

LIONEL WALDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25**

This statement seeks to outline the impact of governance arrangements at the school throughout the course of the 2024/25 academic year.

Governor Membership, Vacancies and Attendance

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

Current membership: 9

Current vacancies: 0

At the start of the 2024/25 academic year, the Governing Body commenced with a full complement of nine governors, in addition to one Associate Member. There were a number of changes in roles: following the planned resignation of our previous Staff Governor, who took up the position of Clerk, Sarah Harrison was appointed as the new Staff Governor. Natalie Bayes, our Deputy Headteacher and former Associate Member, moved into the vacant Co-opted Governor position. In February, the Associate Member stepped down due to increasing work commitments. As this role was in addition to our constitutional structure, it has not been replaced at this time. The Governing Body remains comprised of nine governors. Looking ahead, one governor's term of office is due to conclude during the next academic year, and recruitment for this vacancy is already underway.

Chair: Joanne Dale

Vice Chair: Andrew Naughton

Clerk: Kay Naughton

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

The Governing Body operates under the Circle Model of governance and has convened as a Full Governing Body on five occasions during the 2024/25 academic year. In addition to these formal meetings, governors attended an Information Evening focused on the teaching of reading across the school. This session provided valuable insight into current practices from Early Years through to Year 6 and supported governors in deepening their understanding of curriculum implementation.

Safeguarding and attendance remain key priorities for the Governing Body and are monitored regularly throughout the year via dedicated governor monitoring visits, as well as monthly meetings between the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher. Both areas are standing agenda items at each Full Governing Body meeting, ensuring consistent oversight. Responsibility for safeguarding, including the regular review of related policies, rests with the Governing Body as a whole.

In addition to these core functions, the Board convenes a Pay Committee and a Headteacher Performance Management Panel annually. Other committees—such as those convened for complaints, exclusions, or other statutory matters—are constituted on an as-needed basis, in accordance with the relevant policies and procedural guidance.

Impact of the work of the Full Governing Body

Over the course of the 2024/25 academic year, the Governing Body has provided strategic leadership and robust challenge, resulting in several notable achievements:

- **Strong Academic Outcomes:** Key Stage 2 outcomes in Reading, Writing, Maths, and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS) were excellent, reflecting the school's continued commitment to high standards.
- **Data and Assessment Improvements:** The successful implementation of Insight—a pupil progress tracking system—has streamlined data analysis, improved the quality and efficiency of reporting, and supported informed decision-making.
- **School Development Plan (SDP) Progress:** Targets outlined within the SDP have been achieved and have led to measurable improvements across the curriculum. In writing, pupils remain highly engaged with the writing process, while in mathematics, the adoption of White Rose Maths has enabled a shift away from workbook dependency, encouraging pupils to demonstrate and present their learning independently.
- **Multiplication Tables Check (MTC):** The school achieved outstanding results in the MTC, with 52% of pupils attaining full marks and an average score of 21.6. This success reflects a whole-school focus on times tables fluency, supported by initiatives such as targeted questioning in assemblies, regular chanting, and the use of Times Tables Rock Stars, all underpinned by a coordinated progress strategy.
- **Financial Oversight:** The Governing Body has continued to manage the budget with diligence amid significant financial constraints. Ongoing restructuring has been necessary to ensure staffing levels and deployment remain aligned with pupil needs and educational standards.

Key Challenges Addressed

The Governing Body has engaged proactively with a number of key challenges:

- **Financial Pressures:** Operating within a deficit budget has required difficult decisions, particularly regarding the deployment of support staff and the allocation of resources to meet individual pupil needs.

- **Premises Issues:** Persistent issues with kitchen facilities have posed ongoing operational challenges and required careful monitoring and liaison with relevant contractors and providers.
- **SEND Provision:** Meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has been increasingly complex, particularly where behaviour needs are high. Limited funding has necessitated the allocation of additional resources, which in turn has had implications for provision across the wider school.

Impact of the Headteacher Performance Management (HTPM) Review Panel

The Headteacher Performance Management Review Panel has met regularly with the Headteacher throughout the year to provide both support and challenge in relation to the objectives set as part of the performance management process. The School Improvement Advisor played an integral role in the process by assisting in the formulation of the targets and advising on appropriate and measurable success criteria. This has ensured that the objectives are ambitious, clearly defined, and aligned with the school's strategic priorities.

Impact of the Pay Panel

The Headteacher met with the Performance Management Panel to discuss the appraisal process for teaching staff, including the targets set, the evidence of progress towards those targets, and outcomes relating to pay decisions. Governors were assured that the process was rigorous and transparent. The panel felt fully informed and confident that the appraisal system was applied consistently and fairly, in line with the school's policy and national guidance.

Governor Training

Governance at our school is a collective endeavour, strengthened by the diverse perspectives and experiences that each governor brings to the table. This collaborative approach supports robust discussion and effective decision-making during Full Governing Body meetings. Over the course of the academic year, the Governing Body has also benefitted from a comprehensive programme of training and development, including the following:

- Safeguarding training, including refresher modules and Being an Effective Safeguarding Governor
- Developing and Monitoring the Primary Curriculum
- SEND: What Governors Need to Know
- The Early Years for Governors
- Termly Governor Briefings and the annual Governor Conference
- The Eight Principles of Whole School Health and Wellbeing for Primary Schools
- Headteacher Performance Management Review

This training has played a key role in ensuring that all governors—and particularly those with specific link responsibilities—are equipped with the knowledge and confidence required to fulfil their roles effectively. For example, training focused on SEND has enabled our Link Governor to provide more focused monitoring and informed challenge to school leaders. Similarly, regular briefings and conferences have helped all governors stay up to date with evolving statutory responsibilities and national developments, ensuring the board remains proactive in its strategic oversight.

Governor Monitoring

In addition to attending formal meetings, governors are expected to engage actively with the life of the school through planned monitoring visits. These visits provide valuable insight into the day-to-day workings of the school and enable governors to deepen their understanding of specific priority areas, often aligned with the curriculum or School Development Plan.

Throughout the 2024/25 academic year, governors have undertaken focused monitoring in the following areas:

- **English and Mathematics** – Governors explored teaching approaches, pupil engagement, and the impact of curriculum developments on progress and attainment.
- **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)** – Monitoring focused on how effectively the school identifies and supports pupils with additional needs, and how provision is adapted within available resources.
- **Curriculum** – including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Online Safety – Governors reviewed the school's approach to delivering statutory curriculum content and how it supports pupils' personal development and digital awareness.
- **Wellbeing** – Visits considered the ways in which pupil and staff wellbeing are promoted and how this contributes to a positive school culture.
- **Early Years** – Governors examined Early Years, the structure of learning and the progress that children make.
- **Pupil Premium** – Monitoring considered how funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils and the impact of targeted strategies on learning outcomes.
- **Attendance and Safeguarding** – Governors reviewed systems for monitoring attendance and ensuring safeguarding procedures are robust and consistently applied.

Compliance

Safeguarding Governance: The Governing Body has continued to prioritise the development and maintenance of a strong safeguarding culture across the school. This commitment is reflected in several key areas of our work:

Safeguarding as a Standing Item: Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every Full Governing Body meeting. The Headteacher provides regular updates and detailed information, enabling governors to fulfil their statutory responsibilities and maintain effective oversight.

Policy and Procedure Review: The Governing Body ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and ratified in line with statutory requirements. Link Governors play a key role in this process by scrutinising relevant documentation and working with school leaders to ensure that all policies are up to date and reflect current practice.

Through these measures, the Board ensures that safeguarding remains embedded in the school's culture and that the welfare of pupils is always a central focus.

Forward Planning

Looking ahead, the Governing Body has identified several key areas of focus to ensure continued strategic oversight and school improvement:

Governor Succession Planning: Active recruitment is underway to appoint a new Local Authority (LA) Governor, as the current postholder's term concludes in January following an outstanding 31 years of dedicated service. The Board will also review its membership roles to ensure they reflect the skills and strengths needed for effective governance moving forward.

Strategic Curriculum Priorities: The School Development Plan for the upcoming academic year will focus on key areas including improving attendance, developing reading fluency and prosody, increasing challenge for all learners in mathematics, and enhancing opportunities for outdoor play.

Policy Review and Compliance: The Governing Body remains committed to upholding statutory responsibilities and best practice by continuing to review and update policies in a timely and robust manner.

Staff Structure and Resource Management: The current staffing structure is under review to ensure the delivery of high-quality education remains sustainable. This includes evaluating the deployment of teaching assistants and exploring ways to maintain appropriate levels of support with reduced staffing. This proactive and reflective approach is aimed at securing long-term educational excellence while optimising the use of available resources

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