

WHEELERS LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL



GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-20

PART 1. GOVERNING BOARD FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

All school governing boards have three core functions, which are defined by the Department for Education as follows:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

In addition to performing these core functions, during the 2019-20 school year the governing board engaged in a series of special projects and discharged their ongoing statutory responsibilities as explained in the following sections of this statement.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

There were ten meetings of the Full Governing Body during the school year, with one meeting usually held each month. During the Covid-19 pandemic the Governing Body met virtually and adopted suitable amendments to safeguarding and virtual meetings policies to enable this. In addition, the governing body operated the following regular committees:

- **Finance and Staffing Committee**. One committee meeting was held each term, with an additional meeting in the spring term to consider the budget for 2019-20.
- **Head Teacher Performance Management Committee**. There were two meetings of this committee during the year.
- **Pay Committee**. This committee held one meeting in the autumn term to consider the proposed pay awards.

The following special purpose committees were also required during 2019-20:

- **Discipline Committee**. This committee met on two occasions, to consider two separate staff disciplinary matters.

Governing body membership and meeting attendance records for 2019-20 are published on the governors' page on the school website.

PART 2. CORE GOVERNING BODY FUNCTIONS

2A. ENSURING CLARITY OF VISION, ETHOS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The governing board established a clear strategic direction through:

- Agreement of the School Improvement Plan for the year with the school.
- Reviewing the School Improvement Plan during the year to monitor progress.

- Reviewing the Governing Body targets set for the previous academic year.
- Preparing a Governing Body Strategy Document for the year based upon School Improvement Plan headings, OFSTED targets given to the school, financial priorities and other defined governing body objectives for the year.
- Ensuring that laminated copies of the strategy document would be available at Full Governing Body meetings as a reference and reminder when meeting face to face, otherwise referenced during virtual meetings.

2B. HOLDING THE HEAD TEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANISATION

The Governing Body received a series of presentations from senior leaders and subject leads at which governors scrutinized, questioned, and challenged measures for educational improvements within the school. These presentations and associated governor scrutiny covered:

- Teaching and learning developments within the school presented by the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Curriculum development.
 - Challenge on how the school with address the issues regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion following the Black Lives Matter movement.
 - Proposed plans on how the curriculum will be reviewed to address this and training on 'unconscious bias'.
- Data tracking within the school presented by the Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for data.
- Training was given to governors on the school's Inspection Data Summary Reports which are an OFSTED requirement.
- An update of the school's nursery provision and wrap-around care was provided by the EY leader.
- Review of the partnership between the school and orchids for parents and children.

Challenge on impact of children's learning, transition to reception and financial implications for Orchids and the school. The governing body also:

- Considered the End Key Stage results from 2019 and comparisons with 2017 and 2018.
- Set appropriately challenging performance management targets for the Head Teacher through the Head Teacher Performance Management committee, working alongside a school improvement advisor. These targets were monitored by the committee during the year; however, due to the impact of Covid-19 some targets were less relevant by the end of the year.

2C. HOLDING THE HEAD TEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE PUPILS

Governors received termly reports from the Head Teacher upon developments within the school and containing statutory data that must be presented to governors. Governor questions and challenge on these reports included:

- What actions are being taken to improve attendance?

- How are points raised within Peer Reviews being implemented?
- How is the Sports Premium being used?
- How is supply cover being employed and is it being used in line with best value principles?
- How is funding for Looked After Children being deployed?
- How is English as an Additional Language support being provided?
- What are the procedures in place for authorized absence and unauthorized absence?
- What is the decision-making process for deciding where staff will be working in 2019-20 and how is this information communicated?
- What actions are being taken to address trends appearing in pupil lateness figures?
- What impacts the Covid-19 pandemic has on the school, on pupils' wellbeing, and on teaching and learning?
- How remote learning and key worker children provision is set up during periods of lockdown
- How the needs of the PP children being met during the pandemic with regards to FSM, access to learning and resources?

Governors received termly reports from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who met regularly with the appointed Safeguarding link governor. Governor question and challenge included:

- How are safeguarding measures implemented at parents' evenings?
- How does the school meet safeguarding responsibilities regarding third party providers?
- How is restorative justice being used within the school and how effective has this technique proven?
- How are the children being impacted due to the lockdown?
- How are staff safeguarded during the lockdown and upon their full return for one week in the summer term?

Governors received a presentation on SEND provision from the Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for that area. This presentation and associated governor scrutiny covered:

- How special needs are identified and subsequently monitored by ongoing assessment.
- Approving and scrutinising the new SEND Policy.
- Quality First Teaching practice in reference to children with special needs and the use of Individual Target Plans.
- Considering a report of the Special Educational Needs notional budget and how the money is being spent.

2D. OVERSEEING THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL AND ENSURING MONEY IS WELL SPENT

Each meeting of the Finance & Staffing Committee reviewed reports presenting the current financial position of the school. Reports considered included:

- Income and expenditure by cost centre with variances from budget.
- Three-year strategic financial forecasts.
- Cumulative expenditure with suppliers above £10,000 in the current year.

The school faced an in-year financial deficit in 2019-20 and with a further in-year deficit forecast for 2020-2021 In response to this situation the governing body:

- Challenged the school on methods being used to reduce the deficit.
- Encouraged the school to be open to long-term structural changes as well as short-term measures.

The Governing Body received a presentation from the Deputy Head Teacher concerning Pupil Premium funding. The presentation and associated governor scrutiny covered:

- How Pupil Premium funding is being used within the school.
- Defining priorities and changes concerning Pupil Premium expenditure for 2019-20.

The governing body also:

- Scrutinized the school performance management systems and pay awards through a meeting of the Pay Committee.
- Monitoring challenges of Covid 19 and the impact on the whole school budget whilst ensuring all the necessary changes/adaptions were met during the lockdown period whilst ensuring the provision for key worker/vulnerable children. This included the physical changes to the school environment, the adaptations for online learning or alternatives) as a couple of examples.

PART 3. SPECIAL PROJECTS DURING 2019-20

3B. BETTER GOVERNANCE MEASURES

The governing board implemented a series of measures to improve governance during 2019-20. These included:

- Completing and reviewing the governor skills matrix exercise. This identified areas where the governing body could be strengthened, and would be used to inform training, mentoring and recruitment.

The governing body also:

- All became members of the National College.
- All attended Safeguarding Training January 2021.
- Governor biographies were produced and displayed in school.

PART 4. OTHER GOVERNING BODY ACTIONS

4A. GOVERNOR VISITING

Governors were regular visitors to the school during the year before the lockdown in March 2020, after which they continued to meet virtually for their link role and all full governor and committee meetings.

Governor visiting included:

- Link governor visits for statutory responsibilities concerning safeguarding and SEND:
 - o Governors considered and implemented a 'role description' for the link governor for safeguarding.
 - o Governors considered a list of safeguarding questions they would ask the school community to fulfil their strategic role when visiting.
- Link governor visits concerning English, Maths and Pupil Premium matters.
- Link governor visits regarding wrap-around care with Orchids.
- Link governor visit for Year 3 assembly and Parent Safer Internet Training session.
- Link governor visit and report was presented concerning Pupil Premium.

4B. OTHER STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors discharged other statutory responsibilities not previously mentioned within this statement. These included:

- Approving the Schools Financial Value Standard - an audit of the evidence was conducted, and a written report produced before approval was given.
- Ensuring that the S175 safeguarding audit was completed and monitoring the action plan that was drawn up following the audit.
- Ensuring compliance under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation.

4C. PARENTAL SURVEY

This was undertaken during parent consultation day by governors and the analysis showed a good response and positive feedback from parents. The results of the survey were communicated to staff and thanks expressed from the governors.

The governing body also approved the statutory and non-statutory policies listed below. Some approvals involved adopting a local authority policy without modification. Other policies had been prepared by the school.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Code of Conduct for Governors
- Anti-Bullying
- PHSE and Citizenship
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Home School Agreement
- Pay
- Lunchbox
- Admissions
- GDPR/Data Protection
- Medical Conditions

- Collective Worship
- Complaints Procedure
- Virtual Meetings
- Equality Act
- Charges and Remissions

The Governing Body of Wheelers Lane Primary School

May 2021