



LIONEL WALDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/24

This statement seeks to outline the impact of governance arrangements at the school throughout the course of the 2023/24 academic year.

Governor Membership, Vacancies and Attendance

The Instrument of Government allows for 9 governors across different categories.

Current membership: 9

Current vacancies: 0

Through the course of the 2023/24 academic year, the Governing Body has filled the 2 vacant Parent Governor roles, it has also gained an Associate Member. One of the Co-opted Governors has resigned from the end of the year and this position is planned to be filled by the Deputy Head, who is currently an Associate Member. The Clerk has also resigned from the end of the academic year; however, this position will be filled by our current Staff Governor. The Staff Governor role will be advertised through the school, should no other staff member wish to fill the position then the Deputy Head will become the Staff Governor and we will advertise for a Co-Opted Governor from the community.

Chair: Joanne Dale

Vice Chair: Andrew Naughton

Clerk: Elaine Stratford

Attendance: Over the course of the year, Governors at Lionel Walden Primary School demonstrate an overall positive attendance and engagement with their work.

http://www.lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk/web/attendance_at_governing_board_meetings/234309

The Structure of Governance

As well as meeting as a Full Governing Board, there have been 2 committees this year, in order to ensure sufficient oversight, support and accountability towards areas of identified priority and statutory coverage.

The school names these committees as:

- Finance Committee – which mainly deals with the finances of the school, including budget setting.
- Premises, Health and Safety Committee – which monitors the school site, risk assessments and related mandatory training.

All groups have a continued oversight of the school's safeguarding responsibilities and manage the updates of school policies aligned to the particular areas of responsibility.

In addition to the above, the school also constitutes a Pay Committee and Headteacher Performance Management Panel annually.

Committees related to particular purposes such as dealing with complaints or exclusions are constituted as they are required, in line with the determining policy guidance.

Safeguarding and attendance are monitored half termly during the Governor for Safeguarding's visit.

The full governing body examine attendance and safeguarding at each board meeting as a standing item.

As part of the Health and Safety committee's role, it monitors site security and buildings maintenance.

Impact of the work of the Full Governing Body

Over the course of the last academic year, the Governing Body has demonstrated notable impact with regard to;

- Excellent KS2 results
- Targets within the SDP have been achieved and show impact across the curriculum e.g. in writing, pupils are motivated to write, and teachers have used opportunities to foster their independence.
- The phonics results are excellent following the introduction of the FFT Phonics programme and the use of the Lightning Squad Intervention to accelerate reading progress has shown great results.
- The resolution of the redundancy process and staff restructuring to balance budget constraints against needs and standards.

The main challenges faced and addressed by the Board this year have been:

- Financial situation – redundancy process and deficit budget
- Premises issues – kitchen breakdowns, heating and problematic snagging issue from recent building works
- SEND – challenges addressing need with current resources

Impact of the work of the Finance Committee

Over the course of the last academic year, the Finance Committee has demonstrated notable impact with regard to managing the budget and producing options for the unprecedented situation due to the reduced income because of lower pupil numbers in October and unforeseen additional costs relating to maintenance and operational expenses.

The main challenges faced by this committee this year have been:

- Engaging with the redundancy process – the school has not been in this position before and hence all the processes were new. The headteacher also had no previous experience with the redundancy process.
- Engaging with HR (EPM) to ensure that all procedures were followed correctly and in line with employment law.
- Understanding the implications of submitting a deficit budget, the production of a business case and plan to that this is addressed.

Impact of the work of the Premises, Health and Safety Committee

Over the course of the last academic year, the Premises, Health and Safety Committee has demonstrated notable impact with regard to ensuring that all policies are fit for purpose and that essential repairs and maintenance is undertaken.

The main challenges faced by this committee this year have been:

- Updates to the main Health & Safety Policy, Site Safety Policy & Critical Incident Policy ensuring that they comply with current legislations and that they are robust.
- Balancing identified areas for improvement and prioritising these accordingly, given the financial restrictions.

Governor Training

Governors work is collectively, so we are always able to benefit from our different points of view and considerations within meetings. However, the Governing Body has also benefitted from training courses on the following topics throughout the course of the year:

- Safeguarding Training including the new KCSIE 2023 requirements.

- Safer Recruitment Refreshers.
- Health and Safety.
- Early Reading and Phonics.
- Termly Briefings and Governor Conference.

This training has been helpful in ensuring that Link Governors are equipped for their role, that the FGB is knowledgeable and up to date with any changes. Training of link governors in early reading and phonics has allowed them to monitor and challenge leaders more effectively. Termly and Governor briefing allowed governors to be aware of their responsibilities and any forthcoming changes that need to be addressed.

Governor Monitoring

As well as attending meetings, governors are also expected to visit school to understand more about school life and particular areas of priority (typically linked with different areas of the curriculum, or school development).

Throughout the course of this year, Governors have undertaken particular monitoring in relation to:

- Maths and English
- Phonics and Early Reading
- Curriculum subjects such as RE and Geography
- Pupil Premium Children
- SEND
- Safeguarding

The above areas are all a focus on our SDP and as such visits have enabled governors to gain a greater insight into how the SDP is implemented and the impact that it is having on standards.

Compliance

The Governing Board has ensured that an effective safeguarding culture is in place. Our work includes:

At least termly Safeguarding Monitoring visits, including checking of the SCR. A Safeguarding Review by the Local Authority took place in February, with minimal recommendations and recognition of good practice.

The Governing Board has ensured that the relevant policies and procedures are in place by:

Reviewing all policies and procedures relevant to safeguarding at the beginning of the academic year. The governing body ensured that all staff and governors read and understood the KCSiE latest guidance. These policies and their implementation were checked throughout the year during safeguarding monitoring visits.

Other policies are reviewed regularly and are accessible on the school website.

Forward Planning

The governing board is always keen to proactively advance its strategic vision. This includes:

- the appointed of a new Clerk to the Governing Body
- a thorough review of committee structures and link roles to ensure alignment with the school's strategic priorities and regulatory compliance.
- the School Development Plan will contain key focus areas such as improving attendance, bolstering reading and maths proficiency, and advancing the IT and music programs.
- review of policies continues to be conducted to uphold best practices and statutory obligations.
- the staff structure is being evaluated to maintain high-quality education delivery and optimising resources by ensuring adequate cover with a reduced number of teaching assistants.

This forward-thinking approach is designed to foster an environment of continuous improvement and excellence in education.

Other information and contact

Further information regarding the work of the Governing Body can be found at:

<http://www.lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk>

Stakeholders can contact the Governing Board via the school office: telephone 01354 740405, email: Office@lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk or by emailing the Chair of Governors: chair@lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk