

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 and are pleased to welcome two new parent governors to the Governing Body. 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, Jo Starr,
- 2 Parent Governors – Rebecca Paskin, Victoria Wakeman
- 1 Staff Governor – Kate Dawson

Following a period as an Associate Governor, Andy Hooper took the decision to leave the Governing Body with Jo Starr replacing him as a co-opted Governor. The Governing Body are very grateful for the work Andy put in over the years and thank him for his time and commitment.

The Governing Body, as part of the skills audit undertaken each year will examine any gaps it feels it has. New Governors are taking on their new roles in a supported manner from the wider Governing Body team and thanks are extended for them volunteering to join.

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;
- Experience of primary education;

- Knowledge of the local and wider 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 with a small team responsible for the performance review of the Headteacher. During the lockdown period brought about by the COVID pandemic the Governing Body has been meeting virtually via Zoom or MS Teams.

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 2019/20

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

with the work of the Governing Body aiming to support the school in achieving these.

Our work over the year has been split into two due to the upheaval caused by the COVID pandemic and the changes this required. During the pre-lockdown period the Governing Body were focussed 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;
- supporting the school and Headteacher over the period where the Headteacher was providing assistance to Sutton C of E school

Governors have focused on these areas through linking in with subjects and classes, 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, with the focus on the new national curriculum, the Governing Body has had been updated on the preparations and measures the school has put in place to meet these new standards.

Following the national lockdown in March 2020 the Governing Body focus changed to supporting the school in delivering as much education as possible, whether this was via the 'hub' set up with Cononley and Thornton-in-Craven schools or virtually by means of lesson work being posted on the school website and contact via telephone and email. The Governing Body held a number of virtual meetings with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to discuss and agree various approaches such as support for staff, graduated return to face to face learning and the tracking of attainment. At the time of writing the impact of the lockdown on learning is being assessed but the ability of the school to continue to operate some learning during the period is very much appreciated by the Governors.

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 Governor, and the Governing Body receive regular Pupil Premium reports from the Headteacher.

One of the key objectives of the Governing Body is to monitor financial position of the school and ensure resources are being used appropriately. The Governing body was able to approve a budget plan for the school 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