

Complementary reference information for the Governors Wales website

Critical Success Factors and Key Processes

For excellence in anything to be achieved all the prior conditions that must be fulfilled need to be acknowledged and catered for. These prior conditions are also known as ‘Critical Success Factors’ (CSFs). In focusing staff and other stakeholders on the school’s aims and objectives it’s important for the governing body and SMT, as part of the strategic planning process, to determine the CSFs. The acid test for a CSF is, ‘If this Factor is not fulfilled, can our vision be realised?’ Examples of CSFs are:

Achievement of Learners / Successful Completion

Effective Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Meet the Needs of Learners & Community

Enhanced Buildings and Resources

Effective Pastoral Care

Effective Leadership & Management

Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

Increased Range of Subjects & Curriculum

Key processes within the school’s management system will serve each CSF. The governing body, or its sub-committees, would usually oversee each process. As such, each could be ‘owned’ by a governor or governors. Typical key processes could be:

Staff Recruitment and Development

Strategic Planning and Evaluation

Innovation development

Environmental Management

Recruitment & Retention of Learners

Building Organisational Partnerships

Site (Facilities) Management

Performance Management

Supplier Relationships

ICT Management

Building Professional Networks

Parent./ Carer Relationships

By putting all of these in a matrix the governing body and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) can determine which processes should be prioritised when deciding how resources should be allocated.



Cross-referencing Critical Success Factors with Key Processes

A weighting can be given to each of the Critical Success Factors (CSF) and a judgement made by the governors and SLT as to the impact each Key Process has on each CSF. This will help to decide the importance of the Key processes and to prioritise actions.

Theoretical example

Processes	Weighting									Total weighting
	CSFs	Achievement of Learners / successful completion 9	Effective teaching, learning and assessment 8	Meet the needs of learners & community 5	Effective pastoral care 6	Effective Leadership & Management 9	Evaluation & Continuous Improvement 7	Enhanced Buildings and Resources 5	Increased range of subjects & curriculum 5	
Staff Recruitment and Development	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	152
Site (Facilities) Management	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	108
Strategic Planning and Evaluation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	151
Performance Management	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	147
Innovation Development	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	126
Supplier Relationships	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	129
Environmental Management	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	118
ICT Management	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	136
Recruitment & Retention of Learners	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	145
Building Professional Networks	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	156
Build Organisational Partnerships	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	156
Parent/Carer relationships	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	131

Legend Strong ● x3 Medium ● x2 Weak ○ x1

*Adapted from The Strategic Toolkit
John Marsh 1993*



The following is a selection of measures that the Governing Body and SLT could use to monitor and evaluate school performance:

Staff

Results:

annual survey / discussion group using formal questionnaire;
exit interviews – staff feedback on school effectiveness and what could be improved;
external Inspection Reports (e.g. Estyn KQ2);
Investor In People Report and other external assessments;

Indicators:

number of training days and Continuous Professional Development (including effectiveness of training);
commendations (staff achievements and external acknowledgements in support of staff);
appointments;
absence (%);
staff turnover (%)

Parents

Measures:

annual survey / discussion group using structured questionnaire;
external Inspection Reports (e.g. Estyn KQ1, KQ3, KQ4);

Indicators:

commendations (evidence of parental satisfaction such as letters received);
attendance at parents' evenings (%);
attendance at Annual Governors Report evening (%);
number of complaints about the school;

Pupils

Measures:

annual survey / discussion group;
external Inspection Reports (e.g. Estyn KQ1, KQ3, KQ4);
final examination results, e.g. GCSE A* to C; A* to G, 'A' Level, vocational qualifications, Welsh Baccalaureate; outcomes/results v. predicted (value added);



Indicators:

commendations & achievements (including sporting and non-curricular, e.g. D of E Awards);
internal tests & progress reports;
time-outs & internal 'exclusions';
short-term exclusions,
permanent exclusions; complaints;
provision for the more able and talented;
provision for students' additional needs

School leavers

Measures:

direct feedback from leavers on their time at the school and their views on the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
those leaving with no formal qualifications (%);
entering employment (%), HE (%), FE (%), NEET (%)

Governors and SLT

Measures: External Inspection Reports (e.g. Estyn); self-evaluation of GB effectiveness;
self-evaluation returns (%);
self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness;
feedback from staff, parent and pupil surveys

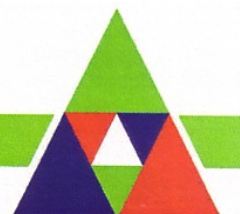
Indicators:

attendance at GB meetings / absence (%);
attendance at committee meetings (%);
attendance at training sessions;
GB vacancies for more than one term;
complaints;
Link Governor contact (at least once per term);
Link Governor reports (to Governing Body).

Community

Measures:

direct feedback from key community opinion formers (such as employers, LEA and Councillors);



external Inspection Reports (e.g. Estyn);

parent survey

Indicators:

work experience placements (% numbers placed and % +ve feedback from employers);

recognition / commendations from the community, press coverage (% +ve); use of school facilities (as a % of time and resource available);

attendance at school events (e.g. theatre productions);

Employers Forum/Employer links – number of employers involved and outcomes.

Framework of Improvement Models

The following is an indication of the overlap between the various elements and criteria of the selected Improvement Models.

The School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Estyn Inspection Framework Key Questions	Investors In People Standard Indicators	European Excellence Model Criteria
Leadership	5.1, 5.2, 7.1, 7.2	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8	1, 2, 3, 4
Working with others	3.1, 3.2	3, 6, 7	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8
Networks of professional practice	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	3, 9, 10	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8
Intervention and support	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2	3, 8, 9, 10	6, 9
Improvement and accountability	6.1, 6.2	5, 9, 10	1, 5, 9
Curriculum and teaching	4.1, 4.2, 4.3	3, 6, 7	5, 6, 7, 9

