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Professor Angela Thody has many publications and conference papers on the subject of school governance. This lecture is the outcome of many years of research on the topic, beginning with her doctoral thesis in 1990 on the Roles of Governors (University of Leicester). For other examples of her work in this field see

School Governors: Leaders or Followers ? (Editor) Harlow, Longmans, 1994

Moving to Management: school governors in the 1990s, London, Fulton, 1992

The Governor-Citizen: agent of the state, the community or the school?', in Macbeth A., McCreath D. & Aitchison A., *Collaborate or Compete: Educational Partnerships in a Market Economy*, Falmer, 1995

'School Governors from the Business Community', (2000) *Education Management and Administration*, (with A. Punter), Vol 28 (2) pp 185-198

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'Training School Principals, Educating School Governors', *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol 12, No. 5, 1998, pp. 232-239

'Developing School Governors, 1987-1997: Change or Inertia', *School Leadership and Management*, Vol 19, No 1, pp. 115-134, 1998

'Innovation in sub-central education government: Top, middle, bottom', *Total Quality Management*, Vol. 9, No. 2 and 3, 1998, pp. 383-394

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British Chamber of Commerce Santiago 2005



**Governors' roles:
A model to
import?**

**Emerita Professor
Angela Thody**





Who is Thody, what is she?

Educating school governors for over 20 years (in how to control their principals)

Educating school principals for over 20 years (in how to control their governors)

School governor 12 years -

**2 secondary schools, 1 early years' school
(Learning how to control my principal)**

Research – PhD on roles of governors;

Research projects on governors from industry, roles, history, composition

Publications – 2 books, many articles,

National and international lectures (NB New Zealand)



School assembly

The 21st century English school governors' hymn

Thoughts for the day –
the roles of governors since the mid 1980s = ?



Trojan horse? Suburban guerilla? Principal's supporter?
Critical friend? Trustee (as in independent schools) ?
Manager? Pupils' protector? Staff performance monitor?
Insider with the outside viewpoint? Leader?



CONTEXT

Quick up-date on English

and Welsh education post 1986

Each state school:

Is financially self-managing and must manage within their budgets. Contract for their own supplies and services. Select own students (within certain parameters)

Appoints, disciplines and dismisses its own staff

Must follow the National Curriculum. Subject to 4-yearly inspection. Can be closed for 'failure'.

Expected to achieve examination targets

**There is a National College for School Leadership
LEAs have few powers left**

2005 - Just developing the extended school



CONTEXT

**Quick up-date on English
and Welsh education post 1986**

Types of state maintained schools

LEAs: COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED

**LEAs and religious bodies, some of original funding
from religious authorities or historic charities:**

FOUNDATION, VOLUNTARY AIDED

**Some of current funding from commerce, benefactors:
PARTNERSHIP, CITY (RURAL, COASTAL) ACADEMIES,
CITY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGES**

**Any of these can have SPECIALIST status – languages,
performing arts, technology, science, business etc.
Some of these (eg Academies) will be directly controlled
through central government.**

NOTE – THE LIST CHANGES DAILY!!!!!!



Results of all the changes:

State schools operate more like independent schools (but not in class size, fees and selectivity)

Some improvements in results

Accountability for state schools is mediated through funding mechanisms, inspection, performance management for staff, the return of the national curriculum and national testing and

GOVERNORS: increased powers since 1986





Governors' roles: A model to import?

The 2000s context in English schooling: each state school is a target orientated, self-managing business





Governors' roles: a model to import?

English and Welsh maintained foundation schools

Composition of governing bodies: schools decide their own but

Elected parents: minimum 33%.

Elected teaching or support staff:
at least 2, maximum 33% including
the principal.

LEA appointees (political parties):
minimum 1, maximum, 20%

Appointed community: minimum 10%
(20% in community schools)

Foundation or partnership: minimum 2, maximum 25%
(none in community schools)



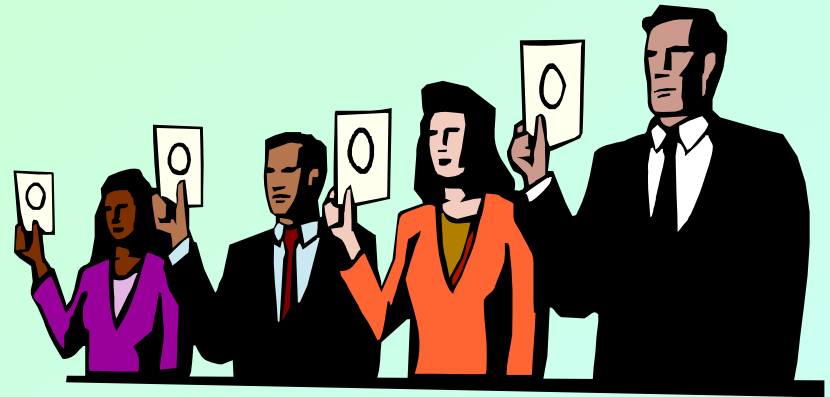
Governors' roles: a model to import?

Composition:

**Enormous advance for democracy and
adult education**

**'Educated' voices to
advise schools of
what the
outside world
thinks of them**

**Failure as a means of
central control
SO WHO CONTROLS
WHOM IN THE
SCHOOL?**



There is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty is vested in the entire aggregate of the community: every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but being, at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in the government

1859 John Stuart Mill On representative government



Governors' roles: A model to import?

The 2000s context in English schooling: each state school is a target orientated, self-managing business with varied volunteer governors





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**Report results
to parents, LEA
and Govt.**

Governors' roles: a model to import?

**WHAT DO GOVERNORS
HAVE TO DO?**

Aim – promote higher standards

Manage the budget; decide staff complement and salaries

Check the school complies with Race Relations Act

**Establish performance management policy for
staff plus grievance and discipline policies**

Set targets for test results

Oversee special needs policies

Draw up the post-OFSTED action plans

**Appoint principal and
deputy, decide on
procedure for other
appointments**

**Pupil
exclusions
Behaviour
policy**

**Ensure that the
curriculum is
balanced and
broadly based and
includes the National
Curriculum, sex and
religious education**



Governors' roles: a model to import?

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The advantages:

Real power

Real job satisfaction

Real helpfulness

Real decrease for
some principals'
stress **BUT**





REAL WORK LOAD FOR VOLUNTEERS

Responsible – to everyone and no-one

Likely collaboration with colleagues and outsiders-

Continuous committee

**Qualifications-
meetings-
in plumbing and philosophy**



**Responsibilities-
overwhelming**

**Extent of postholder's authority-
From infinitesimal to infinity**

**Skills, abilities, aptitude –
Weightlifting to carry DfES
documents; insomniac – to**

**Knowledge and
Skills – about
everyone and
everything**

Tasks - everything

**stay awake to
read them**



REAL WORK LOAD FOR VOLUNTEERS – cont.

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Training available – if you have time to attend

£ Pay? None. You have to pay to do the job

**Personality –
Conscientious
but crazy**

*Equal
Opportunities –
We're not
Proud –
we'll co-opt
anyone*

**Holidays –
what holidays?**



**Work
Hours –
A lot**

Experience? None needed - you'll soon get it.



Governors' roles: A model to import?

The 2000s context in English schooling: each state school is a target orientated, self-managing business with varied volunteer governors with extensive responsibilities





**So governors have the powers –
How do they play the game?**



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Governors' roles: a model to import?

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ROLE MODELS

A view from the past...

*In relation to the governors, the principal is
Their instrument to work with
Their servant, to carry out their plans and
wishes*

*Their representative, to illustrate and
maintain the good principles in which
you are all enlisted*

*Their almoner, to bestow what is better
than silver or gold - viz, a good
education.*

1853: Anon A School Master's Difficulties, London,
Longmans, Brown, Green and Longmans. P.65





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Governors' roles: a model to import?

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ROLE MODELS

**The view from the present –
The governor's role is to be
the critical friend**

**BUT WHOSE FRIEND?
PARENTS?
GOVERNMENT?
PUPILS?
PRINCIPAL?**





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Governors' roles: a model to import?

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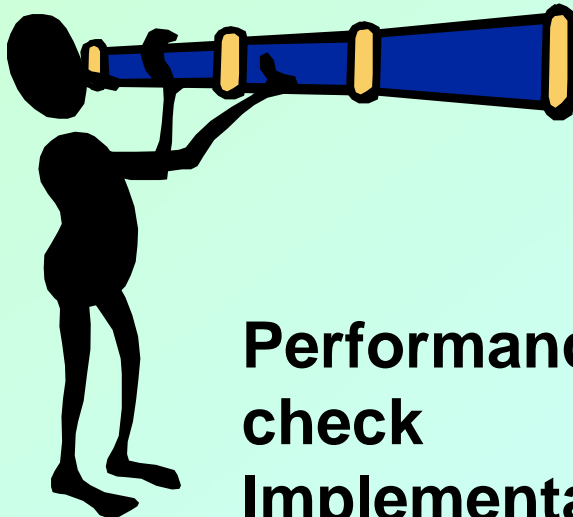
ROLE MODELS: Evaluator

Needs knowledge of teaching and learning

SO GO GET IT

Observe teachers in
classrooms

Controversial – but how else
can governors learn about
the core business?



Performance management powers – policies,
check

Implementation, reward and discipline staff



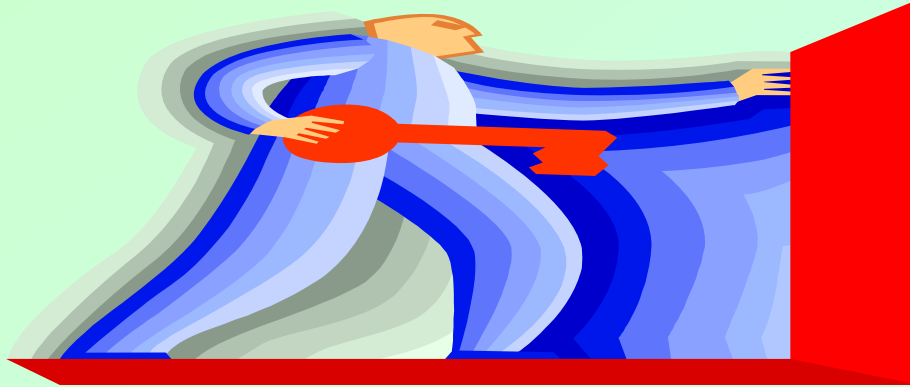
ROLE MODELS: The non-executive director



Governors each specialise.

Governing bodies have committees.

Strategic role – initiating and checking but not managing



**ROLE
MODELS
THE TRUSTEE**

The trustees are the life of the school. If they are active, watchful and faithful, the school will flourish; but if they are irresolute and indifferent, the school will dwindle and eventually go down



Trustees have responsibilities of stewardship...Legally a trustee is a person entrusted with the administration of property for the benefit of a third party. This third party is usually a minor, hence the trustee is specifically looking towards the welfare of the future generation... the pupils and staff of a school are necessarily transient members but the governing body prevails as the trustee

Trusteeship fits the style of those who volunteer as governors – altruistic, goal-, interest- and rogue- orientated, bystanding and ambitious; they balance current needs against future needs



Still room for fun...

Governors' weeks

Classroom attachments

Helping out

Being an audience

PR



Governors' roles: A model to import?

The 2000s context in English schooling: each state school is a target orientated, self-managing business with varied volunteer governors with extensive responsibilities and a choice of being critical friends, teaching and learning evaluators, trustees, non-executive directors and fun roles.

So – which will you import?





But keep the governor's role in perspective...

Who has not repeatedly seen cases of best governance where ... everything in the school...has been truly miserable: whilst on the other hand, where governance has been defective...all that is valuable prospers?

1853 – *A School Master's Difficulties*. Anon. London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman

