancy, highlighting the need for support with this issue.
- 64 per cent of volunteers believe their work as a governor to be of 'high' or 'very high' value, and almost one in two schools describing GfS volunteers as having 'high' or 'very high' impact.
- 96 per cent of schools stated that GfS volunteers have the same or better skills than other governors and 65 per cent of schools felt that GfS volunteers were either 'highly motivated' or 'more interested' than other governors.
- The value of the time committed by the GfS volunteers is estimated to be around £9.9 million.

Implications

The findings of this report show the value that schools place on the service provided by GfS, and also the value to the volunteers from the experience of being a governor.

There are a handful of areas where GfS could consider changes going forwards, including:

- How support both before and during governor placements could be improved to facilitate a better understanding as to what the governor role entails.
- Whether support can be enhanced outside of London where schools experience the most acute difficulties in recruiting governors.
- Whether school satisfaction could be improved if GfS can find a way to identify and vet less motivated volunteers earlier in the process.

More broadly, this report represents an important step in GfS's journey towards being able to measure their impact. GfS can build on the survey data collected for this study by developing stronger evidence around the experience of schools that do not use GfS services. This would provide better insight into the difference that GfS makes. In addition, there may be scope to develop evidence on the impact of improved governance on levels of academic attainment in schools.

What do volunteers say?

9/10

would recommend being a governor to a friend

6.7

hours a month spent on governing duties on average

64%

consider their work of high or very high value

“ My annual performance appraisal recognised my vice chair role as evidence of my leadership skills - it also contributed to my promotion at work to a senior manager. ”

11%

have become a **chair** or **vice chair** of the governing body

£9.9m

annual value of the time given by GfS governors

>50%

had a **strong impact** on a project

Skills most utilised are:

Leadership & Governance, Policy & Strategy, Finance, HR / Recruitment, Educational Experience



governorsforschools.org.uk
[@schoolgovnet](https://www.instagram.com/schoolgovnet)

What do schools say?

9/10

would recommend
Governors for
Schools

Almost

1 in 2

think GfS governors
had a **high or very
high impact**

1/2

took **two terms or
longer** to find their
last governor

“ The skillset of those found have really helped improve the quality of our governing body by bringing skills and experience that we were unable to source locally ”

65%

rated GfS governors
as **highly motivated
or interested**

85%

of schools surveyed
still have GfS
governors in post

96%

said GfS governors
as **skilled or better**
than other governors

Skills most utilised are:

Policy & Strategy, Leadership & Governance
Finance, Educational Experience, HR / Recruitment



governorsforschools.org.uk
[@schoolgovnet](https://twitter.com/schoolgovnet)

2 INTRODUCTION

This report was developed for Governors for Schools (GfS) to help build its understanding of the efficiency and effectiveness of its work to place skilled volunteer governors in schools.

GfS believes that effective governance is the key to improving school performance and educational standards. In the last 5 years, its recruitment and matching processes have placed over 11,600 governors in more than 8,600 schools. GfS is keen to build the evidence base around the impact of this work.

Scope of the report

The report uses evidence from a survey of schools and volunteers completed by GfS in July 2018 to answer the following questions:

- How satisfied are volunteers and schools with the service GfS provide?
- How does the service provided by GfS compare to alternative routes to filling governor vacancies?
- How effective are the volunteers provided by GfS compared to other Governors in terms of participation and impact on the school?
- What is the value of the services GfS volunteers provide to the school?

Structure of the report

Section 3 provides some background to the study; Section 4 summarises the results of the volunteer survey; Section 5 summarises the results of the school survey, and Section 6 seeks to provide an estimate of the value added by the GfS service. A summary of the survey methodology is set out in Section 7.

3 BACKGROUND

GfS is a charity that was set up in 1999 to support schools in recruiting governors and trustees. As schools become more independent of local authority control and/or must address a more challenging financial environment, the demand for, and responsibility of, governors is growing. GfS estimates that the English school system needs to find around 30,000 new governors every year. There is also an increasing need for governors with specific skillsets, such as finance, legal, human capital, property and marketing.

The work of GfS has two dimensions. It works with organisations and individuals to encourage people to become school governors and provides training so they can start contributing both quickly and effectively. It also works with schools, both directly and via local authorities, in order to carefully define and register their needs.

In order to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the governors that it has placed in schools, GfS conducted an online survey of its users between 2nd and 31st July 2018. The survey was split into two parts:

- The first part was a survey of the volunteers that had been placed by GfS as governors in schools
- The second part was a survey of the schools that received governors placed by GfS.

This report relies on the results that were obtained from that survey in order to help GfS understand their impact.

4 RESULTS OF VOLUNTEERS SURVEY

Background

In July 2018, an online survey was delivered electronically to the entire population of volunteers that had been placed at a school by GfS in the last 4 years. A total of 716 responses were received from a population of 5,894 volunteers¹.

Responses were received from volunteers across the UK, including volunteers of different ages, genders and ethnicity. However, there were some differences between the sample and the overall population of GfS volunteers in terms of:

- Age – 52 per cent of volunteers that responded to the survey were under 45 compared to 68 per cent of the GfS governor population
- Location – 26 per cent of volunteers that responded to the survey were located in London compared to 35 per cent of the GfS governor population
- Ethnicity – 12 per cent of the volunteers that responded to the survey were Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) compared to 23 per cent of the GfS governor population

In order to ensure that the survey results were representative of the overall GfS volunteer population, the results presented in this section have been weighted. Further details on the weighting methodology are provided in Section 5 below.

The survey questions were designed to evaluate the following key points:

- The satisfaction levels of volunteers that had been placed at a school by GfS
- The commitment and expectations of being a governor
- The impact being a governor had on schools and volunteers

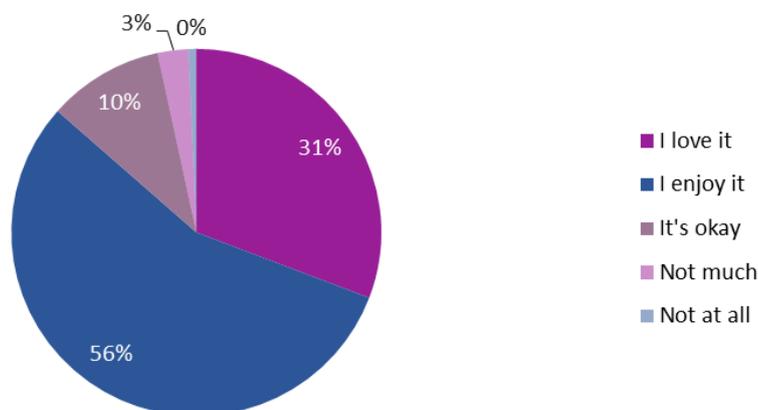
This is the structure adopted below.

Satisfaction levels

The overwhelming majority of volunteers (87 per cent) have had a positive experience as a governor. Most volunteers (56 per cent) said they enjoy their experience as a governor, and almost a third of volunteers (31 per cent) said they love it. Only a small minority of volunteers (less than 3 per cent) had a negative experience as a governor.

¹ Approximately 30 per cent of surveys were not successfully delivered to volunteers.

Have you enjoyed your experience?



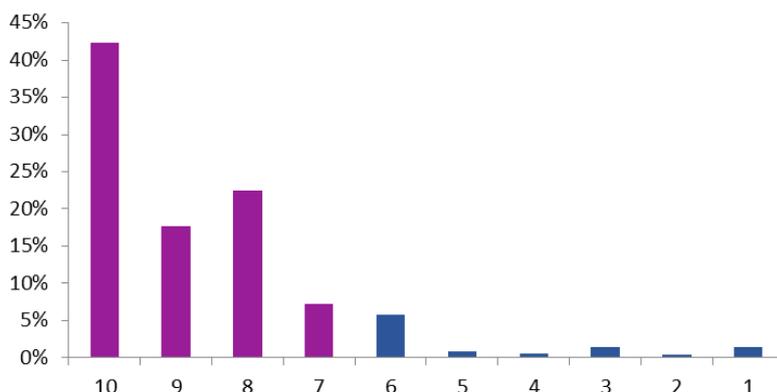
The level of satisfaction was consistent by

- Gender (i.e. male and female volunteers)
- Age (i.e. volunteers aged under 45 and over 45)
- Location (i.e. volunteers located in London and outside London)

However, white volunteers were more likely to have had a positive experience than BAME volunteers (88 per cent compared to 78 per cent).

Consistent with the high levels of satisfaction, a very high proportion of volunteers would also recommend being a governor to a friend. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the most highly recommended, 90 per cent of responses gave a rating of 7 or higher, with the average rating being 8.6. The Net Promoter Score Index yields a score of +49.8 for volunteer satisfaction².

Would recommend being a governor



² Respondents were asked to rate how likely they were to recommend being a governor on a scale from 1 to 10, and the Net Promoter Score was calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents giving a rating of 1 to 6 from those giving a rating of 9 to 10. Normally, the Net Promoter Score is calculated with

Volunteers under 45 were more likely to recommend being a governor to a friend than volunteers over 45 (94 per cent of under 45 volunteers gave a rating of 7 or more compared to 84 per cent of over 45 volunteers), as were volunteers in London compared to volunteers outside London (93 per cent compared to 88 per cent).

Beyond asking respondents directly about their experiences as governors, another way to gauge volunteer satisfaction is through retention rates. According to the survey results, 76 per cent of respondents were still governors at the school GfS matched them with, and 15 per cent of volunteers are a governor at a school they found themselves.

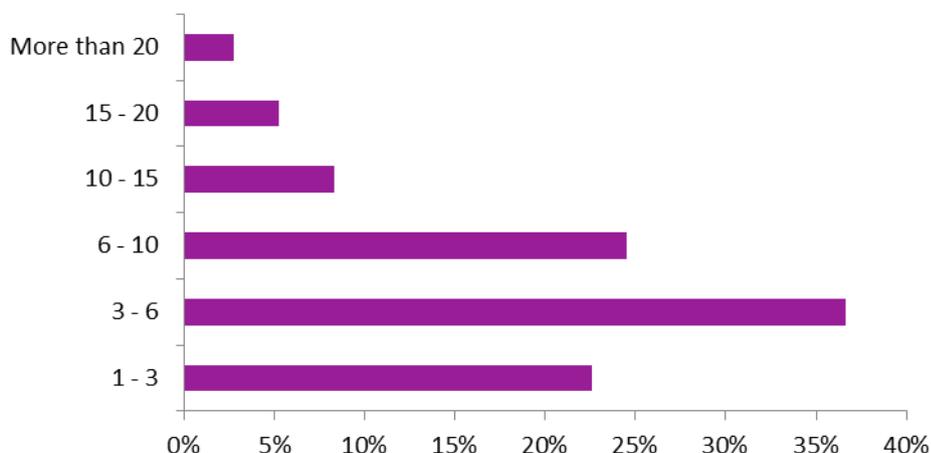
Of the volunteers who resigned, most (62 per cent) stayed in the role for a period of more than one year before resigning. Only 13 per cent of volunteers who resigned stayed for less than six months. Moreover, for many volunteers, resigning is likely to reflect factors other than satisfaction with the GfS programme. For example, over 10 per cent of volunteers that are no longer a governor referred to moving out of the area as the reason for resigning.

The commitment and expectations of being a governor

Governors are responsible for overseeing the management side of a school: strategy, policy, budgeting and staffing. Being a school governor is a commitment to attending governing body meetings which consider issues such as setting the school vision, mitigating financial risk and scrutinising educational outcomes.

The vast majority of GfS volunteers attend most governing body meetings, with 73 per cent of volunteers attending over 80 per cent of meetings, and 94 per cent of volunteers attending over 60 per cent of meetings. Most volunteers in the GfS programme make a time commitment of 10 hours or less each month. The average volunteer reported spending 6.7 hours a month on governing duties.

Hours spent per month



reference to a scale from 0 to 10 rather than 1 to 10. [Evidence](#) suggests that this difference in scale may bias the NPS score upwards by around 4% pts but it is unlikely to affect the overall picture.

However, there are some significant differences in the time spent on governing duties between different volunteer groups. For example:

- Volunteers over 45 spent on average 8.1 hours per month on governing duties, nearly three hours per month more than volunteers under 45 (5.3 hours)
- Volunteers in London spent significantly less time on governing duties than volunteers outside London (5.8 hours per month compared to 7.2 hours)
- BAME volunteers spent less time on governing duties than white volunteers (5.1 hours per month compared to 7.0 hours)

Most GfS governors (94 per cent) have taken on additional responsibility during their time as a governor, including:

- 42 per cent of volunteers have become a committee member and 10 per cent of volunteers have become a committee chair
- 22 per cent of volunteers have become a link governor
- 11 per cent of volunteers have become a vice chair or chair of the governing body

Despite the progress made by GfS governors, lots of volunteers had a limited understanding of the governor role before they started. Nearly half of all volunteers only understood the roles and responsibilities of being a governor to a limited extent (20 per cent) or to some extent (30 per cent) before they started.

Enhancing and sustaining participation could be achieved by fostering a better understanding as to what the governor role entails, both before and after volunteers join the governing board.

Although GfS offers volunteers online training including webinars and e-learning courses, GfS could consider investing to ensure that volunteers are aware that the training exists. Currently, less than half of volunteers made use of GfS' e-learning courses and less than 30 per cent of volunteers made use of the webinars. Of those volunteers that had used the online training, more than 60 per cent said that it was good or fantastic.



Skills and impact

Volunteers perceive the GfS programme as an opportunity to utilise their expertise and make a positive contribution to schools and communities. They can apply governance and leadership

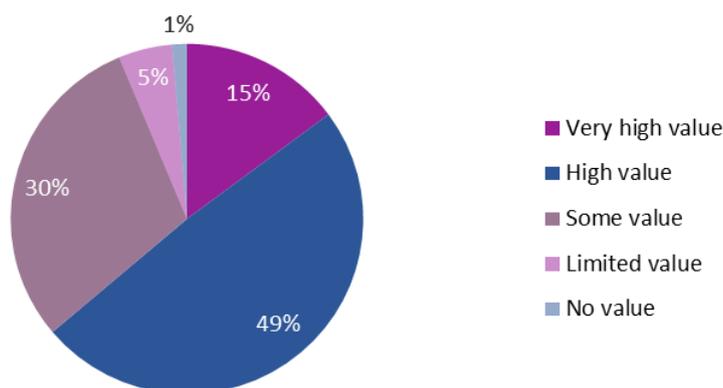
knowledge to their roles, whilst drawing from a wide array of other skills and experiences. The most common skills volunteers have used in their role as a governor include leadership and governance (18 per cent), policy/strategy (17 per cent), and finance (13 per cent).

Skills of governors



The value of the programme to the wider community is a key driver for volunteer participation. The majority of respondents (64 per cent) perceive their work to be of very high or high value. This is consistent across volunteers of different gender, age and location. However, white volunteers are more likely to perceive their work as being of very high or high value (67 per cent) compared to BAME volunteers (52 per cent).

Value of Work



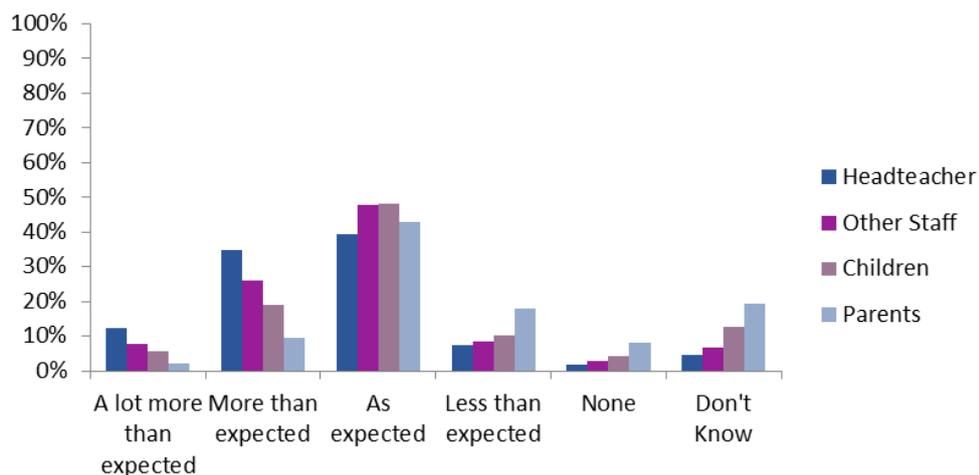
More than half of volunteers have undertaken a specific project where they have seen their time have a particularly strong impact. Examples of projects given by volunteers include:

- ‘Recruitment of new headteacher and averting a funding crisis’
- ‘A project I set up named Citizen to Citizen involves military veterans from our community who give their time helping disadvantaged pupils and those lacking positive male role models at home’
- ‘I am a governor on the Admissions Committee and I represent the school on Admissions Appeals hearings in front of the admissions board’
- ‘Attendance - Helped implement a reward system, and generated prizes for pupils using external contacts. Attendance has improved from 92% to 96% over last 18 months as a result.’

The benefits of the programme to schools have exceeded volunteers’ expectations, particularly with regards to the impact on head teachers, other staff, and children. For example, 49 per cent of volunteers (excluding volunteers who responded with 'Don't know') feel that they have benefited headteachers more, or a lot more, than they expected.

However, there is the perception that the effect on parents has been more limited. This suggests that schools and volunteers could benefit from involving parents more actively in the governance process.

How volunteers perceive the benefit of their time on different stakeholders



Over a quarter of volunteers (28%) found that being a governor has benefited their careers. There are some compelling stories:

- 'Being a governor has challenged me in ways that I am not in my day job. It has also built my confidence in areas where I was not so assured before such as chairing meetings'
- 'My annual performance appraisal recognised my vice chair role as evidence of my leadership skills and desire to develop myself as well as give back to the community - it also contributed to my promotion at work to a senior manager'
- 'It has given me board experience, experience of setting strategy and opened up a lot of new networks which will benefit my career'
- 'It has improved my skills and experience in strategic thinking, which was very valuable and helped me get a promotion'
- 'My last interview I told the interviewer I was a governor and she said that's excellent and asked why it wasn't on my CV'
- 'The skills and confidence gained from being a governor and taking on increasing levels of responsibility contributed to my success in gaining a promotion to departmental manager within my workplace'
- 'I work in the education sector, so it has been helpful to have real examples of current practice and challenges in school'

Summary of key findings from volunteer survey

The key findings of the volunteer survey include:

- 9 out of 10 volunteers would recommend being a governor to a friend
- The average volunteer estimated that he/she spent around 6.7 hours per month on their governor duties
- 64 per cent of volunteers believe their work as a governor to be of "high" or "very high" value
- Nearly half of all volunteers only understood the roles and responsibilities of being a governor to a 'limited extent' or to 'some extent'. GfS could explore how support both before and during governor placements could be improved to facilitate a better understanding as to what the governor role entails.

5 RESULTS OF SCHOOLS SURVEY

Background

In July 2018, an online survey was delivered electronically to the entire population of schools that had received governors from GfS. A total of 437 responses were received from a population of 2792 schools³. This covered a mix of primary, secondary and other types of school, and there was a good geographic spread of respondents across the country (as shown below).



The median number of governors at the schools that responded to the survey is 11 people, with a large majority of respondents (81 per cent) either having 1 or 2 of their current governors provided by GfS. The results were therefore considered to be representative of the current user base of GfS schools.

The survey questions were designed to evaluate the following key points:

- The satisfaction levels of schools that had received governors from GfS

³ Approximately 10 per cent of surveys were not successfully delivered to volunteers.

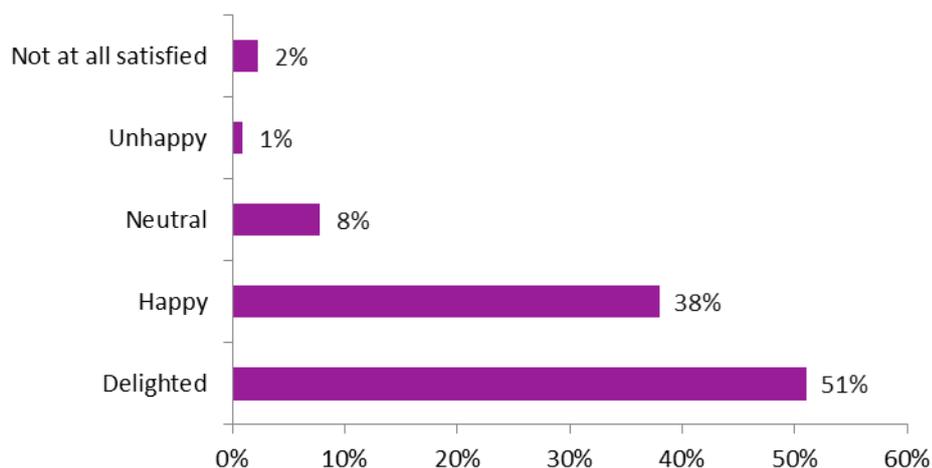
- Whether there were any difficulties that schools have faced in recruiting governors independently
- How the skills and performance of the governors placed through GfS compared to other school governors
- The impact that the GfS governors have had on school performance

We discuss these below.

Satisfaction levels of schools

Satisfaction levels were extremely high amongst respondents in relation to the governors provided by GfS: 89 per cent of respondents were either happy or delighted with the governors provided, with just 3 per cent being either unhappy or not at all satisfied.

Satisfaction levels with GfS governors

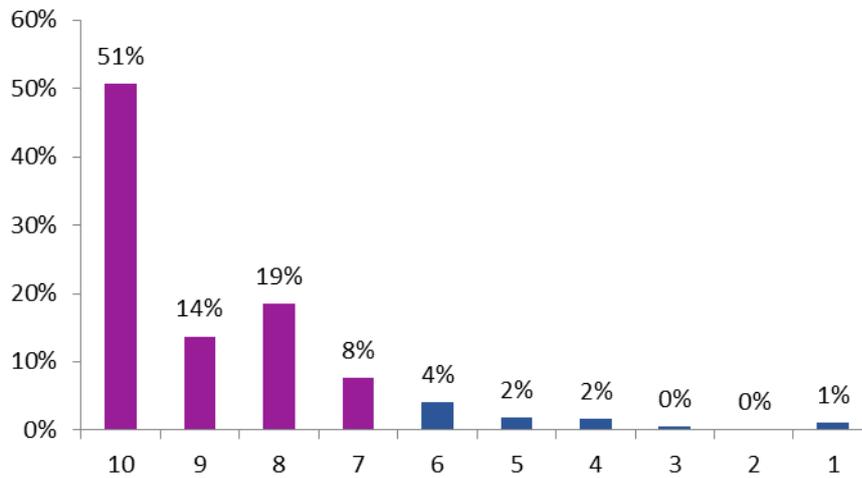


These high levels of satisfaction are also broadly consistent by (i) phase of education (i.e. split between primary, secondary and other); (ii) by location, with similar levels of satisfaction at schools in London as those outside of London; and (iii) by type of establishment (i.e. split between Community, Academy and Other).

A very high proportion of schools would also recommend GfS to other schools. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the most highly recommended, 91 per cent of responses gave a rating of 7 or higher, with the average rating being 8.8. The Net Promoter Score Index yields a score of +55.1 for school satisfaction⁴. These results confirm that schools are generally very happy with the service provided by GfS.

⁴ Respondents were asked to rate how likely they were to recommend being a governor on a scale from 1 to 10, and the Net Promoter Score was calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents giving a rating of 1 to 6 from those giving a rating of 9 to 10. Normally, the Net Promoter Score is calculated with reference to a scale from 0 to 10 rather than 1 to 10. [Evidence](#) suggests that this difference in scale may bias the NPS score upwards by around 4% pts but it is unlikely to affect the overall picture.

Would recommend GfS to other schools



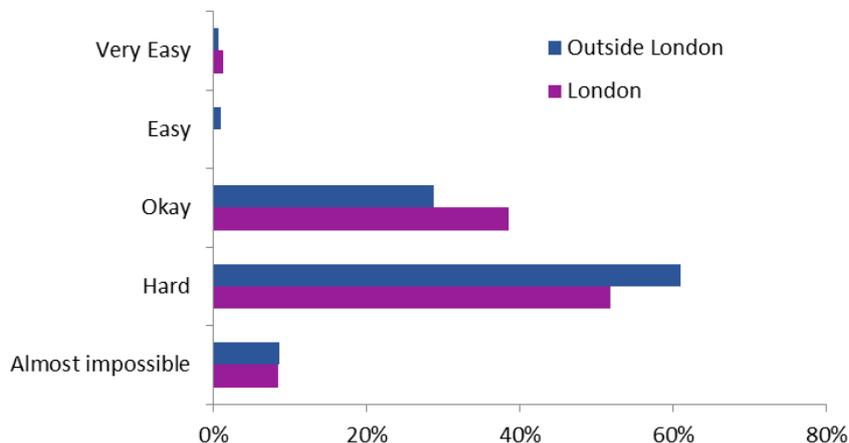
In relation to the small number of respondents that were either 'unhappy' or 'not at all satisfied', this is reflected in the performance of those governors (e.g. they attended far fewer meetings, their general attendance was lower than other school governors, they were often seen as being uninterested, and were in place for a much shorter length of time). Accordingly, there may be scope for GfS to improve school satisfaction if they can identify and vet those volunteers that seem less motivated.

Any recruitment difficulties?

The survey results confirm the difficulty that schools often experience in recruiting governors. In particular:

- 67 per cent of respondents said that they had found it either hard or almost impossible to recruit governors, with this number being even higher (70 per cent) for schools outside of London
- In comparison, just 3 per cent of respondents said that they had found it easy or very easy to recruit governors

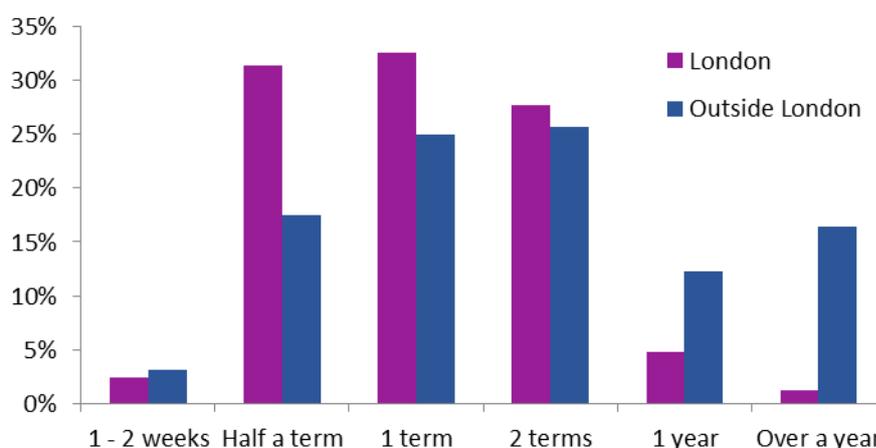
Experience in recruiting



Not only is it generally difficult to recruit governors, the survey also confirmed that it takes time to fill vacancies. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) of respondents said that it took them at least a year to fill the last governor vacancy, and just under 50 per cent said that it took them at least 2 terms to fill the vacancy.

The length of time to fill vacancies is also notably longer for schools outside of London. 29 per cent of respondents said that it took them at least a year to fill the last governor vacancy, compared to just 6 per cent for schools in London.

Time to fill governor vacancies



These results confirm that the schools often find it difficult to recruit governors. GfS are unable to provide a comparable figure for how quickly they are able to fill vacancies raised with them due to recent changes to process and reporting systems. However, the estimates provided here provide a valuable benchmark for them to compare their performance against in future. The results highlight that the difficulty in recruiting governors is even more acute outside of London, and therefore GfS could consider how they can better target support for those schools.

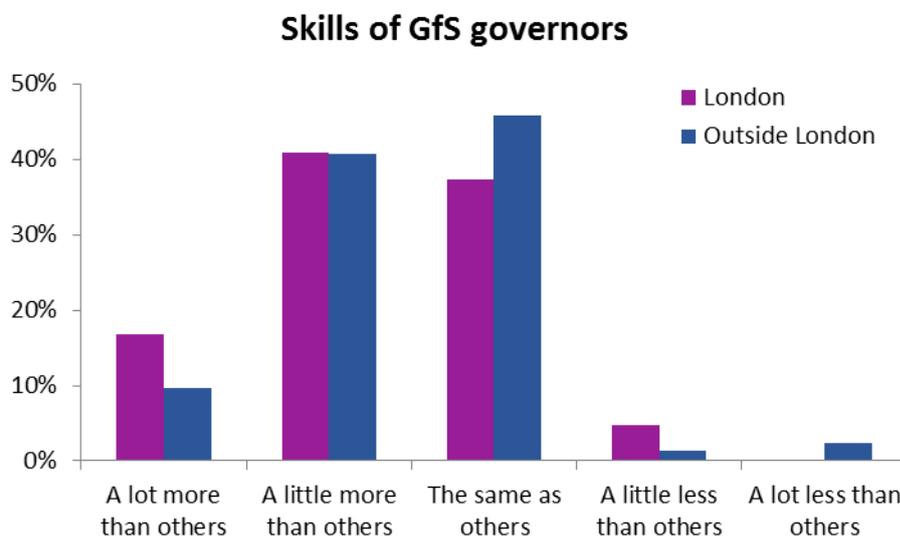
Comparison with other governors

The survey makes a number of comparisons between GfS governors and other school governors (e.g. those governors recruited independently by the schools).

Firstly, the attendance of the GfS governors is similar to that of other school governors (i.e. 62 per cent of responses said that the attendance was about the same as other governors, with 19 per cent saying that attendance of the GfS governors was higher, but 19 per cent saying that attendance of the GfS governors was lower).

Secondly, the skills of the GfS governors are generally considered to be either the same or better than the skills of other school governors. 44 per cent of respondents said the skills were about the same, 52 per cent said that they were better and only 4 per cent said that the skills of GfS governors were lower than other school governors. In London, the proportion of respondents

that consider the skills of the GfS governors to be better than other governors was even higher at 60 per cent.



A number of respondents commented positively on the skills GfS governors brought to the school:

'... our most recent member to join has proved to be excellent, and became vice-chair after a few months and is now chair and using skills gained from a career in education to support the school through a difficult period.'

'Coming from a higher education sector, they brought a different perspective to the board. Their professional skills of project management providing additional clarity in data focussed discussions.'

'The chair has led the school through a period of tremendous change and has really turned the school around.'

'The Governor in question works in IT and has been instrumental in getting us good deals with our IT providers as well as identifying new and innovative ways of dealing with IT in the school both administratively and through teaching as part of the curriculum.'

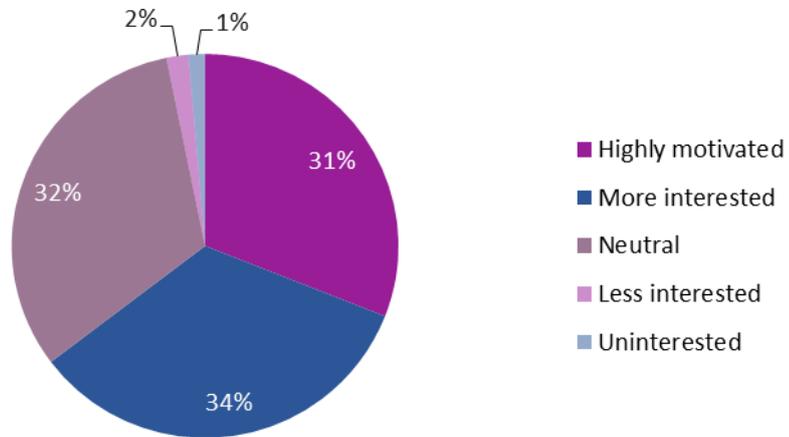
'One is excellent on policy development, safeguarding and community - she chairs the Children, Families and Community committee.'

'Bringing professionalism and expertise to the GB, being more able to analyse data and challenge the school particularly in terms of results and financials.'

'The skillset of those found have really helped improve the quality of our governing body by bringing skills and experience that we were unable to source locally'

Thirdly, GfS governors also tend to be highly motivated. 65 per cent of respondents said the GfS governors were either 'highly motivated' or 'more interested' than other governors, and a further 32 per cent of respondents said that their motivation was about the same. Very few respondents described the GfS governors as either being less interested or uninterested.

Motivation of GfS governors

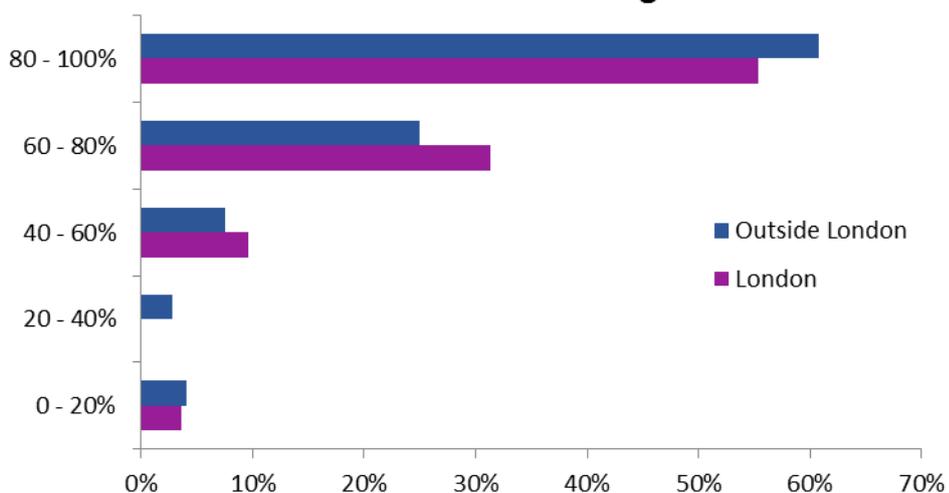


These results suggest that GfS is recruiting and placing volunteers that are highly motivated and highly skilled individuals. These individuals are often more highly skilled than the schools are able to attract independently. As the attendance of the GfS governors is similar to other school governors, schools are therefore able to benefit from the additional skills that the GfS governors bring for the full duration that the governors are in place.

Impact on school performance

The survey confirms that there is generally a high level of participation by the GfS governors in school meetings. Just under 60 per cent of respondents said that the GfS governors attend more than 80 per cent of school meetings (with the number being slightly higher at schools outside of London), and 85 per cent of respondents attend more than 60 per cent of school meetings. The mean response was that GfS governors attended 77 per cent of meetings.

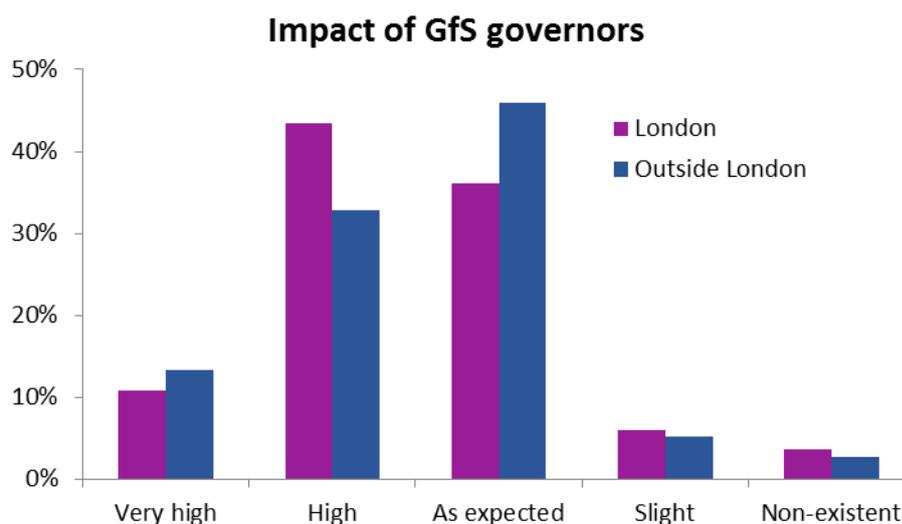
Attendance at meetings



The impact of the GfS governors is also highlighted by the significant progression that those governors have made when they are in place:

- 76 per cent of respondents reported that at least one of the GfS governors had progressed to become a committee member
- Half of the respondents reported that at least one of the GfS governors had progressed to become a link governor
- 27 per cent of respondents reported that at least one of the GfS governors had progressed to become a committee chair
- 22 per cent of respondents reported that at least one of the GfS governors had progressed to become either a Vice Chair or a Chair of GB

The responses to the survey also confirmed the impact that the GfS governors have had on the school. Just under half (47 per cent) of responses said that the impact was either 'high' or 'very high', and a further 45 per cent said that the impact was as expected. The impact was even higher in London with 54 per cent of respondents reporting the GfS governors as either having a 'high' or 'very high' impact. Around a third of responses (31 per cent) also reported that the GfS governors had taken on a specific project.



The impact of the GfS governors covers a range of different factors including: advising on financial and strategic matters; reviewing and amending policy; providing leadership; and having advanced IT skills. A number of respondents also noted that this was recognised by Ofsted as being beneficial during school inspections:

'Ofsted recognised that the questioning of governors in meetings was good and this is in part due to the [GfS] governor'

'In the last two Ofsted inspections, Montem has been rated good, with governance mentioned positively'

'Last OFSTED Rating was Good, with particular note of the level of knowledge and engagement demonstrated by the Governors interviewed (GfS governor + 1 other)'

"At the latest Ofsted we were commended for the enthusiasm and solid governance of the governing board";

'One of the link governors joined me for a meeting with OFSTED during their last inspection in 2017. She demonstrated a high level of knowledge of the school's own metrics and this helped us secure a Good rating overall and an Outstanding rating for Leadership and Governance'

'The school was RI [requires improvement] when the now Chair arrived, but the school achieved a Good Ofsted Report last year'

The survey therefore confirms that the GfS governors are highly effective people and have had a significant positive impact on the schools they are placed in. This is confirmed by the numerous comments which refer to the beneficial impact that strong governance has had on the school's Ofsted rating.

Summary of key findings from school survey

Key findings from the school survey include:

- 9 out of 10 schools would recommend Governors for Schools. This satisfaction could be improved if GfS can find a way to identify and vet less motivated volunteers earlier in the process.
- 67 per cent of respondents said that they had found it either hard or almost impossible to recruit governors. GfS could consider whether support can be enhanced outside of London where schools experience the most acute difficulties in recruiting governors.
- Nearly 50 per cent stating it had taken more than two terms to fill their last vacancy.
- 96 per cent of schools stated that Gfs volunteers have the same or better skills than other governors.
- 65 per cent of schools felt that GfS volunteers were either 'highly motivated' or 'more interested' than other governors.
- Almost 1 in every 2 schools stated that GfS volunteers had a high or very high impact on their school.

6 VALUE ADDED ESTIMATE OF GFS GOVERNORS

It is clear from the results of the surveys that the Governors for Schools programme has significant benefits in terms of:

- Helping schools to fill governor roles that often lie vacant for half a year or more. By quickly matching volunteers with schools, GfS ensures that the full benefits of an effective governing body are realised throughout the academic year
- By filling governing roles more quickly and taking the burden of finding new governors away from already overworked schools, GfS also reduces the search costs of finding new governors
- GfS governors typically have either the same or better skills than other governors and often fill skill gaps in the existing governing body. This will strengthen a school's governing body and increase its effectiveness in terms of overseeing the management of the schools
- GfS volunteers tend to be highly motivated and most schools rated GfS governors as more motivated than other governors. Motivated individuals are more likely to be effective governors which is supported by evidence on the proportion of GfS volunteers that have taken on additional roles

Full quantification of all the benefits of the GfS programme in monetary terms is a significant task which is beyond the scope of this study. However, we provide below an estimate of the monetary value of the time volunteered by GfS governors, which gives an indication of the scale of the potential value of the GfS programme.

As set out above, on average each GfS volunteer spent 6.7 hours a month on governing duties. Across all GfS governors this equates to more than 500,000 hours a year. We estimate the monetary value of this based on three estimates of the value of their time:

- The value of non-working time per person per hour as estimated by the Department for Transport
- The 2017 median hourly earnings across all occupations as estimated by the ONS
- The median hourly earnings of each GfS volunteer based on their occupation⁵

The table below shows the estimated value of volunteer time for each methodology in 2017 prices. The Office of National Statistics⁶ recommends a "replacement cost" approach to monetising the value of a volunteer's time. This involves valuing their contribution using the market wage rate for their profession as this is the best indication of the benefits to the recipient organisations. As such, we consider that the most appropriate approach for GfS is to use the estimate based on the median hourly earnings of each GfS volunteer given their occupation.

On this basis, we estimate the total annual value of time given by GfS governors amounted to more than £9.9 million in 2017. It should be noted that this is not a direct measure of the impact of GfS activity, as such an assessment would require us to compare the value of time provided by GfS volunteer governors against the value of time from governors recruited via alternative routes.

⁵ Median hourly earnings taken from Office of National Statistics (2018) "[Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](#)" Table 10-SOC10. GfS volunteer occupations were matched to the Occupational group (SOC 2010) used in this publication.

⁶ Office of National Statistics (2013) "[Household Satellite Accounts - Valuing Voluntary Activity in the UK](#)".

This information is not available from the existing surveys but is an evidence gap that GfS could consider filling as part of any future evaluation work.

Approach	Average value of time per hour	Total value of time given by GfS governors
Value of non-working time	£6.94	£3.7 million
Median hourly earnings across all occupations	£13.93	£7.5 million
Median hourly earnings for each GfS volunteer	£18.46	£9.9 million

7 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

An initial telephone survey was piloted with eight schools to establish the skill set they look for in a school governor and how they go about recruiting people for their board. This information was used to inform the preparation of an online survey. The online survey was piloted with ten schools and ten volunteers. The initial survey received a zero response rate and the schools and volunteers were contacted individually to encourage them to respond. This resulted in responses from 3 schools and 3 volunteers.

In light of the responses to the pilot, some minor revisions were made to the survey questions. The final survey was delivered electronically to the entire population of schools and volunteers during July 2018. In order to address the limited response rate received during the pilot, the final survey included a raffle offering respondents an opportunity to win money for their chosen school. Two reminders were sent out over the period of the fieldwork to encourage responses.

Volunteers survey

716 responses were received from a population of 5,894 volunteers in schools, representing a response rate of 12 per cent.

The representativeness of the sample was checked by calculating the confidence interval around the proportions of individuals falling within key demographic groups in our sample – this represents the level of uncertainty that could be down to random chance as opposed to systematic differences in response rates. We use the 95% confidence interval (meaning we would expect the proportion to fall within this range 95% of the time based on random chance) and compare this range against the proportions for the overall populations of volunteers (provided by GfS). If the proportions of individuals falling into each category for the overall population falls outside of this confidence interval for our sample then it suggests that the survey sample is not representative of the underlying population of volunteers and there were systematic differences in response rates.

The confidence intervals were calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Confidence Interval} = p_i \pm 1.96 * \sqrt{p_i * (1 - p_i) / (n_i + n_j)}$$

p_i = the proportion of the sample with characteristic i

n_i = the number in the sample with characteristic i

n_j = the number in the sample without characteristic i

As set out in the table overleaf, the sample was representative of the population of volunteers in terms of the gender of respondents. However, respondents based in London, aged under 45 and BAME were under represented.

	Population	Survey
Gender		
Male	2,912	351
Female	2,920	351
Information unavailable	62	14
Proportion male	49.9%	50.0%
Survey confidence interval	46.3% - 53.7%	
Sample representative?	Yes	
Age		
Under 45	3,534	273
Over 45	1,634	251
Information unavailable	726	192
Proportion under 45	68.4%	52.1%
Survey confidence interval	47.8% - 56.4%	
Sample representative?	No	
Location		
London	2,048	185
Outside London	3,846	523
Information unavailable	0	8
Proportion in London	34.7%	26.1%
Survey confidence interval	22.9% - 29.4%	
Sample representative?	No	
Ethnicity		
White	4,035	564
BAME	1,202	79
Information unavailable	657	73
Proportion BAME	23.0%	12.3%
Survey confidence interval	9.7% - 14.8%	
Sample representative?	No	

To determine whether this was likely to impact upon the representativeness of the answers given by survey respondents, we considered whether responses varied for different volunteer groups. In response to a number of questions there were statistically significant differences between the answers given by different groups. Accordingly the decision was taken to weight response by key demographics (ethnicity, location and age).

In order to weight survey responses, the population of volunteers was split into 27 groups based on the following demographics:

- Age – under 45, over 45 and information unavailable
- Location – in London, outside London and information unavailable
- Ethnicity – white, BAME and information unavailable

Each group was given a survey weight based on the proportion of volunteers in that group that responded to the survey, relative to the proportion of volunteers in that group in the overall population:

$$\text{Survey Weight of Group } i = \frac{(\text{Size of Group } i \text{ in population} / \text{Size of population})}{(\text{Size of Group } i \text{ in survey} / \text{Number of survey responses})}$$

All responses recorded in the main body of the report are the weighted figures.

A copy of the survey sent to volunteers is attached at Annex 1.

Schools survey

449 responses were received from a population of 2,792 schools. However, the results for 12 schools were excluded on the basis that they did not complete the survey. The results in the main report are therefore based on a sample of 437 schools.

No weightings were applied to school type as there are no systematic differences in the results between different types of school. However, where relevant, differences have been highlighted in the main report.

A copy of the survey sent to schools is attached at Annex 2.

ANNEX 1 – VOLUNTEERS SURVEY

1. Have you enjoyed your experience as a Governor? - I have enjoyed it...
 - a) I love it
 - b) I enjoy it
 - c) It's okay
 - d) Not much
 - e) Not at all

2. Are you still a governor?
 - a) Yes - at the school Governors for Schools matched me with
 - b) Yes - at a school I found myself
 - c) No

3. How long were you in the role before you resigned?
 - a) Less than 6 months
 - b) 6 - 12 months
 - c) 1 - 2 years
 - d) 2 - 3 years
 - e) 3 - 4 years
 - f) More than 4 years

4. What was your reason for resigning? [Open response]

5. Would you recommend being a governor to a friend? [Score 1 – 10]

6. How many hours a month did/do you typically spend on governing duties? - Hours spent per month
 - a) 1 - 3
 - b) 3 - 6
 - c) 6 - 10
 - d) 10 - 15
 - e) 15 - 20
 - f) More than 20

7. What proportion of meetings have you been able to attend? - Proportion of meetings attended
 - a) 0 - 20%
 - b) 20 - 40%
 - c) 40 - 60%
 - d) 60 - 80%
 - e) 80 - 100%

8. During your time as a governor have you undertaken any of the following roles?
 - a) Chair of GB
 - b) Vice chair of GB
 - c) Committee Chair
 - d) Committee Member
 - e) Link Governor
 - f) Other

9. If other, what was the role? [Open response]

10. How well did you understand the roles and responsibilities of being a governor before starting? - I understood the role
 - a) To a limited extent
 - b) To some extent
 - c) As needed
 - d) To a good extent
 - e) To a great extent

11. Governors for Schools provide free training and development opportunities to governors.
How would you rate... - e-Learning modules
 - a) Fantastic
 - b) Good
 - c) Okay
 - d) Of limited use
 - e) Not relevant
 - f) Not used

12. Governors for Schools provide free training and development opportunities to governors.
How would you rate... – Webinars
 - a) Fantastic
 - b) Good
 - c) Okay
 - d) Of limited use
 - e) Not relevant
 - f) Not used

13. Do you have any comments about our support services? [Open response]

14. Which of the following skills have you used in your role as a Governor?
 - a) Change / Project Management
 - b) Educational Experience
 - c) Finance
 - d) Fundraising

- e) Health and Safety
- f) HR / Recruitment
- g) IT
- h) Leadership and Governance
- i) Legal Expertise
- j) Policy / Strategy
- k) Risk Management
- l) Stakeholder Communications

15. Thinking about the time you have given, how much of a direct benefit have you seen it give to the following stake holders? – Headteacher

- a) A lot more than expected
- b) More than expected
- c) As expected
- d) Less than expected
- e) None
- f) Don't Know

16. Thinking about the time you have given, how much of a direct benefit have you seen it give to the following stake holders? - Other Staff

- a) A lot more than expected
- b) More than expected
- c) As expected
- d) Less than expected
- e) None
- f) Don't Know

17. Thinking about the time you have given, how much of a direct benefit have you seen it give to the following stake holders? - Children

- a) A lot more than expected
- b) More than expected
- c) As expected
- d) Less than expected
- e) None
- f) Don't Know

18. Thinking about the time you have given, how much of a direct benefit have you seen it give to the following stake holders? - Parents

- a) A lot more than expected
- b) More than expected
- c) As expected
- d) Less than expected
- e) None

f) Don't Know

19. I feel my work as a governor is valuable to the school in which I am placed - My work is of

- a) Very high value
- b) High value
- c) Some value
- d) Limited value
- e) No value

20. Are there any specific projects you have taken on where you have seen your time have a particularly strong impact?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21. Please tell us more [Open response]

22. Has being a governor benefited your career?

- a) It has benefited my career
- b) I have not noticed a benefit to my career
- c) It has harmed my career

23. Please tell us more - has this been evident in performance appraisals, self-evaluations, improving your skills in certain areas? [Open response]

ANNEX 2 – SCHOOLS SURVEY

1. How many governors do you have on your Governing Body in total? [Open response]
2. How many of your current governors were found by Governors for Schools?
 - a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4
 - e) 5 or more
 - f) Don't know
3. How satisfied were you with the governors provided? - We were...
 - a) Delighted
 - b) Happy
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Unhappy
 - e) Not at all satisfied
4. Would you recommend Governors for Schools to other schools? [Score 1 – 10]
5. Are your Governors for Schools governor(s) still in post? - Still in post?
 - a) Yes
 - b) Some of them
 - c) No
6. Typically how long does a Governors for Schools governor stay in their role? - In role for
 - a) Less than 6 months
 - b) 6 - 12 months
 - c) 1 - 2 years
 - d) 2 - 3 years
 - e) 3 - 4 years
 - f) 4 years +
 - g) Don't know
7. How does this length of tenure compare to other governors? - Their tenure is...
 - a) A lot longer
 - b) A little longer
 - c) The same
 - d) A little shorter
 - e) A lot shorter
 - f) Don't know

8. What proportion of meetings do (did) Governors for Schools governors typically attend? - Meetings attended
- a) 0 - 20%
 - b) 20 - 40%
 - c) 40 - 60%
 - d) 60 - 80%
 - e) 80 - 100%
9. How does your GfS governor's attendance compare to other governors? - Attendance is...
- a) A lot higher
 - b) A little higher
 - c) The same
 - d) A little lower
 - e) A lot lower
10. Have Governors for Schools governors filled any gaps in the following areas?
- a) Change / Project Management
 - b) Educational Experience
 - c) Finance
 - d) Fundraising
 - e) Health and Safety
 - f) HR / Recruitment
 - g) IT
 - h) Leadership and Governance
 - i) Legal Expertise
 - j) Policy / Strategy
 - k) Risk Management
 - l) Stakeholder Communications
11. Compared to other governors, how would you rate the skill set of the Governors for Schools placed governor(s)? - Their skill set is...
- a) A lot more than others
 - b) A little more than others
 - c) The same as others
 - d) A little less than others
 - e) A lot less than others
12. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles - Committee Member
- a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors

- e) 5 or more governors
13. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles
- Link Governor
 - a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors
 - e) 5 or more governors
14. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles
- Committee Chair
 - a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors
 - e) 5 or more governors
15. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles
- Vice Chair of GB
 - a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors
 - e) 5 or more governors
16. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles
- Chair of GB
 - a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors
 - e) 5 or more governors
17. How many of your Governors for Schools governors progressed to one of the following roles
- Other
 - a) 1 governor
 - b) 2 governors
 - c) 3 governors
 - d) 4 governors
 - e) 5 or more governors
18. If other, what was the role? [Open response]

19. How would you rate the motivation of GfS governors? - GfS governors are...
 - a) Highly motivated
 - b) More interested
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Less interested
 - e) Uninterested

20. How would you rate the impact of GfS governors on your school? - Their impact is...
 - a) Very high
 - b) High
 - c) As expected
 - d) Slight
 - e) Non-existent

21. Are there any areas of the school they have had a particular impact upon?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know

22. Please tell us more about this [Open response]

23. Has this been reflected in any performance metrics (eg OFSTED ratings, stakeholder satisfaction surveys)?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know

24. Please tell us about this [Open response]

25. Are there any cases where a Governors for Schools governor has taken on a specific project?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know

26. Please tell us about their contribution [Open response]

27. How easy have you found it to source your own governors in the past? - Finding governors is...
 - a) Almost impossible
 - b) Hard
 - c) Okay
 - d) Easy
 - e) Very Easy

28. How long did it take you to fill your last governor vacancy? - It took
- a) 1 - 2 weeks
 - b) Half a term
 - c) 1 term
 - d) 2 terms
 - e) 1 year
 - f) Over a year