



Annual Report on the Evaluation of Governor Effectiveness, 2019 – 20 and 2020 - 21

Background and Context

This annual report provides an evaluation of the Governing Body effectiveness during the period under review.

No report was produced during the school year 2019 to 2020 so this report covers both school years commencing September 2019 until July 2021, however, the main focus is on the school year 2020/21 with notable achievements from 2019/20 to ensure that they are captured.

This report comprises the following sections:

- 1 Overview
- 2 Meetings of the Governing Body
- 3 Remit and achievements of the Governing Body and its committees
- 4 The composition of the Governing Body and its committees, and attendance

1 Overview

The governing body conducts its business to take account of the three roles of the governing bodies as outlined in the Governors' Handbook:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the Head teacher and senior leadership team.

The governing body also ensures that the school complies fully with statutory safeguarding procedures. All staff have signed a record to confirm they have read Part 1 of the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education". The governing body has familiarised itself with the document and are working with the safeguarding lead in school to complete the annual safeguarding audit.

2 Meetings of the governing body and attendance

The full governing body normally meets 6 times a year; all meetings are clerked by a trained professional clerk.

During the school years 2020 and 2021 meetings were atypical due to the Coronavirus pandemic which has had a significant impact on School. 2 FGB meetings were cancelled during this period and in May and June 2020 there were a number of smaller executive group meetings to provide Governor support and challenge to the Headteacher during that very difficult period to ensure that the necessary steps were in place to meet the needs of the school and its stakeholders during that time.

There are 3 governing body sub-committees which normally each meet 3 times a year and which have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the governing body. Again, during 2020 and 2021 there was some impact on sub committees, but not significantly.

Governors have good attendance at meetings overall. Apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis; governors are aware through the code of conduct that non-attendance, which includes apologies not being accepted, will result in the removal of a governor six months from the date of first non-attendance. No Governors were removed as a result of non-attendance during this period.

3 The remit and achievements of the governing body and its committees

Through all activities Governors have supported and monitored the School against the key priorities for 2020-21, which are:

Shire Oak – Key Priorities for 2020-21

- We will understand and respond to the academic, social and emotional needs of children following the period of partial school closure and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We will develop our use of models, images and teaching methods that help children to master key concepts in mathematics and build secure foundations for later mathematical learning.
- We will ensure that all members of Shire Oak understand what makes us distinctive as a church school and further develop children's roles at the heart of our sharing and worship.
- We will work to ensure that current health and safety guidelines are followed in ways that maximise a sense of calm, a broad and balanced curriculum and a feeling of community in and around our school.

Key Achievements during 2020-21

It is important for the Governing body to reflect on its key achievements over the last year. The period March 2020 to July 2021 was, and continues to be, particularly challenging due to the Coronavirus pandemic causing unforeseen difficulties and responding to a rapidly changing situation, locally and globally. The impact of the pandemic included 2 major school-wide lockdowns during which time School was closed to all children except those of key workers or who needed additional support. In addition there was significant disruption as pupils and staff had to isolate at various times throughout the year and individual class bubbles burst. SAT's were cancelled and the wellbeing of both staff and pupils was challenged through a very difficult period which continues. The period January to March was particularly difficult as Government had been determined that Schools would remain open, only to close them on the second day of the Spring term. School had to respond to desperate parents / carers who requested their child was allowed to attend school, and managed to accommodate as many requests as they could on a need-by-need basis.

Home working was prevalent during this time and a complex set of risk assessments and regulations required to be in force throughout UK-wide restrictions as well as a regional/tiered approach.

The Headteacher and school staff have worked incredibly hard during this period and have responded well to disruption and a rapidly changing situation, always keeping the pupils needs at the forefront. Governors are very proud of everything that School has done during this period and can see the positive impact that the hard work of school has had on its pupils and the broader community and stakeholders. It is hard for Governors to shout about their achievements in the context of the huge achievements of School staff, often with little Governor support as the changes required had to be managed so quickly with little time to discuss them in the wider Governing Body.

However, there is evidence that Governors were involved School wide achievements throughout this period, include in particular;

- New measures to manage risk and safety – Governors provided support to the Headteacher during April 2020 and onwards when it was important that School undertook regular risk assessments as directed by LCC in order to minimise safety risks to staff and pupils. In particular Dick Killington, a Professor in Virology provided expert advice and guidance on what School would need to have in place in order to manage the risk. Sally Dyster, experienced in Health and Safety undertook a safety walks in March 2021 to ensure that School had what it needed in place to manage risks generally (not just related to Covid, but it is important that we don't lose sight of all risks);
- Remote / home learning – In 2018 Governors attended a presentation by Chris Marshall, Yr 4 teacher, who briefed them on the work he had been doing at that time to introduce to school the Google learning site "Classrooms" and as a result of his recommendations Governors approved that the School purchase a set of Chrome books to support Yr 4 and wider school learning. During 2020 and 2021, the work that Chris had already set up on Classrooms was instrumental as the foundation to the learning platform which was fully utilised during substantial periods of remote / home leaning. It was also possible to allocate School chrome books from the resources purchased in 2019 to pupils who did not have access to computer facilities at home. Chris Marshall was invited to FGB in October 2020 to present the remote / home learning system to Governors, and the system had to be implemented again to the whole school between January and March 2021 due to a third lockdown, with

periods of class homeworking at various times throughout the year as individual class bubbles burst. Without this earlier intervention and Governor support it would have been very difficult to have got this up and running for the first time in March 2020;

- Supporting staff – Governors supported Staff with email thank you's at regular points from the Chair of Governors as well as an invitation to raise anything they may need to with Governors at any time. The Chair of Governors meets with the Headteacher every 6 weeks to review priorities and provide support, as well as act as a sounding board on any matters the Head wishes to raise, which has been useful during a very difficult management period;
- Assessing children's educational requirements whilst facilitating a normal return to school and building confidence, plus lack of benchmarking data – Teaching and Learning and PPP supported the work of the School throughout 2020 and 2021 to provide rigour to ensure that high standards of teaching and assessment remained in place during the period, even though normal benchmarking data was lacking and there had been a lot of disruption to teaching. This will continue to be a focus throughout 2021 and beyond;
- School budget deficit addressed within year – Resources Committee supported the Headteacher to understand the causes of the financial deficit and to seek to correct the deficit within a 5 year period. Due to an atypical year school spending reduced in 2020/21 and the deficit has been corrected earlier than projected. Resources will continue to monitor this through regular review;
- Through the smaller executive meetings in May and June 2020 Governors supported School to make brave decisions about opening up the school safely to all pupils before the end of the academic year 2020. Although all schools were required to bring pupils back in years 6, 1 and Reception Shire Oak invited all pupils back on a limited basis to undertake some key learning and for transitions into the following year. This also allowed pupils to re-connect with school through some fun events including sports days in a safe way. The school were proud to report that all pupils attended at least one day at school and this was welcomed by Governors and the wider school community;
- Merger of the Headingley, Ireland wood and Horsforth Childrens Centre – Governors supported the merger and the Chair of Governors along with a Governor from Horsforth has supported the Manager of the Childrens Centre in regular meetings to provide a sounding board to support the transitional period immediately after the merger.

Statement from the Chairs of each sub-Committee on their work during the academic year 2020-21:

Dick Killington, Chair of Teaching and Learning

The academic year 2020-2021 has been a difficult one for all schools including Shire Oak. National and local safety measures to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 have caused major disruption to teaching and learning and meant a change to the normal business of the T&LC. We have missed the opportunity to chat with pupils and staff, to attend assemblies, to carry out book scrutinies, to attend pupil progress meetings, to see normal data reports and to use learning walks for monitoring school priorities. Monitoring, in effect, has focussed on listening to how the school has responded and reacted to the need for innovative teaching methods, assessment and pupil engagement during these very different and challenging times. We have listened, learnt and where necessary asked pertinent questions.

Our virtual meetings have been both positive and informative and have reassured us that Shire Oak has responded in an exemplary way to the challenges of maintaining a broad curriculum and to teaching the core subjects during the pandemic.

Parent governors in particular have been forthcoming in congratulating the school on its excellent remote learning work.

Whilst the contribution of the T&LC has been somewhat different this year it has we hope been helpful, supportive and effective in contributing to the shaping of curricular activities at Shire Oak.

In 2021 we piloted a joint meeting of the T&LC and the PPP committee which was considered to be a success. This will be used for the next academic year.

The T&LC thank all staff for their very hard work and dedication to pupils education and welfare during the pandemic and we hope to return to 'business as usual' as soon as allowed to do so.

Antonia Nicholls, Chair of Resources Committee

With the exception of the meetings, which have been remote as opposed to physical, the work of Resources Committee has been largely unaffected by the pandemic. We have focussed on the Budget and deficit action plan, which School has worked hard to remedy within the year, as well as Health and Safety measures generally as well as specific to the risks associated with Covid, and maintenance of the premises and buildings. Staff wellbeing has been a focus and I hope that we have provided support to the Headteacher and her team during an unforeseen and incredibly challenging period.

Kate Wright, Chair of PPP

To be supplied

Governing Board Priorities for 2021-22

- Governors will continue to support and constructively challenge the School to ensure that its activities are robust and meet the objectives of School and its stakeholders;
- The structure of FGB and Committee meeting cycle has been reviewed with some changes to commence in September 2021, these were approved at FGB on 5 July 2021. The changes include a Governors Away day in October and reconfiguration of two sub-Committees;
- A recent skills audit compiled by the Chair of Governors confirmed that the Governing Body have a wide range of skills appropriate to the needs of School, however, some individual training needs were highlighted by individual Governors and the Chair will seek to provide development accordingly.

5 The composition of the governing body and its committees, and attendance

The school's Governors are drawn from different groups associated with the school including staff, parents, the church, the local community and from Leeds City Council. The Governors have a wide range of skills and experience to be able to fulfil their roles to support the Head Teacher and school staff. A recent Skills Audit undertaken on the Governors identified no significant skills gaps.

There are currently no vacancies on the governing body.

The current constitution of the Shire Oak Governing Body is:

- Headteacher (Jane Astrid Devane)
- 1 Local Authority (LA) governor, recommended by the LA and approved by the governing body (Cllr Neil Walshaw)
- 4 parent governors, formally elected through a ballot of parents unless the election is uncontested (Anna Swinburn, Kate Wright, Charlie Stobbart, Julia Kelly)
- 4 co-opted governors, nominated and appointed by the governing body (Dick Killington, Sally Dyster, Ann Dudzinski, Antonia Nicholls)
- 1 staff governor, formally elected by staff employed at school (Bianca Woodruff)
- 2 foundation governors, appointed by the foundation (Jan Kramer, Angela Birkin)
- 1 Associate member (Marcelle Maver, Deputy Head), appointed by the governing body and can vote in committee meetings.

The governing body operates with the following committees:

Resources committee - responsible for staffing including the appointment and role of the SENCO, equality and diversity, finance, property management, health and safety and nutritional standards.

Members:

Antonia Nicholls (Chair)

Sally Dyster

Ann Dudzinski

Kate Wright

Jane Astrid Devane

Marcelle Maver

Teaching and learning committee - responsible for teaching and learning matters including target setting, standards and achievement, SEN (including reporting annually on the success of the SEN policy), monitoring teaching and learning and curriculum provision and ensuring that the governing body is represented at school improvement discussions.

Members:

Dick Killington (Chair)
Jan Kramer
Anna Swinburn
Julia Kelly
Bianca Woodruff
Jane Astrid Devane
Marcelle Maver

Pupil, Parents and Partnerships - responsible for behaviour, safeguarding, attendance, children's spiritual moral social and cultural development, children, parent and staff voice, extra-curricular activities, cluster and other partnerships.

Members:

Kate Wright (Chair)
Dick Killington
Charlie Stobbart
Cllr Neil Walshaw
Jane Astrid Devane
Marcelle Maver

Advisory Board for the Horforth and Headingley Children's Centre

Members:

Jane Astrid Devane
Kate Wright
Cllr Neil Walshaw
Antonia Nicholls

plus the Manager of the Children's Centre and;

Four members of Broadgate Primary School to include;, Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and representative stakeholders.

In April 2021 the Childrens Centre merged with Ireland Wood Childrens Centre and the newly formed Advisory Board also comprises representatives from Ireland Wood.

Governors with specific monitoring duties

- Looked After Children – Charlie Stobbart
- Child Protection and Safeguarding – Charlie Stobbart
- Complaints – Antonia Nicholls
- Training – Antonia Nicholls
- EYFS – Dick Killington
- Health and Safety – Sally Dyster

Headingley/Kirkstall Partnership

- Ann Dudzinski was delegated with making decisions on behalf of the governing board.

Current and recent (in the last 12 months) governors and business/other interests declared are provided in the table below. Governors and associate members, if appointed, are reminded that they should declare any changes as and when they occur.

Name of governor	Category of governor and committees served	Date appointed and term of office	Relevant business/personal interests	Any other educational establishments governed	Relationships with the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives
Rev Angela Birkin	Foundation	15/02.21 – 14/2/25			
Ann Dudzinski	Co-opted	16/3/20 – 15/03/24			
Sally Dyster	Co-opted	24/11/14 – 22/11/22			
Julia Kelly	Parent	30/09/13 – 29/09/21			
Dick Killington	Co-opted	15/07/15 – 14/07/23			
Jan Kramer	Foundation	26/11/18 – 25/11/22			

Antonia Nicholls	Co-opted	19/9/18 – 16/9/22			
Charlie Stobbart	Parent	22/10/19 – 21/10/23			
Anna Swinburn	Parent	7/9/15- 21/10/23			
Neil Walshaw	Local Authority representative	3/11/15- 2/11/23			
Bianca Woodruff	Staff	21/9/20- 20/9/24			
Kate Wright	Parent	22/10/19 – 21/10/23			
Rev Tony Whatmough	Foundation	15/01/14 – 30/09/20			

The following is an attendance record for individual governors at meetings of the full governing body and committees.

Shire Oak CE Primary School Governing Body

Attendance List: 2020/2021

Y - in attendance

N - not in attendance and no apologies received/accepted

A - apologies received and accepted

X - not in post/not a member

	FGB 21/09/20	Resources 20/10/20	PPP 10/11/20	Teaching & Learning 11/11/20	FGB 23/11/20	FGB 25/01/21	Resources 26/01/21	Joint T&L and PPP 10/02/21	Resources 4/5/21	Teaching & Learning 12/5/21	FGB 24/5/21	PPP 15/6/21	FGB 5/7/21
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Jane Astrid Devane	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rev Angela Birkin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	Y
Ann Dudzinski	Y	A	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y
Sally Dyster	A	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y
Julia Kelly	Y	X	X	N	A	Y	X	N	X	X	A	X	Y
Dick Killington	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jan Kramer	A	X	A	X	A	Y	X	Y	X	X	Y	X	Y
Antonia Nicholls	Y	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y
Charlie Stobbart	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	N	X	X	Y	Y	Y
Anna Swinburn	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y
Neil Walshaw	Y	X	Y	X	A	Y	X	Y	X	X	Y	X	Y
Bianca Woodruff	Y	X	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y
Kate Wright	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y
Rev Tony Whatmough	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X