



Findings and recommendations skills audit Castlechurch LAB 25-26

Governance Skills Development:

The board demonstrates strong capability in strategy, risk, finance, curriculum and compliance (majority at level 4). Targeted development is required for two governors (RJ, JW) in chairing, panel confidence, stakeholder engagement, finance/risk interpretation, and EDI/data. A 12-month CPD programme (National College/CFLP), mentor pairings, and practical simulations (finance clinic, risk workshop, appraisal/panel simulations) are scheduled. We will monitor improvement via pre/post self-ratings, increased quality of challenge in minutes, and quarterly KPIs. By year-end, all governors should demonstrate panel confidence ≥ 3.5 , improved EDI literacy, and stronger stakeholder-informed decision making.

Snapshot of Findings:

- Strong across the board (LAP, TD, ZP, JC):
- High confidence (mostly 4s) in: strategy, risk, finance, curriculum, stakeholder engagement, governance core functions, delegation, compliance, and collaboration.

Development priorities:

- RJ: Lower confidence in chairing, stakeholder engagement, panels, finance, equality/diversity, and interpreting EDI data (scores 1-3 across multiple lines).
- JW: Strong overall (4s) but lower in chairing (1), appraisal panel confidence (2), panels (3), and EDI/data (3).
- Panel confidence: Mixed—RJ (3), JW (3).
- Equality, diversity & inclusion (EDI): Varied confidence (RJ: 2-3, JW: 3), with a need to raise capability in influencing culture and challenging practice.
- Training asks include Data & SEN, general awareness raising, and keeping up to date with National College/CFLP.

Training & Resources Plan (aligned to requests)

- National College / CFLP: Book core modules now; diarise refreshers each term.
- Data & SEN (requested): Add a practical session on interpreting pupil progress/SEND data, triangulating with curriculum and interventions.
- General awareness raising: Provide a governance fundamentals refresher (roles, expectations, ethical standards).
- Any relevant training (JW): Prioritise chairing, panel skills, and EDI/data in the first two terms.

Training Recommendations for RJ

RJ's lower scores indicate development needs in:

chairing skills, panels, stakeholder engagement, finance, EDI, and interpreting data.

Core Governance Training

- **Governance Induction / Governance Fundamentals**
Ideal for strengthening knowledge of core functions, delegation, roles, accountability.
- **Understanding Strategy & Risk**
Covers risk evaluation, strategic alignment, and holding leaders to account.

Finance & Budget Training

- **School Finance for Governors**
How funding works, what money is spent on, reading budget reports, asking challenge questions.
- **Interpreting Financial Monitoring Reports**
Focused on building confidence in spotting trends, overspends, variances.

Panel Skills & HR Processes

- **Panel Training for Governors**
Covers structure, legal responsibilities, questioning techniques, decision-making.
- **Headteacher Appraisal Training (observer then full training)**
Helps build confidence at appraisal panels.

Stakeholder Engagement

- **Stakeholder Engagement & Community Insight for Governors**
Covers purposeful engagement, triangulating feedback, using insights in decision-making.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

- **Governance EDI Fundamentals**
Understanding legal duties, protected characteristics, inclusive governance behaviours.
- **Using EDI Data in Governance**
Practical course on interpreting inclusion data, spotting inequity and asking challenge questions.

Training Recommendations for JW

JW demonstrates strong skill overall but would benefit from support in: **chairing, appraisal panels, panel confidence, and EDI/data.**

Leadership & Chairing Skills

- **Chairing Skills for Governors**
Agenda planning, managing discussion, decision-making, building consensus.
- **Effective Governance Leadership - Vice-Chair Pathway**
Good for long-term development.

Panel & Appraisal Training

- **Advanced Panel Skills**
Roleplay-based training covering exclusions, complaints, appeals, and decision frameworks.
- **Headteacher Appraisal Training**
Strengthens confidence in appraisal processes, evidence scrutiny & objective setting.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- **EDI: Challenging Non-Inclusive Practice**
Develops confidence to challenge behaviours and embed inclusive culture.
- **Interpreting Data for Equality & Inclusion**
Focus on using attendance, progress, and behaviour data through an inclusion lens.

Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

- **Effective Governor Communication & Stakeholder Engagement**
Supports influencing skills and community insight.

Shared Training for Both RJ & JW

(Useful because both show development areas in similar themes.)

Governance Essentials (Refreshers)

- Governance roles & responsibilities
- Delegation & compliance
- Strategic vs operational decision-making

Data Interpretation for Governors

- Understanding school performance data
- SEND data
- Using dashboards for challenge

Safeguarding - Governor Level

- Updates on statutory duties & challenge expectations

Workshop: Writing Stronger Challenge Questions

- Practical session to improve confidence and effectiveness in meetings

Additional Support Activities (Non-Training)

To embed learning and build confidence:

Mentoring

Pair each with an experienced governor or chair for:

- Finance walkthroughs
- Risk discussions
- Panel observation
- Meeting preparation

Shadowing

- Observe at least one panel before participating
- Shadow a chair/vice-chair on agenda planning and minute review

Practice Sessions

- Mock panels
- Mock challenge questioning using school data or budget reports