

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of
Balshaw's Church of England High School
School Year 2023-2024**

Role of the Governing Board

The role of the governing board in a local authority maintained school is set out in education law, namely to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement'. The board also has a legal responsibility to promote pupil wellbeing. It does this by:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Setting Strategic Direction | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensuring clarity of vision and ethos- Engaging with stakeholders- Making sure statutory duties are met. |
| Creating Robust Accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Accountability for teaching, achievement, behaviour and safety- Strengthening and supporting school leadership- Performance managing the Headteacher- Contributing to school self-evaluation.- Holding Performance Leaders to account |
| Ensuring Financial Probity | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Making sure the school's money is well spent- Monitoring the use of the Pupil Premium grant and other resources to overcome barriers to learning. |

Governance Arrangements

The governing board is made up as follows:

- **Foundation: 5**
- **Parent Governors: 2**
- **Staff Governor: 2 (including the Headteacher)**
- **Co-opted Governors: 10**
- **Local Authority Governor: 1**

The full Governing Board meets four times a year, once a term for general school business and once early in the autumn term to consider governing board arrangements and protocols for the forthcoming year. Governors also meet at least termly in 4 separate committees to consider various aspects of the school in detail. At **Balshaw's CE High School** we have the following committees:

- Resources Committee (finance, staffing, premises, health and safety)
- Curriculum and Standards Committee (Quality of education, intent, implementation and outcomes as well as the wider curriculum breadth and effectiveness.)
- Student Welfare and Ethos Committee (Pastoral care and provision, Safeguarding, Child protection, attendance, behaviour, inclusion, SEND, Pupil premium, Children Looked After and the impact of our Christian distinctiveness, welfare of staff, culture and ethos.)

- Strategy Group meets three times per year, one month prior to the termly Full Governors meeting. The group comprises Chair and Vice-Chair of governors, chairs of the above committees and one governor with oversight of the school's Christian distinctiveness and ethos.

Governors also have links to **specific subjects and departments (e.g. Maths, RE, English, Science)**. They visit school regularly to meet students and staff to gather Pupil Voice and speak to members of the departments with which they are linked. This ensures good lines of communication, positive relationships for active governance and deepens understanding of the implementation and impact of School Development Plan and Priorities. In addition to this a subset of Link Governors are able to monitor specific aspects of the curriculum or key areas such as SEND, Safeguarding and the Pupil Premium Strategy across all subject areas as common threads throughout all school development strategy.

There are also committees that meet, if required, to consider pupil discipline, staffing appeals and complaints and specific Governors are highlighted to represent the Governing Board on these committees.

A list of Governors, their terms of office and positions of responsibility is published on the school website.

Governors' Attendance Record

Governing boards make decisions collectively, though they may choose to delegate responsibility to committees, or individuals (including the Headteacher). Attending Governing Board meetings is an essential part of a governor's role and the attendance record for the governors of our school is **good**. This ensures that all governors receive the necessary information all at the same time and therefore important and informed decisions can be made as and when necessary, on all aspects of the school, staff and pupils.

The Governing Body utilises a hybrid approach to meetings to allow governors with their own work commitments to be able to attend meetings that they may not otherwise have been able to make with the journey time to school. All repeated non-attendance at meetings is followed up rigorously by the Chair.

The attendance record for all governors is published on the school website.

Assessment and Impact of the Governing Board during 2023-2024 School Year

The Governing Board has maintained a strong focus on its three core functions to ensure effective and supportive governance. The school's distinctive Christian vision underpins and drives all aspects of decision-making related to robust accountability and financial probity. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all our staff and students is paramount and we continually strive to develop as an inclusive, welcoming place in which all can learn and flourish.

Resources Committee

The committee's role is to oversee the effective use of resources to:

Ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education, including those with SEND, the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Plan, discuss and agree the effective use of the school's budget over the next

financial year, with a focus on school improvement. Monitor how the budget and financial resources are spent at termly meetings.

In the Autumn term, a small group of governors undertook the headteacher's performance review with the support of the school's adviser. The Pay Committee also met to consider and agree pay progression for teaching staff, including senior leaders, subject to good performance. This process is detailed, and a full range of evidence is presented to the Pay Committee to be able to evaluate decisions on pay progression.

The appointment of high-quality teaching staff is always a priority. Governors take part in the staff appointment process, including the appointment of existing staff to any new internal positions.

Governors agreed to the purchase of a new replacement minibus with financial support from the Balshaw's Association (PTA). It was agreed that Room 60 was to be converted into a new Drama Studio during the summer holiday 2024. The second phase of the roof repair funding has been agreed by the LCC.

Curriculum and Standards Committee

The main functions of the committee are to:

- *Review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum*
- *Recommend the SEF and SIP to the Governing Board*
- *Develop and review policies*
- *Ensure that special needs requirements are met*
- *Ensure that all children have equal opportunities*

To monitor and evaluate:

- *Provision for all students*
- *The impact of the school development plan.*
- *The effectiveness of leadership and management*
- *The impact of the quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement by underachieving groups and vulnerable students.*
- *The impact of continuing CPD on improving staff performance*

The committee regularly reviews and develops the assessment policy and ensures that it is operating effectively.

The committee regularly analyses pupils' attainment and progress across all year groups at its termly meetings, provide challenge and accountability for senior leaders. This includes comparisons with other schools, locally and nationally, particularly with the impact of lockdowns. Governors look for trends and data anomalies to ensure that they are holding Leadership at all levels of school to account.

The committee scrutinised the programme of professional development and the progress made with the Embedding Formative Assessment (EFA) programme that was the main focus of PD for the 2023-2024 year. It continues into 2024-2025.

Student Welfare and Ethos Committee

The main functions of the committee are to:

- *Monitor attendance, behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding and student welfare*
- *Promote the key features of the school's church distinctiveness*
- *Promote the school as an inclusive church school respecting people whatever their faith or world view*

Significant progress has been made towards academisation and the creation of a new Multi Academy Trust (MAT). In keeping with the school's current ethos, culture and Christian distinctiveness, it acknowledges the importance of school level governance within the proposed MAT.

Full Governing Board

In addition to their monitoring visits, governors regularly attend school events, helping them to build relationships with staff, pupils and parents. The governing board receives reports from nominated governors on the effectiveness of safeguarding, provision for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, challenging pupils and those with SEND.

Governors provide a high level of challenge to the headteacher, senior leaders and the school. They consider a range of documents and data provided by the school in order to judge the impact of strategies and the effectiveness of these on pupil outcomes.

The school's School Adviser provides notes of visits in a termly report. These are considered at the Full Governor's meetings. Governors can use the School Improvement Advisor to provide impartial advice and also to lead training sessions for Governors in the development of their role.

The Full Governing Board Meetings and those of the Committees have high attendance rates and there is robust accountability for Governors who are unable to attend or who offer apologies.

Governor Recruitment

The nominations committee, established to review and carry out a robust governor recruitment process, continues to support governor recruitment, ensuring that the board is balanced and skilled. Annual skills audits ensure that governors continue to be developed in their role. They also identify areas which may be strengthened by future governor recruitment. This committee also reviews the governor induction process and undertakes the mentoring of new governor appointees.

Recruiting governors with the right skills and qualities and the ability to commit to the time needed to carry out the role effectively is an ongoing challenge.

During the academic year 2023-2024, Sonia Edwards and Gareth Taylor were elected as parent governors.

The board welcomes interest from parents and others who feel that they have something to contribute and are passionate about improving the life chances of all our pupils. If you would like to find out more, please contact the headteacher, Mr. Steven Haycocks, 01772 421009 for information. Alternatively, visit the governors' page on the school website to find out more about how to become a governor at the school.

Governor Training and Development

New governors attend induction training. Experienced governors have attended SIAMS training. All governors undertake regular Safeguarding training, and many have attended staff CPD sessions. They

attend and contribute to acts of worship (Carol Service, Garden of Remembrance, Staff Communion etc). All these help governors to better understand and carry out their roles and responsibilities. The annual 'Awayday' was held at Leyland Golf Club on Saturday 7th October 2023. This included a discussion with two experienced members of a MAT 'Being a Governor on a Local Governing Body and being a Trustee on a MAT board.

Future Plans for Continuous Improvement

The Board of Governors has arranged an 'Awayday' in October 2024.

Agreed by the Governing Board on: 11th September 2024

Signed by the Chair: *R. K. Woodcock*