

Governors of Framwellgate School Durham 2020 Knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours		Summary of returns.			
<b>1. Strategic leadership</b>					
Experience of being a governor/trustee in another school or being a board member in another sector.	3				
Experience of chairing a board/governing board or committee.	3				
Awareness of the key aspects of national education policy e.g. school funding, curriculum, teaching, learning etc. and education locally e.g. the types of school, local education issues etc.	4				
Knowledge and or experience of the community served by the school that can be useful to the board.	4				
Experience of strategic planning and translating a vision into clear objectives.	4				
Experience of engaging and working with stakeholders (e.g. parents, community groups, local business etc.) within or outside of the school sector.	4				
Understand the principles of risk management and how to prioritise, assess and mitigate against risks.	3				
Experience and or involvement in change management activities e.g. planning a re-structure or reorganisation.	3				
<b>2. Accountability</b>					
Experience of working with leaders to establish expectations for improvement, outcomes and of how progress is to be reported.	4				
Knowledge of the elements that make up a broad and balanced school curriculum and how the attainment and progress of pupils is assessed and measured.	4				
Ability to interpret data and statistics presented in a range of formats relating to the progress and outcomes achieved by pupils and using it to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for development.	4				
Ability and confidence to ask questions and challenge leaders in an appropriate way on matters relating to the educational outcomes, behaviour, welfare and wellbeing of all pupils.	5				
General experience of financial planning, monitoring, decision making, compliance and control.	4				
Experience of financial planning, monitoring, decision making, compliance and control within the school sector.	3				
General experience of human resource (HR) policy and processes outside of the school sector.	2				
Experience of human resource (HR) policy and processes within the school sector.	2				
General experience of preparing for and responding to inspection and oversight.	4				
Experience of inspection and oversight within the schools sector.	3				
<b>3. People</b>					
Ability to listen, reflect and learn from a range of viewpoints and consider impartial advice before reaching my own view.	5				
Capable of working alongside and of building strong, collaborative relationships with a range of personalities.	5				



The skills, tact and diplomacy required when discussing issues that are of a sensitive nature and are used to bring people together in adversarial situations.	4				
<b>4. Structures</b>					
Clear and practical understanding of what the strategic role of a governing board is and how it is different from the management responsibilities that are carried out by the headteachers and senior leaders in the school.	4				
Experience of reviewing governance structures.	3				
<b>5. Compliance</b>					
Experience of complying with legal, regulatory and financial frameworks and statutory guidance.	4				
Working knowledge of the legal duties and responsibilities of a governor e.g. in relation to the safeguarding of children and in respect of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).	4				
Understand the importance of adhering to organisation policies e.g. on parental complaints or staff-discipline issues.	4				
<b>6. Evaluation</b>					
Have experienced the process of evaluating the working practices of a team and of applying the learning to make improvements.	4				
<b>7. Positive contribution</b>					
Aware of my strengths, weaknesses and am committed to personal development.	5				
Able to work as part of a team and build positive working relationships with different personality types.	5				
Honest, transparent and act with integrity.	5				
The ability and confidence to speak up when I have concerns e.g. about non-compliance.	5				

**What contribution do you feel you have made to the governing board over the past year?**

Returns indicate that ALL governors feel they have made a positive contribution this year:-

**Attendance** at both full governing board meetings and sub-committee meetings has been very good.

**Contributions in meetings** has been thoughtful, open and honest. Governors have been willing to ask challenging questions of the Headteacher and senior staff. One governor described his role as “a critical friend”. We would all aspire to that.

**Full governing body meetings** have been used to focus on strategic issues which need detailed discussion.

Before the cancellation of the LGB meeting in March 2020 governors had discussed:-

- The School Development Plan and SEF (September 2019)
- Curriculum changes, including the introduction of compulsory RE (December 2019)
- Data – presentation by Jim Murray (January 2020).

**Sub-committee meetings** have been expertly chaired by JT and DM. The following issues have been discussed in greater detail this year:-

**Quality of Education** – 2019 examination results, progress data, Literacy Year 7 catch up funding, pupil premium plans, assessment policy, homework, effective teaching and learning strategies.

**Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes** – Safeguarding (standing item), attendance & punctuality, behaviour, exclusions, Careers, RSE, Pastoral care, Enrichment week, PSHE, cost of the school day.

**Link governor roles** have improved and become more pro-active, linked to the school development plan. These links will be developed further after the Covid emergency.

- Outcomes & interventions – DGW & DM
- Curriculum Leadership – JO’D and AR



- SEND – JM & DH
- Careers, Education & Guidance - DL
- Safeguarding – JT

**Support at PEX meetings** – several governors have given up their time, often at short notice for these meetings.

**Governor Training** – see attached summary.

### **Commentary on the Skills Audit 2020**

This audit was completed by 11 governors. It demonstrated a strong set of skills, knowledge and experience as you would expect from a well-educated group working in a range of professional roles.

#### **The strongest section**

Section 7 – Positive Contribution, scoring all 5.

Again this reflects the professional lives of governors. All governors are in roles in which they are working with people, building relationships, used to a diversity of views and having a commitment to ethical behaviour and independence of thought.

Similarly 5 was scored on “ability and confidence to ask questions and challenge leaders”. This is reflected in the responses to “the contribution made by governors this year” – see above.

#### **The lowest scores – largely the responsibility of the Trust Board.**

Within Section 2 - Accountability - HR policy and processes both outside and within the school sector scored 2. The HR function at Framwellgate is primarily the responsibility of the Trust Board, although Governors do assist the Headteacher in some appointments. Specific training could be organised in this area for those governors who wanted more information on this.

Financial Planning and Governance structures – both scored 3 – again these are Trust Board responsibilities.

#### **Areas for development following the audit**

Most of the areas scored 4. This is a stronger return than that of 2017, indicating how much governors have grown in experience and knowledge. We can always improve but the scores and comments indicate that governors feel confident in their role.

The areas scoring 3:-

- Experience of chairing a board or committee – if any governors would like to chair a meeting or discuss the role of chair with AD or JT this is easily arranged.
- Experience of Inspection – ironically our cancelled March 2020 LGB meeting was on this very thing. When meetings go back to normal this can be re-visited.

Individual areas for development – some governors indicated areas they would like to know more about. This can be arranged during the next academic year.

#### **Conclusion**

Thanks to all governors for completing the audit. The scores illustrate how much the quality of governance has improved since 2017. Governors have responded positively to the appointment of Andy Byers and he has encouraged governors to become more strategic and less operational. We now have a wide range of skills on the governing board and a clear commitment to work, with the staff, for the good of the school. This puts us in a strong position for a post Covid world and for the next inspection, whenever that might be.

AD June 2020