

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all Governing Bodies, the three core strategic functions of our Governing Body are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its students;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Governance arrangements

We always strive to ensure the Governing Body has the blend of skills, competencies and commitment to meet the needs and future requirements of the school. The constitution of the Governing Body is as follows:

- 1 Headteacher – Susan Marshall
- 1 Local Authority Governor – Rev. Helen Collings
- 3 Co-opted Governors – Donna Robinson, Deborah Raynsford, Jonathan McGill,
- 2 Parent Governors – Jo Starr, Andy Hooper
- 1 Staff Governor – Kate Dawson

Jon Batchelor, previously appointed as a co-opted Governor, resigned in July 2019 after ten years service, and the Governing Body thank Jon for all he has achieved during this period, both as an active member of the Body and as Chair. The Governing Body, as part of the skills audit undertaken each year will examine any gaps it feels it has and will look to appoint a new co-opted Governor as early as possible in the new school year.

During the year the Governing Body has continued to develop its' knowledge and skills and has become a committed and capable source of support and challenge to the Headteacher and the school staff. Paul Baxter continues as Clerk providing an excellent service to the Governing Body and school.

Specific experience in the following areas exists throughout the Governing Body:

- Experience/understanding of Governance;
- Understanding and experience of strategic planning;
- Experience of project management;
- Experience of Human Resources;
- Experience of performance management appraisal;
- Experience of financial planning/management;
- Experience of premises/facilities management;
- Links with the local community/businesses;
- Day to day engagement with the school as parents of students;
- Knowledge of the local/regional economy.

As Governors, we are well informed, undergo induction and ongoing training and have clear areas of responsibility. We have a programme of meetings throughout the school year which focus on specific areas of governance, agendas are designed to cover the statutory responsibilities. The full Governing Body meets every half term, 6 times a year. We also have a Data Team which meets to review the educational progress and attainment being achieved

and predicted for every child. We also have nominated safeguarding, Pupil Premium and Sports Funding governors.

Attendance record of governors

A record of our attendance at meetings is kept by the Clerk to the Governing Body and is available on the school website.

Work of the Governing Body 2018/19

Our work over the year has been focused on:

- supporting efforts to achieve progress in the areas identified in the School Improvement Plan;
- supporting the school in preparation for an OFSTED inspection;
- continuous identification and improvement of the skills and capabilities of the Governors

The overall aim for the school is to place Cowling in the top 20% of schools nationally, with particular focus on:

- raising attainment in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 (especially boys);
- improving Year 1 phonics year on year;
- accelerating progress in Key Stage 2 to ensure a higher percentage of pupils achieve the higher standard

Governors have focused on these areas through visiting school, undertaking learning walks and work scrutiny, interviewing pupils and staff members, delivering challenge at Governing Body meetings, detailed analysis of relevant data both at Data Team and Full Governor Body meetings and informal discussions with the Leadership Team. In addition the Governing Body has had insightful presentations from staff on focus areas such as retention of knowledge and new techniques adopted to support writing activity.

The school currently receives Pupil Premium Funding to support the learning of some children. It is important the Governing body monitors how money is spent, and what the impact of that spend is on the children's learning. To that end we now have a Pupil Premium Champion, and the Governing Body receive regular Pupil Premium reports from the Headteacher.

During the year the school and Governing body prepared for and underwent an OFSTED inspection. The visit and outcome were in line with expectations and reinforced the view of the Governing body and senior management that the correct areas were being focussed on.

The Governing Body has continued to monitor the political landscape and the continued but quieter debate on Academisation. Of more pressing concern was the financial outlook for the school given increasing cost pressures and lower settlements from central and local Government. The Governing body was able to approve a budget plan for the school for 2019/20 which retains some carried forward surplus but this is becoming increasingly challenging. Despite this we continue to support the Headteacher in maintaining current staffing levels and resources, without which the quality of education our children receive would inevitably suffer. This does however require some difficult decisions such as increasing the cost to parents of school meals.

We plan to revisit our skills and training needs audit in the Autumn term and will source appropriate further training for all Governors during the next academic year.

Approved minutes can be obtained by contacting the Clerk, Paul Baxter at the address below.

Strategic Planning for the future

We will continue to rigorously monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan and work closely with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team to ensure the School is the best it can be, welcoming external support when required.

We will work on strategies identified from the Governing Body self-evaluation exercise to continue to improve our working practices. We will exercise strong stewardship and support and challenge in all areas to ensure the highest possible standards for the benefit of students and value for money.

How to contact your governing body

Information about the School's Governing Body is available on the Governors' page of the School website <http://www.cowling.n-yorks.sch.uk>. The Clerk to the Governors, Paul Baxter can be contacted at Paul.Baxter@northyorks.gov.uk