

PROPOSAL FOR THE FACILITATION OF A STRATEGY DAY

Arranging a Bespoke Strategy Day

AGBIS provides a range of services to its member schools and this includes the facilitation of strategy days. Many organisations find it helpful to use an independent facilitator for strategy days as it is sometimes difficult for those with a detailed working knowledge of the School to be truly objective about the process. AGBIS's staff can help design and facilitate exactly the right type strategy for the School using their extensive sector knowledge and previous experience.

The process for arranging and AGBIS led bespoke strategy day is:

- Stage 1:** The Chair / Head / Clerk contacts AGBIS to enquire about arranging a strategy day.
- Stage 2:** A discussion (usually a telephone conference) takes place to enable AGBIS to gain a detailed understanding of the status of the school's existing strategy and establish the aims and objectives for the day itself.
- Stage 3:** AGBIS develops a draft programme for the day which is then shared with the School and is developed jointly into final programme. The School makes all the necessary logistical arrangements and provides AGBIS with all the background information required to facilitate the strategy day.
- Stage 4:** The strategy day takes place and the Clerk records the decisions and actions – the School then incorporates these into a revised strategy document.
- Stage 5:** Some schools like to invite AGBIS to run a review session, usually around two years after the strategy day, to assess the effectiveness of the strategy and make any modifications required.

Typical Strategy Days

No two strategy days are quite the same, as no two schools are the same – hence all AGBIS led strategy days are carefully planned by our experienced staff to meet the needs of the individual school. Below are some general formats for different types of strategy days which can be used as the starting point for a discussion on exactly what format should be used, depending on the prevailing situation.

Pre-Strategy Day:

Occasionally Governing Bodies need to hold a preparation day before they can plan a successful strategy day – such a day may consist of:

- Refresher training by AGBIS
 - Roles and Responsibilities of Governors
 - Safeguarding update
 - Governors' Role in Strategy
- Assessment of School's current strategy documents
- Evaluation of the current strategy
- Discussion on the nature of the strategy day

This is effectively a detailed Stage 2 (see above) after which AGBIS will commence the design of the bespoke strategy day.

Full Strategy Day

If the School's strategy is in need of a major overhaul then a full strategy day will often be required which will include some preparatory work. The programme for a full strategy day might be something like:

- Introduction by the Chair of Governors
- Presentation 'Governor Key Responsibilities and their Role in Setting Strategy' by AGBIS
- Introduction to the strategy session (Objectives / Methodology / Programme)
- Review the School's Vision / Mission Statement
- Governors' SWOT analysis – identify issues to be addressed in new strategy
- Review SWOT analyses / questionnaires / survey conducted in advance on the day by:
 - Parent and/or pupils
 - All Staff / SMT
- Identify recurring themes and determine which require immediate staff action and which need to be embedded in medium to long-term strategic plans
- Agree decisions, actions and measures of effectiveness
- Review the proceedings and agree next steps

Strategy Update / Review (Usually Half a Day)

If the School's strategy has been updated in the past two to three years then a shorter full strategy update / review may often suffice. The programme for such a session, which normally takes around half a day, might be something like:

- Introduction by the Chair of Governors
- Governor Role in Setting Strategy – brief refresher presentation by AGBIS
- Introduction to strategy session (Objectives / Methodology / Programme)
- Review the School's Vision / Mission Statement
- Identify and analyse key elements of the existing strategy:
 - Are these still relevant?
 - Has the strategy achieved the desired objective or is progress being made towards the objective?
 - Does the strategy need to be amended or replaced by a new objective?
- Agree decisions, actions and measures of effectiveness
- Review the proceedings and agree next steps

Governing Body's Effectiveness Review

Occasionally the main thrust of away day in to gauge the Governing Bodies own performance in the setting of strategy and other key governance functions. AGBIS can help develop a programme for such an event, which usually takes around half a day and might follow a programme like:

- Before the event – Governors complete the online AGBIS Governing Body Self-Assessment questionnaire
- AGBIS facilitator uses the results of the survey to develop a number of relevant discussion topics such as:
 - Bearing in mind the mantra “Eyes, on, hands off”, how would Governors rate their approach to governance (individually and collectively)?
 - How do Governors know what how the school is operating and can they evidence this?
 - Is the information provided by senior management sufficient - what more or different information do Governors need from senior management, if any, to discharge their duties as Trustees and Directors?
 - What are the top three strategic challenges facing the School over the next five year?
 - How clear are Governors about the vision and mission of the school for the future and are these shared by the executive?
 - What are the overall educational priorities for the School for the next five years?
 - Do the plans for developing the infrastructure support the educational priorities?

Fee and Charges

The charges for member schools for 2024 are £950 for a half-day session and £1,250 for a full day, plus an equivalent hourly rate for the time taken to prepare the programme (usually around 3 to 4 hours) plus all travel and subsistence costs. VAT is chargeable on the fee and expenses. These charges are for in-person attendance; a reduced rate is available for remote sessions. For strategy days for schools outside the UK, a bespoke rate will be provided based on the appropriate daily rate, including travel time, plus all travel and subsistence costs +VAT. Where possible, we advise booking at least a term in advance. This service to member schools continues to gain in popularity and it is important not to leave the booking too late.

We hope this provides sufficient information for you to consider the benefits of an AGBIS facilitated strategy day. If you would like to know more about the subjects or have other questions, please email the Director of Training & Membership (Deputy CEO) on training@agbis.org.uk or telephone 07719 534999.