



Governing Body of Woodlawn School Annual Governance Statement 2015 - 2016

The Governing Body of Woodlawn School has a strong focus. Its three core strategic functions are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school ensuring value for money and best practice

The governing body's key aims for 2015-2016 were to work with the Head teacher, senior leadership team and staff to:

- Secure an overall judgement of good at the next Ofsted inspection (expected June / Autumn 2016)
- Ensure financial stability was maintained and
- Oversee the refurbishment programme

The full governing body met twice termly and the Chair also met with the Head teacher and Local Authority monthly to monitor progress. The Chair and Head teacher communicated regularly (at least weekly). The new reconstituted committees met regularly in order to:

- Monitor the educational performance of pupils and staff (Achievement, Teaching, Leadership and Safeguarding committee)
- Oversee the financial performance of the school ensuring value for money and best practice (Finance, staff, pay review and facilities committee) and
- Monitor the performance of the Head teacher (Head teacher's performance management group)

NB The committees identified in brackets are responsible for the bulleted areas. There are also two further committees, Disciplinary and Appeals committee and Policies committee. These two committees meet when necessary and address any appeals made to the governing body and scrutinise policies prior to reporting to the full governing body. The committee for the performance of the Head teacher meets at least annually and termly committee meetings are held by the Achievement, Teaching, Leadership and Safeguarding committee and the Finance committee.

The Head teacher and the new senior leadership team (from January 2015) have worked incredibly hard to secure improvement in teaching and learning and subsequently pupil outcomes. This work has been monitored and acknowledged by the governing body. The Head teacher reported regularly to the full governing body and committee meetings about progress made, and the governors held the senior leaders to account.

The Head teacher, through the performance management process produced excellent evidence for governors in achieving all her targets.

The school was inspected in early May 2016. Members of the governing body met with the lead inspector.



During this academic year, the focus for senior leaders was on:

- Improving teaching to good or better so all groups make good progress.
- Improving the quality of assessment information so leaders can more accurately track progress (including interventions and pupil premium)
- Improving outcomes for pupils by developing communication and reviewing therapy services delivered in school
- Strengthening the impact of middle leaders and subject leaders

The school development plan is presented to governors who monitor through information from meetings and from observations seen during learning walks and discussions with subject and area (e.g. pupil premium) leaders. At every full governing body meeting governors report back from their visits. There is a diary of visits timetabled and this is checked as part of the governors' agenda.

Improvements have been seen in teaching and learning following a model of coaching, support and training. This was reported to governors by the Head teacher at each meeting and increasing numbers of lessons seen are good or better. Teachers were held accountable through the performance management process.

The Assistant Head with responsibility for assessment reported to governors on the assessment system used having had support from the Deputy Head at Epinay Teaching School.

The Head teacher has worked closely with the therapy services and embedded their work into lessons thus providing a more holistic approach.

Subject leaders have had training both within school and externally working with Epinay Teaching School.

Following a restructure of middle leaders, three holding responsibility points attended training for NPQML (National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders) sourced by the Chair of Governors in consultation with the Head teacher.

Training in behaviour and safety has been given and an improvement seen across the school. Much work on developing staff understanding of pupils with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has taken place.

Governors have attended training in the following areas:

Induction for New Governors
Governors on Looked After Children
School Funding
Health and Safety Risk assessment
PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education)
Child Protection (Safeguarding)
Prevent (Safeguarding)
Head teacher appraisal
How to get the best out of School Visits



As can be seen from the above training safeguarding is a key area in schools. Governors who attend the above training report back at meetings of the full governing body.

The Local Authority offer a range of training for governors and the clerk to the governing body brings a list of training to full governing body meetings.

In ensuring financial stability, governors have worked with the Head teacher in appointing new teaching staff and teaching assistants to increase capacity for additional support whilst also ensuring the budget can accommodate and sustain additional staff.

The school's business manager also negotiated a very good insurance package for supply staff cover, agreed by governors thus ensuring absence cover is available and unexpected absences do not place a financial burden on the school.

Governors have been rigorous in working with the Head teacher to tackle staff and pupil absence and have attended absence management meetings with the Local Authority representative present.

The school's business manager also acquired funding for the toilets and now all toilet facilities have been updated.

The school was inspected by Ofsted in May 2016:

Leadership and management was given a **good** judgement. Ofsted (May 2016) stated:

"The Head teacher and senior leaders have provided good leadership to change the culture of the school. As a result, the school is **improving rapidly**".

"Governance is a strength of the school. Governors' mix of relevant experience and expertise combines well to ensure that the **drive towards excellence is relentless**".

Personal development, behaviour and welfare was given a **good** judgement. Ofsted (May 2016) stated:

"Pupils' conduct and their attitudes to learning are consistently good. Pupils' safety and welfare is promoted effectively"

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven throughout lessons and is a strength of the school"

Early Years provision was given a **good** judgement.

"Improvements to the Early Years provision since the previous inspection ensures that children get off to a good start and make good progress"

Post 16 still requires improvement

There is now a post-16 Annual Development plan in place, regular evaluation and the link Governor for post-16 visits half termly. The curriculum has been developed now offering a rich and wide curriculum with community based learning to support developing skills. Work has been completed to embed the work experience activities for all students.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment still **requires improvement**. Ofsted (May 2016) stated:

"Good training and development for teachers has improved the quality of teaching at the school", however teaching is still too variable "despite improvements since the last inspection"



Outcomes for pupils still requires improvement:

“Since the previous inspection progress, although improving, has remained variable”

Much work has been developed through a new induction programme for new staff to school. The full-time Deputy Head teacher has developed the NQT programme in school to ensure new teachers receive a full programme of support and CPD both in school and with external providers.

The Ofsted inspectors were very positive about the school and acknowledged the hard work of all involved and the progress made since the previous inspection. Governors acknowledge the hard work of the Head teacher, other senior leaders and staff on the excellent progress made in the school.

Future

- To work with senior leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching to ensure all pupils make rapid progress.
- To support the Head teacher to strengthen the impact of middle leaders and subject leaders in the drive for improvement.
- To monitor the development of the Sixth form and the range of accreditation.