



**Governing Body of Woodlawn School
Annual Governance Statement
2018 - 2019**

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 Annual statement 2017-2018 identified key priorities for governors for 2018-2019 to be:

- To continue to work with senior leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to maximise achievement for all pupils, including the most able.
- To continue to monitor the Sixth form provision to ensure it more effectively meets the needs of pupils.
- To monitor with senior leaders the refined assessment systems so they are more closely aligned to allow leaders at all levels and all teachers to evaluate pupils' progress in all subject areas so that underachievement can be precisely identified and addressed.
- To work with senior leaders to embed and develop allocated middle leadership roles to ensure they have full impact in the ongoing drive for improvement.

The OfSTED report in October 2018 identified the following:

	Oct 2018	May 2016
Overall Effectiveness	Good	Requires Improvement
Leadership and Management	Outstanding	Good
Teaching Learning and assessment	Good	Requires Improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Good	Requires Improvement
Personal Development, Behaviour and welfare	Outstanding	Good
Early Years Provision	Good	Good
Post-16	Good	Requires Improvement

OfSTED (May 2018) stated:

“The headteacher’s strong and inspirational leadership has ensured that Woodlawn School has made rapid improvements”. (since May 2016) “It now provides a good education for its pupils. She is ably supported by a cohesive team that is passionate about improving outcomes for its pupils. As a result of outstanding leadership, the school is improving at a pace”

“Senior leaders regularly check that the quality of teaching is of a high standard. They ensure that a good range of training opportunities extend teachers’ skills. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is good”.

“Governance is a real strength of the school because of the passion, professional backgrounds, knowledge and skills possessed by governors. They are well organised into different areas of responsibility. They are well informed about the school’s performance by comprehensive reports given by the headteacher, in meetings and by presentations given by staff members”.



School Development Plan (SDP)

Governors work closely with the Headteacher and senior leaders in writing and monitoring the School Development Plan (SDP), overall responsibility for writing the SDP is with the Headteacher. The priorities for the School Development Plan (SDP) are taken from both internal and external monitoring, e.g. Local authority reports, OfSTED report and internal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and pupil outcomes by the Headteacher, other senior leaders and link governors. Governors also join staff on the first Training day in September to look at the progress made in the previous year and develop plans for the coming year.

The SDP is monitored and reviewed termly with an evaluation review being written and presented to governors as part of the Headteacher's termly report. Governors question the Head teacher where there are any concerns. Questions are challenging and rigorous.

During 2018-2019 governors have:

- Worked in partnership with school staff and senior leaders in the joint creation of the school development plan and school SEF (Self Evaluation Form)
- Held senior leaders to account on primary focus areas following the LA February 2018 review i.e. English and Post 16 development. Visits have taken the form of learning walks to see evidence of progress in English across school (especially ensuring consistency across Secondary and post-16 English) in lessons, through display work, discussions and presentation of development plans.
Impact: English, as part of teaching and learning, is now good. A new link governor with a specialism in English now liaises with the English curriculum team.
- Met with OfSTED in October 2018 to discuss school development and governor role in school leading to a good judgement overall and outstanding for leadership and management.
Impact: leadership, including governance, is now outstanding.
- Ensured post-16 plans monitored to extend the curriculum offer and liaise with school partners.
Impact: post-16 now good
- Asked challenging and relevant questions regarding qualifications both pre and post 16.
Impact: Governors are knowledgeable about appropriate qualifications and ask relevant and challenging questions Good results in August 2019.
- Asked challenging questions to the Deputy Head who gave a presentation on refined assessment systems to ensure rigour in identifying underachievement. The Teaching, Leadership, Achievement and Safeguarding Committee (TLA&S committee) noted the change to B Squared as an assessment tool after the previous assessment tool was found not to be fit for purpose.
Impact: Example of ongoing evaluation and quick response from governors. Greater percentage of pupils achieving aspirational targets



Leadership and Management (Governors)

OfSTED 2018 stated:

“Governors hold the headteacher and her staff to account very effectively. They ask pertinent, challenging questions about incidents which have occurred in school, or when making decisions about additional funding for agreed projects. They also ensure that staff are held to account for their classroom performance when confirming decisions about salary progression”.

“The headteacher, ably supported by her senior team, knows her school extremely well. She has an incisive understanding of the strengths of the school in addition to the areas that require further focus. As a result of this, improvement planning is top notch. She has galvanised her staff to work for the good of the pupils in her care. Not one stone is left unturned in the pursuit of excellence at Woodlawn. Consequently, the school is improving strongly.”

Governors monitor through at least termly meetings (two during Autumn term) of the full governing body and meetings of the committees (Finance, Staffing, Pay Review and Facilities Committee and Teaching, Leadership, Achievement and Safeguarding Committee).

We also have a strategic group consisting of the Chair of Governors, Vice Chair (who is also Chair of Finance), Head Teacher and Chair of Teaching and Leadership.

This group meets monthly and provides a helpful place for reflection, it allows for more regular monitoring and an additional opportunity for the school and Headteacher to consider more strategic opportunities.

Example of impact: Developed self-reflection and appraisal procedures for all governors which enabled more clarity around the role of governors, relating to link priorities.

As well as the two main committees and strategic group, governors also have the Headteacher’s performance management group and the appeals and complaints committee. The Headteacher, through the performance management process produced excellent evidence for governors in achieving all her targets in December 2018 and excellent progress towards 2018-2019 targets in a review in June 2019.

Governors have supported the school in complaints, appeals and disciplinary matters:

Examples: Support of complaint – overturned

Governor panel re disciplinary matter – satisfactory conclusion

Support of exit agreement – completed.

Impact: School staff understand the school policies and procedures to a greater depth. There is a shared school expectation of the quality service for delivery. Standards in teaching and learning have increased).

Monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment plus outcomes is an essential part of the Teaching, Leadership, Achievement and Safeguarding (TLA&S) committee and it noted the improved outcomes and the progress in most areas regarding teaching quality. Governors continue to monitor rigorously through learning walks, classroom observations, observations of Read, Write, Inc and through regular reports from the Head teacher and senior leaders.

Presentations on assessment systems and qualifications, post 16 (in such areas as Curriculum choice, work placements, partnership with Monkseaton High School and interactions with others) and Pupil Premium have been given to Governors during this last year by Senior Leaders.



The budget has been presented and agreed by Governors and the Head Teacher's report (including the School Development Plan) is presented by Gill (HT) and discussed termly. The school Self Evaluation Form (SEF) is presented to Governors during the Autumn term and updated regularly.

During 2018-2019 Senior staff supported the Government teacher workload campaign and governors supported the school and welcomed this initiative. Action plan updates were regularly given to Governors in order for us to monitor the action and impact this was making on teacher workload.

Impact: The response from teaching staff was very positive and both teaching and non-teaching unions involved in the initiative were very pleased with progress resulting in a greater understanding of team working, colleagues supporting each other, and greater consistency in teaching and learning across school.

A new safeguarding governor was appointed who continues to review safeguarding in school. He will be delivering KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) parts one and two training in October 2019 to all governors. OfSTED (2018) stated:

"Safeguarding arrangements are secure and well monitored by a named safeguarding governor. This governor ensures that members keep up-to-date with safeguarding and safer recruitment training, for example".

Impact: Governors' knowledge updated so governors monitor rigorously

Governors have attended an increased number of school events to support stakeholder engagement (including parents) in school life, i.e.

- Initiation of and support of the Archbishop of York visit to school September 2018.
- Harvest Festival assembly, Easter Assembly
- Core values assembly
- Post 16 café attendance
- School Summer Fair 2019
- 2019 Prom event
- Sports Day 2019

Impact: Governors' knowledge of the school has increased, and stakeholders are able to discuss plans with governors.

We were sorry to lose Helen Samuel as Local authority Governor and Peter Gannon as a Trust Governor and currently have two potential governor applications. We have recruited 2 co-opted governors and staff governor this year; David Bavaird, who has a wealth of knowledge in Careers and Employability, Councillor Sean Brockbank who has brought Council and Social Services skills to the team and Angela Chapman who is a staff governor with many years of service at Woodlawn.



Pupil Premium

(Funding given for pupils who receive free school meals, children who are looked after, adopted children and children who have a parent(s) in the Armed Forces.)

The pupil premium governor meets with the Deputy Head teacher and the interventions coordinator. Good progress continues to be made. Governors challenged the data showing pupils who receive pupil premium achieving better than those not receiving pupil premium.

OfSTED (2018) said:

“Governors also keep close checks on pupil premium spending. They monitor the impact on outcomes for pupils who have received additional support in their reading and spelling, or who benefit from organised educational trips. They know that there are no apparent gaps in progress in mathematics and English between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.”

Training

Following a new system of self-reflection and appraisal for governors put in place, skills audit and working with “Governor Space” it was identified that key training to take place during 2018 - 2019 would be:

- 1) Strategic Leadership for Governance (Risk management) and
- 2) Governance and the School Community (to include all stakeholders)

1) Strategic Leadership for Governance (Risk Management)

A key function of governors is to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction and this half day of training focussed on governors understanding their role in shaping the vision and strategy of the organisation, developing further understanding of what it means to be strategic, setting high expectations and maximising the effectiveness of decision making. Governors spent time on discussing their role particularly linked to the competency framework for governance. Governors jointly did a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis and targets for further training were to ensure all governors have been involved in SWOT analysis and ensure all have same vision and strategic view.

2) Governance and The School Community

During the Summer Term Governors spent half a day in training around the role of Governors in the school and wider community. Governors considered where they and the school had effective stakeholder engagement and where more work could be done. It was felt that stronger links could be formed with representatives of the community, that Governors would welcome more engagement with parents and how Governors felt the Friends of Woodlawn could be better supported by the Governing Body. Additional priorities were added to the Governor Action Plan as a result, namely that meetings would be arranged with local councillors and business leaders, Governors would attend the Friday Cafe (run by pupils and attended by parents) on a weekly basis and a Governor would be named as a link person for the Friends of Woodlawn.

Governors have attended the following additional training this year:

Whole school action planning with staff,

Updating and monitoring the governors' action plan.

The Chair of Governors and Head Teacher attended Schools NE Conference and SEND (Special Educational Needs) Conference and individual governors have attended training where relevant to their link area and / or need (e.g. Induction).

Joint staff / parent and governor training e.g. See Saw (assessment recording system) for parents and governors



Finance, Staffing, Pay Review and Facilities (FSPR&F) Committee

The FSPR&F Committee ensures that the budget is managed effectively, and that money is spent appropriately to ensure the most significant impact for pupils across the school at Woodlawn. Governors continue to ensure that the school's financial priorities are in line with those identified in the School Development Plan (SDP), providing suitable resources and facilities to achieve the school's aims. Governors have worked with the Headteacher both in the appointment of new teaching staff and additional support staff to meet changing needs in the school community. The school budget projecting a deficit for the year, Governors were proactive in exploring the causes of this, challenging the Local Authority on both the inappropriate level of funding some pupils were receiving and the lack of funding for additional pupil places.

The FSPR&F Committee receives regular and rigorous reports from the Business Manager which give Governors confidence in the school's robust and effective facilities management, Health and Safety and Data Protection procedures. In addition to challenges around pupil funding Governors also raised concerns with the Local Authority about services Woodlawn School was providing and not being sufficiently re-imbursed and the effect of this limiting school spending in priority areas.

Impact: Governors were pleased that this and the issues around pupil funding have now been rectified, eradicating the deficit.

OfSTED 2018 stated:

"Governors ensure that school finances are purposefully used. For example, additional funding is used effectively to encourage pupils' participation in sport in the primary phase. Governors also keep close checks on pupil premium spending. They monitor the impact on outcomes for pupils who have received additional support in their reading and spelling, or who benefit from organised educational trips. They know that there are no apparent gaps in progress in mathematics and English between disadvantaged pupils and their peers."

Future aims:

It is clear to see the outstanding progress the school has made from the OfSTED inspection in May 2016 to October 2018. The governors of Woodlawn School will continue to work with the Headteacher in monitoring progress.

Key priorities for governors for 2019-2020 will be to monitor the following:

Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:

- eliminating inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion of pupils make excellent progress from their starting points
- strengthening teachers' use of assessment information so that planning meets individual pupil's needs more effectively in other subjects across the curriculum

Improve the effectiveness of 16 to 19 study programmes by:

- continuing to refine the curriculum on offer in the sixth form so that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress, including the most able pupils in the cohort
- ensuring that all courses on offer are delivered to a consistently high standard.



Ensure further appropriate training takes place to maintain Governor skills and knowledge in order that we carry out the three core functions of governance with rigour and understanding. (Continue to maintain the rigour through link governor priorities).

Further develop our individual self-reflection and appraisal and maintain a high percentage of attendance at governor meetings

Governors can be contacted through school and we welcome comments and feedback.

Hilary Harrison
Chair of Governors
Woodlawn School

Composition of the Governing Body

- 2 Parent Governors
- 1 Headteacher
- 1 Staff Governor
- 1 Local Authority Governor
- 7 Co-opted Governors
- 2 Trust Governors
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Committees of the Governing Body

- Finance, Staffing Pay Review & Facilities Committee
- Teaching, Leadership, Achievement & Safeguarding Committee
- Appeals
- Complaints
- HT Performance Management

Chair of Governors

Mrs Hilary Harrison

Vice Chair of Governors

Rev. Peter Dobson