



HOPEBRIGHT

S C H O O L

Governance Policy Hopebright School

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GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK AND SCHOOL OVERSIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

Aligned to the Independent School Standards (ISS 2026)

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OUR MISSION

Hopebright School is a specialist secondary SEND provision delivering education to pupils with a diverse range of additional needs, including Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, autism spectrum conditions, moderate learning difficulties, and associated complex developmental and learning profiles.

The school operates a highly structured, therapeutic, and individualised approach to education, designed to meet the needs of learners who require enhanced support to access learning, regulate behaviour, and achieve positive outcomes.

Our mission is to ensure that every pupil:

- accesses a **safe, stable, and consistently structured learning environment** (ISS Part 3: Welfare, Health & Safety)
- receives a **personalised and appropriately differentiated curriculum** that enables meaningful progress over time (ISS Part 1: Quality of Education)
- develops **emotional regulation, resilience, independence, and social understanding** as core life skills
- is **safeguarded effectively at all times through robust systems, oversight, and staff practice** (ISS Part 3)
- is supported to achieve **positive and sustained post-16 destinations**, including education, training, apprenticeships, or employment pathways

The governance framework exists to ensure **full and sustained compliance with the Independent School Standards (Parts 1–8)** and to provide structured oversight that drives continuous improvement in:

- educational quality and pupil outcomes
- safeguarding effectiveness
- attendance and engagement
- behaviour, wellbeing, and personal development
- leadership accountability and operational consistency

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Proprietor (Ultimate Accountability)

The Proprietor holds **overall legal responsibility** for ensuring the school meets all requirements of the Independent School Standards (ISS 2026), including safeguarding, educational quality, leadership effectiveness, and premises safety.

This role provides final assurance that all statutory duties are being met and that governance systems are effective in practice, not just in design.

Core responsibilities include:

- ensuring sustained compliance with **all ISS Parts 1–8**
- maintaining effective safeguarding arrangements with clear leadership accountability (ISS Part 3)
- ensuring leadership and management systems are robust, effective, and properly resourced (ISS Part 8)
- ensuring the school is appropriately staffed, resourced, and able to deliver its stated curriculum intent (ISS Parts 4 and 5)
- receiving and reviewing escalation reports relating to safeguarding, risk, and compliance failure
- ensuring that governance structures remain effective, appropriately skilled, and operationally functional
- holding senior leaders to account for educational performance, safety, and compliance outcomes

The Proprietor acts as the final point of escalation for any issues relating to risk, safeguarding concerns, or regulatory compliance.

2. School Governance Function (Strategic Oversight and Assurance)

The School Governance Function provides **structured challenge, scrutiny, and assurance** to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). It operates as the primary mechanism for ensuring that ISS requirements are not only met but demonstrably evidenced.

This function does not manage day-to-day operations; instead, it evaluates performance, interrogates data, and ensures corrective actions are implemented effectively.

Governance responsibilities include oversight of:

ISS Part 1–2: Quality of Education and Curriculum

- curriculum intent, implementation, and impact
- pupil progress and attainment data
- quality of teaching and learning
- effectiveness of interventions and personalised pathways

ISS Part 3: Welfare, Health and Safety

- safeguarding systems, DSL effectiveness, and escalation processes
- behaviour systems, including risk reduction and intervention strategies
- attendance monitoring and vulnerability tracking
- effectiveness of pupil support and wellbeing systems

ISS Part 4: Suitability of Staff

- safer recruitment compliance and Single Central Record (SCR) assurance
- staff training, competency, and suitability checks
- workforce capacity and deployment effectiveness

ISS Part 5: Premises and Accommodation

- health and safety compliance across the site
- risk management systems and environmental safety
- accessibility and suitability of learning environments

ISS Part 6: Provision of Information

- accuracy and accessibility of published policies and statutory information
- compliance with reporting requirements to parents, carers, and stakeholders

ISS Part 7: Complaints

- review of complaints trends, themes, and outcomes
- assurance that complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and within timescales

ISS Part 8: Leadership and Management

- effectiveness of leadership decision-making

- implementation of school improvement actions
- monitoring of compliance systems and operational governance

Governance ensures that issues are identified early, escalated appropriately, and resolved within agreed timeframes.

3. Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (Operational Delivery and Compliance Execution)

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) hold responsibility for **day-to-day operational delivery of all ISS requirements (Parts 1–8)**. They are accountable for ensuring that policies are implemented consistently, systems are maintained effectively, and that all pupils receive safe, high-quality education and support.

Operational responsibilities include:

ISS Part 1–2: Education and Curriculum

- delivery of a broad, balanced, and appropriately differentiated curriculum
- monitoring of pupil progress and achievement
- implementation of intervention strategies and personalised learning pathways
- ensuring teaching quality is consistently effective across the school

ISS Part 3: Safeguarding, Behaviour, and Welfare

- implementation of safeguarding procedures and DSL systems
- day-to-day behaviour management and risk reduction
- management of attendance and vulnerability concerns
- implementation of pupil support plans, risk assessments, and BSPs

ISS Part 4: Staffing

- safe recruitment practices in line with statutory requirements
- staff supervision, training implementation, and performance management
- deployment of staff to meet pupil need effectively

ISS Part 5: Premises and Safety

- operational health and safety management
- implementation of risk assessments and safety procedures
- ensuring a safe and structured learning environment at all times

ISS Part 6: Information

- accurate communication with parents, carers, and external agencies
- maintenance of required documentation and published information

ISS Part 7: Complaints

- initial handling and resolution of complaints at school level
- escalation of serious complaints to governance or safeguarding routes where required

ISS Part 8: Leadership and Management

- implementation of governance decisions and improvement actions
- internal monitoring of compliance systems
- ensuring consistency of practice across all staff and departments

Summary

This three-tier governance structure ensures:

- clear **accountability at every level**
- robust **ISS compliance across all Parts 1–8**
- effective separation of **strategy, oversight, and operational delivery**
- continuous **monitoring, escalation, and improvement**
- strong alignment between **safeguarding, education quality, and leadership effectiveness**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (2026 ALIGNED)

1. Proprietor

The Proprietor holds **ultimate legal accountability** for ensuring that Hopebright School fully complies with the **Independent School Standards (ISS 2026, Parts 1–8)**. This includes both strategic oversight of compliance systems and assurance that leadership arrangements are effective, well-resourced, and consistently implemented in practice.

The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring that governance arrangements are sufficiently robust to identify risk early, maintain regulatory compliance, and secure sustained improvement in outcomes for all pupils, particularly those with complex SEND needs.

The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring:

- **Full ISS compliance across all Parts (1–8)**
Including ongoing assurance that all statutory standards are met and evidenced through documentation, monitoring, and audit activity.
- **Safeguarding effectiveness (ISS Part 3)**
Ensuring safeguarding systems are robust, consistently implemented, and independently reviewed, including clear escalation routes and DSL oversight.
- **Leadership accountability systems (ISS Part 8)**
Ensuring that the Headteacher and SLT are effectively held to account through structured performance monitoring, reporting, and review cycles.
- **Safe recruitment systems and SCR compliance (ISS Part 4)**
Ensuring that all recruitment processes are compliant with safer recruitment standards and that the Single Central Record (SCR) is accurate, complete, and continuously maintained.
- **Safe premises and operational risk control (ISS Part 5)**
Ensuring that the school environment is safe, well-maintained, and that risks are identified, assessed, and mitigated effectively through appropriate systems.
- **Governance effectiveness and capacity**
Ensuring governance arrangements remain fit for purpose, including appropriate oversight structures, reporting mechanisms, and escalation procedures.

2. School Governance Function (Strategic Assurance and Scrutiny)

The School Governance Function provides **independent challenge, scrutiny, and assurance** to the Headteacher and SLT. Its purpose is to evaluate the effectiveness of school systems, ensure compliance with ISS requirements, and monitor the impact of leadership decisions on pupil outcomes and safety.

This function does not manage operational delivery; instead, it ensures that leadership activity is **evidenced, effective, and compliant**, and that risks are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

Education & Outcomes (ISS Parts 1–2)

Governance provides assurance that:

- curriculum design demonstrates clear **intent, structured implementation, and measurable impact**
- teaching and learning lead to **sustained pupil progress relative to starting points**
- pupils are supported through **appropriately differentiated and personalised pathways**
- SMSC development is systematically embedded across curriculum and wider school experience
- interventions are timely, targeted, and reviewed for effectiveness
- assessment information is accurate, moderated, and used to inform improvement planning

Safeguarding & Welfare (ISS Part 3)

Governance ensures that:

- safeguarding systems are **effective, compliant, and subject to regular scrutiny**
- DSL arrangements are robust, clearly defined, and operationally effective
- behaviour systems are consistent, proportionate, and focused on pupil welfare and safety
- risk assessments and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) are **consistently applied and regularly reviewed**
- incidents, including serious safeguarding concerns, are appropriately recorded, escalated, and analysed for patterns
- pupil wellbeing and vulnerability tracking systems are actively used to inform intervention

Staffing (ISS Part 4)

Governance assures that:

- safer recruitment processes are fully compliant with statutory requirements

- the Single Central Record (SCR) is accurate, complete, and routinely audited
- staff suitability checks are consistently maintained and updated
- workforce capacity is sufficient to meet pupil need and ensure safe supervision
- staff training and professional development support compliance and improvement priorities

Premises (ISS Part 5)

Governance ensures that:

- the school site is safe, secure, and suitable for all pupils
- health and safety systems are effective, documented, and regularly reviewed
- risks are identified promptly and mitigated through clear action planning
- accessibility and suitability of learning environments are maintained in line with pupil need
- statutory compliance relating to premises, fire safety, and environmental risk is consistently met

Information & Complaints (ISS Parts 6–7)

Governance ensures that:

- all statutory information is accurate, up to date, and appropriately published
- policies and required documentation are accessible to stakeholders
- complaints are recorded, tracked, and analysed for trends and systemic issues
- complaints handling is timely, fair, and compliant with policy requirements
- learning from complaints is embedded into school improvement processes

Leadership & Management (ISS Part 8)

Governance provides assurance that:

- leadership systems are effective, consistent, and aligned with ISS expectations
- school improvement actions are clearly defined, tracked, and completed within timescales
- performance management processes are robust and linked to outcomes for pupils
- compliance systems are embedded into daily school practice
- risk identification, escalation, and resolution processes are effective and timely

3. Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (Operational Delivery and Compliance Execution)

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for **day-to-day operational implementation of all Independent School Standards (Parts 1–8)**. They ensure that all systems, policies, and procedures are actively embedded in practice and that pupils receive a safe, structured, and high-quality educational experience.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (ISS Parts 1–2)

The Headteacher and SLT are responsible for:

- delivering a **broad, balanced, and appropriately adapted curriculum**
- ensuring high-quality teaching across all subject areas
- monitoring pupil progress and intervening where underachievement is identified
- ensuring personalised learning pathways reflect individual SEND needs
- embedding SMSC development across all areas of school life

Safeguarding, Behaviour and Welfare (ISS Part 3)

They are responsible for:

- implementing safeguarding policies and DSL procedures in full
- ensuring all staff understand and apply safeguarding expectations consistently
- managing behaviour systems that prioritise safety, regulation, and positive engagement
- overseeing risk assessments, BSPs, and pupil vulnerability planning
- ensuring attendance, wellbeing, and engagement are actively monitored and responded to

Staffing and Workforce Management (ISS Part 4)

They are responsible for:

- ensuring safe recruitment procedures are followed in all appointments
- maintaining accurate and up-to-date SCR records
- delivering induction, training, and ongoing professional development
- managing staff performance, supervision, and deployment
- ensuring appropriate staffing ratios to meet pupil need safely

Premises and Safety Management (ISS Part 5)

They are responsible for:

- ensuring the school environment is safe, clean, and fit for purpose
- implementing health and safety procedures and risk assessments

- responding to identified hazards and ensuring timely mitigation
- maintaining safe access, movement, and supervision across the site

Information, Communication and Compliance (ISS Part 6)

They are responsible for:

- ensuring statutory information is accurate and consistently maintained
- communicating effectively with parents, carers, and external agencies
- ensuring required policies are implemented and accessible

Complaints Handling (ISS Part 7)

They are responsible for:

- managing complaints at school level in line with policy timescales
- ensuring fair, transparent, and documented resolution processes
- escalating serious complaints appropriately
- identifying learning from complaints and implementing improvements

Leadership and Governance Implementation (ISS Part 8)

They are responsible for:

- implementing governance decisions and improvement actions
- maintaining internal monitoring and quality assurance systems
- ensuring consistent application of policies and procedures
- driving continuous improvement in outcomes, behaviour, and safeguarding practice
- ensuring staff understand and deliver governance expectations operationally

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSURANCE MODEL

Governance assurance at Hopebright School is delivered through a **structured, cyclical, and evidence-led framework** aligned explicitly to the **Independent School Standards (ISS 2026, Parts 1–8)**. The model ensures that compliance is continuously monitored, risks are identified at the earliest point, and improvement actions are systematically implemented and evaluated for impact.

The approach is designed to ensure that governance oversight is **active, predictive, and triangulated**, drawing together operational data, leadership evaluation, and independent scrutiny.

1. Weekly KPI and Safeguarding Reporting (ISS Parts 1–8)

A formal weekly reporting cycle provides **real-time oversight of school performance, safeguarding, and operational risk**.

Reports include triangulated data covering:

- pupil attendance, punctuality, and engagement trends (Parts 1–3)
- behaviour incidents, escalation patterns, and risk indicators (Part 3)
- safeguarding referrals, concerns, and DSL actions (Part 3)
- staffing updates including absence, deployment, and recruitment activity (Part 4)
- premises, health and safety issues or emerging risks (Part 5)
- complaints, parental feedback, and external communications (Part 7)
- leadership actions, risk flags, and compliance issues (Part 8)

This enables governance to:

- identify emerging risks before escalation
- monitor effectiveness of safeguarding interventions
- review operational stability in real time
- ensure accountability for timely leadership action

2. Termly Governance Meetings with SLT

Formal governance meetings occur each term and provide **structured strategic scrutiny of school performance and compliance against ISS requirements**.

Each meeting includes:

- review of performance dashboards and KPI trends
- safeguarding oversight report and DSL assurance update (Part 3)
- curriculum quality, sequencing, and impact review (Parts 1–2)
- behaviour, attendance, and inclusion analysis (Part 3)
- staffing compliance and workforce capacity review (Part 4)

- premises safety, maintenance, and risk review (Part 5)
- complaints analysis, themes, and learning outcomes (Part 7)
- leadership effectiveness and improvement progress review (Part 8)

Outcomes include:

- formally agreed governance actions
- escalation of risks where required
- challenge to leadership decision-making and effectiveness
- confirmation of compliance position against ISS Parts 1–8

3. Annual Full ISS Compliance Audit (Parts 1–8)

An annual audit provides a **comprehensive, evidence-based evaluation of compliance across all Independent School Standards.**

The audit assesses:

- curriculum intent, implementation, and impact (Parts 1–2)
- safeguarding systems, culture, and operational effectiveness (Part 3)
- safer recruitment, SCR accuracy, and workforce compliance (Part 4)
- premises safety, accessibility, and suitability (Part 5)
- statutory information accuracy and publication compliance (Part 6)
- complaints handling effectiveness and learning (Part 7)
- leadership systems, accountability, and governance effectiveness (Part 8)

The audit outputs:

- a formal compliance report with graded findings
- identification of strengths and areas for improvement
- risk classification where applicable
- a tracked action plan with clear accountability and deadlines

4. Routine Leadership Monitoring Visits

Governance assurance is strengthened through structured and unannounced **leadership monitoring activity.**

These visits focus on:

- quality of education in practice (Parts 1–2)
- safeguarding culture and implementation (Part 3)
- behaviour climate, regulation, and pupil engagement
- staff practice, supervision, and consistency of approach (Part 4)

- site safety, environment, and operational controls (Part 5)

Monitoring activity includes:

- learning walks across curriculum areas
- pupil voice and engagement discussions
- review of case studies and intervention effectiveness
- sampling of documentation and compliance evidence

Findings are formally recorded and integrated into governance reporting cycles.

5. Ongoing Safeguarding and Behaviour Data Analysis (ISS Part 3)

Safeguarding and behaviour data are subject to **continuous monitoring and analytical review**, reflecting their central importance in ISS compliance and pupil safety.

This includes:

- analysis of safeguarding referrals and thematic trends
- monitoring of behaviour incidents and escalation patterns
- review of restrictive practice use and de-escalation effectiveness
- identification of vulnerability indicators and at-risk cohorts
- tracking attendance patterns linked to safeguarding concern

This data is used to:

- inform early intervention strategies
- update risk assessments and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)
- reduce repetition of incidents through systemic learning
- strengthen safeguarding culture and consistency of response

6. Sampling of Key Compliance Systems

Governance undertakes structured sampling of core systems to ensure **accuracy, reliability, and operational effectiveness** across ISS-critical areas.

Single Central Record (SCR) – ISS Part 4

- verification of safer recruitment checks and statutory compliance
- confirmation of ongoing staff suitability and vetting accuracy
- assurance that SCR is maintained in real time and fully auditable

Curriculum Planning and Impact – ISS Parts 1–2

- review of curriculum design, sequencing, and adaptation for SEND learners
- evaluation of pupil progress evidence and attainment trajectories
- assessment of intervention effectiveness and personalised learning impact

Safeguarding Logs – ISS Part 3

- review of referral quality, timeliness, and escalation decision-making
- analysis of DSL practice consistency and multi-agency engagement
- identification of recurring safeguarding themes or emerging risks

Behaviour and Risk Assessments – ISS Part 3

- evaluation of Behaviour Support Plans for accuracy and implementation fidelity
- review of risk assessment quality, review frequency, and responsiveness
- monitoring of restrictive practice reduction strategies and safeguarding alignment

7. Action Management and Tracking System

All governance and leadership actions arising from monitoring, audit, or reporting activity are subject to a **formalised accountability and tracking system** designed to ensure completion and impact.

All actions are:

- **recorded** within a centralised governance action log
- **assigned** to a named responsible individual or role
- **time-bound** with clearly defined deadlines and milestones
- **tracked to completion**, with escalation where progress is not achieved

Progress is reviewed through:

- weekly governance reporting cycles
- termly governance meetings
- audit follow-up activity
- leadership

ISS COMPLIANCE MAPPING GRID (PARTS 1–8)

ISS Part	Area	Governance Assurance Mechanism	Key Evidence
Part 1	Quality of Education	Curriculum review, lesson observations, outcomes analysis	QA reports, data tracking
Part 2	SMSC Development	Curriculum mapping, pupil voice, enrichment monitoring	SMSC evidence portfolio
Part 3	Welfare, Health & Safety	Safeguarding audits, behaviour monitoring, DSL oversight	SCR, safeguarding logs
Part 4	Suitability of Staff	Safer recruitment checks, SCR audits	HR files, recruitment records
Part 5	Premises & Accommodation	Site inspections, H&S audits, risk assessments	Site audit reports
Part 6	Information Provision	Website, policy compliance checks	Published documents
Part 7	Complaints	Complaints log review and trend analysis	Complaints register
Part 8	Leadership & Management	Governance scrutiny, audit cycle, improvement tracking	Minutes, action logs

APPENDIX 1 – GOVERNANCE AND SCHOOL SUPPORT MODEL

Frequency	Activity	Output
Weekly	Headteacher KPI report	Governance dashboard
Weekly	Safeguarding & behaviour review	Risk escalation log
Termly	Governance meeting	Minutes & actions
Termly	Leadership performance review	Improvement plan updates
Annual	ISS full compliance audit	Compliance report
Ongoing	Monitoring visits	QA reports

APPENDIX 2 – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Universal Support (All Schools)

- annual ISS audit (Parts 1–8)
- termly governance review meetings
- KPI and safeguarding monitoring cycle
- routine leadership engagement and challenge

Targeted Support (If required)

- increased monitoring frequency
- focused improvement action plan
- additional leadership oversight visits
- enhanced scrutiny of identified risk areas

Intensive Support (Where risk is identified)

- weekly monitoring cycle
- formal school improvement recovery plan
- escalation of safeguarding or compliance risks
- external review input where required

APPENDIX 3 – WEEKLY REPORT TO GOVERNANCE (TEMPLATE)

Section	Information Required
School	
Week Ending	
Occupancy	Actual / Planned
Achievements	
Key Issues	
Safeguarding	Referrals / themes / actions
Behaviour	Incidents and trends
Restrictive Practices	Numbers and context
Police Contact	Details if applicable
Complaints	Summary
Staffing	Absence / agency / recruitment
Estates	Issues / risks
AOB	

APPENDIX 4 – GOVERNANCE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Governance Composition

- Proprietor Representative: _____
- Headteacher: _____
- Senior Leader Representative: _____
- Quality / School Improvement Lead: _____

Collective Governance Expertise

The governance function collectively includes expertise in:

- SEND and specialist secondary education leadership
- safeguarding systems and child protection (ISS Part 3)
- behaviour support and SEMH provision
- curriculum design and quality assurance (Parts 1–2)
- independent school standards compliance (Parts 1–8)
- inspection readiness and regulatory frameworks
- health, safety, and operational risk management (Part 5)

Purpose of Governance Expertise

This ensures:

- consistent ISS compliance across all parts
- robust safeguarding oversight
- effective challenge and accountability
- continuous school improvement
- high-quality educational outcomes for all pupils