

Governing Body Annual statement 2016/17

The year has been a busy one for governors, with two extra full governing body meetings on important issues, with major implications for the school. Online training has become a significant part of our governor development and we have improved our links with parents. Governors have been heavily involved in a review and strengthening of the school's safeguarding procedures; an external Audit of the school's safeguarding procedures produced a very positive report in July. We have continued to develop our understanding of the life of the school, the curriculum and our relationships with the teaching staff, by acting as Link and Named governors. Having senior staff at governing body meetings, to update us on their work and the curriculum has further enhanced this. The minutes of our governing body and committee meetings show we are offering strong challenge and support to the school's leadership team. The governors work in harmony with the school leadership team and teachers to ensure that the school continues to develop.

Governing body membership.

We lost three of our Foundation governors this year: Mrs Anna Fleisch and Mrs Joanne Meehan, both resigned due to family commitments, in September and November respectively. Mrs Pat Jones, our vice-chair, retired in April after long service as a governor in the school. Mr John Cope took over the role of vice-chair when Mrs Jones left. Our Associate governor, Mrs Nikhola Haley left the school in July and has been replaced by Mrs Fiaz Begum, who is a senior lunchtime supervisor. Mr Steve Morrell joined us as a Foundation governor in April. We are actively seeking to recruit other Foundation governors with the required skills and experience.

Signing up to the NGA code of conduct for governors.

All school governing bodies are required to have a Code of Conduct. In our September 2016 meeting, governors again agreed to adopt the National Governors' Association (NGA) Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards. The code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors in order for the governing body to properly carry out its work within the school and community. The Code of Conduct can be seen at www.nga.org.uk if you search for 'Code of Conduct.'

Special full governing body meeting on 13th October 2016.

This meeting was requested by governors as part of our ongoing consideration of whether the school should become an Academy.

Mr Richard Noake, the Diocesan Director of Education attended the meeting and updated governors on the Diocesan position regarding academies and academisation. This was followed by a session in which governors were able to ask questions and discuss the issues in depth with him. Governors were reassured that if we should decide to become an Academy, the Diocese has robust procedures in place to support and guide schools through the process.

At our November governing body meeting we decided that we should not have a further meeting to discuss academisation in the 2016/17 school year.

Special Governing Body Meeting on 15th March.

A Special Governing Body Meeting took place to discuss working in collaboration with a group of primary schools called the Keighley Working Together Group (Riddlesden St Mary's, Long Lee, Ingrow, Oldfield and ourselves). This school to school support, was proposed as the services and support being provided by the Local Authority was rapidly diminishing and that Governors had agreed that the time did not feel right to academise. A joint meeting, to present the proposal to the governors of all the schools in the group, followed on 20th March and the collaboration was subsequently agreed at the Governors meeting on 6th April.

Skills audit of Governors and its influence on recruitment of new governors.

In order to ensure that the governing body held a range of skills and experience, a skills audit was carried out in 2014/5 and this has been updated as new governors have joined us. Governors are required to complete a questionnaire indicating his/her fields of experience and the levels of skills which they hold. This process ensures that amongst us, we have skills ranging from property and financial management, health and safety experience, experience of chairing committees, as well as experience in the field of education. This process has continued to inform our recruitment of new governors and our current governing body now has a broad coverage of skills and experience. A job specification has been drawn up to be included when we advertise vacant parent governor positions and the roles and responsibilities of all governors made clear to all governors by the Chair of Governors.

Chair of Governors visit to SATS.

The Chair of Governors visited the SATS on the morning of the 9th May, this was an informal visit; the LA carries out formal monitoring visits. The Chair of Governors found that the tests were being conducted in accordance with the instructions in the Local Authority's sheet 'Good practice guide checklist.'

Website compliance activity.

One of our responsibilities as governors is to ensure that the school's website contains all the information we are asked to include by the D.F.E. In our January governors meeting Mrs Bateman led an exercise in which we used a 'Website compliance' document to check the school's website. We found a number of minor discrepancies which were corrected by Gill Higham and Liz Cockroft. The Local Authority subsequently carried out a website compliance check.

Attending parents evenings.

At our January meeting we made a decision to attend Parents' Evenings, as part of our aim to improve our links with Parents, which is in our Development Plan. The Parents' Evenings on the 4th and 5th of April saw the beginning of this, with a good turnout of governors, on both evenings and lots of conversations with parents.

Role of Governors as Link and Named Governors.

A large part of our governors' work, is to act as Link and Named governors. Each year group has a Link governor who will meet with staff and complete a report for the full governing body using a pro forma to guide discussion. This helps governors keep up to date the work being done in each year group and improves relationships between staff and governors. Named governors are assigned areas of responsibility for: Maths; English; Performance Management; Health and Safety; RE and Worship; Child Protection/Looked after children/Safeguarding and SEND/Gifted and Talented / Supporting children with medical conditions. Named governors will meet with the relevant member of staff and report back to the full governing body. A list of Named and Link governors can be found on the school's website.

Governing Body Development Plan 2016/17.

The Governors' Development Plan can be found on the schools web site. Progress towards the objectives will be evaluated early in the 2017-18 school year.

Staff Presentations at Governor Meetings.

At the January Governing Body Meeting an update was given on Maths in school by Mrs K Vernon (Maths Coordinator). She provided Governors with booklets on the approach and rationale behind the teaching of maths in school, that is given to teachers and two that are given to parents (EYFS and rest of school). She also explained the Mastery approach in maths and how reasoning and problem solving are key elements to this approach.

Mrs J Feeney (EY leader) took the Governors on a Learning Walk in our April meeting to explain how the provision in both Nursery and Reception classes underpinned learning and how the school day was planned and run.

An update on Reading across school was provided by Mrs Khambhaita (English Coordinator) in our May meeting. She explained how reading is immersed throughout the wider curriculum and that children are taught vocabulary in a systematic way across school. She also stressed how hard school had been working to further involve parents in reading with their children. Books from Year 2 and Year 6 were also provided so that Governors could see the learning journeys of the children and the high quality of learning and teacher expectations.

Safeguarding updates were given by Mrs Whitham (Designated Safeguarding Lead) on 23rd November and 5th July.

The Role of the Pay and Personnel committee in recruitment.

The school has a very stable teaching staff and there were no new appointments in 2016/17.

Governing bodies in maintained schools are responsible for establishing a selection panel to appoint a headteacher and a deputy headteacher. This responsibility cannot be delegated. The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 say in regulation 15 that the selection panel for a headteacher or deputy headteacher in a maintained school must include at least three governors.

The governing body of a maintained school retains overall accountability for decisions for recruitment but may delegate its staffing functions (including appointing staff). Keighley St Andrew's delegates this responsibility to the Pay and Personnel Committee and therefore recruitment panels for teachers usually include the headteacher, another member of the SLT and a Governor. Whilst the decision about who to appoint should be made by the headteacher, it is done in discussion and with the agreement of the governor(s) on the panel who are members of this committee. It is not recommended that a parent governor should sit on the panel due to the potential conflict of interests.

Safeguarding and Child protection.

Safeguarding and Child Protection has always been a priority for schools but it has been a major focus during this academic year. Parents send their children to school each day with the expectation that school provides a secure environment in which children can flourish. Governors when going about the school can get a sense of whether there is a happy and disciplined atmosphere that is conducive to the wellbeing of pupils and staff.

Governors decided at our first meeting of the year, to have two Named Governors for Looked After Children, Child Protection and Safeguarding, rather than one, as in previous years. These are John Cope (Foundation Governor) and Sarah Scott (Teacher Governor). The Safeguarding lead, Rachel Whitham (Deputy Headteacher) and the two Named Governors have spent an increasing amount of time ensuring that effective policies are in place and followed and that the governing body receives reports that provide evidence of impact, barriers and actions arising. During 2016-2017 greater emphasis was given to Safeguarding by ensuring that the topic is covered separately on each Governors' meeting agenda and that governors receive an annual report.

John Cope and the Safeguarding Lead meet regularly to check that school is meeting safeguarding requirements, including recruitment and staff checks and reviewing attendance.

Governors believe that safeguarding is not the responsibility of one person but that of all stakeholders and visitors to school. All staff members receive training and updates on safeguarding and training is provided for governors. (See Governor Training section.)

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies to achieve a safe and secure environment include the need to address the risk of children being radicalised, online safety policies, a policy for visitors coming to school and the need to avoid abuse of staff. A risk assessment is carried out before children undertake school trips and governors are involved in monitoring risk assessments. This has recently been revised to include emergency plans.

In July an audit of safeguarding was carried out by the Local Authority Lead Primary Improvement Officer for Safeguarding. It was judged that school had developed many effective policies and procedures for Child Protection and Safeguarding but swift actions were needed to improve attendance and improve awareness of local safeguarding issues with parents. These areas are being addressed.

Training and out of school meetings completed by Governors in 2016-17.

This year governors continued to be proactive in attending meetings out of school and in house and external training. Governors attended part of a Staff training day on the 'Prevent' strategy which is a first for the school. Online training is becoming an important part of Governor training and allows governors to do training at a time and place of their choice.

Safeguarding: The Governors' Role

Monday 17 October 2016
Eastwood Primary School
6.30 p.m. – 8.30 p.m.

John Cope

Safer Recruitment – online training

18 November 2016

Dave Thompson

Safer Recruitment – online training

22 November 2016

Rachel Whitham
(attends governors' meetings)

Attendance - Managing pupil attendance

Thursday 04 May 2017
6.30 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.
Margaret McMillan Tower, Bradford

John Cope

Heads and Chairs Briefing

Tuesday 23 May 2017
4.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.
Church House, York Place, Leeds

Alison Bateman

Staff training with Simone Bennett

Vision & Values and The Church of England's Vision for Education
20 June 2017
Keighley St Andrew's CE Primary School
3.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.

John Cope
Mike Cansdale
Steve Morrell

Prevent Training with staff.

27 June 2017
Keighley St Andrew's CE Primary School
11.00 a.m. – 12 noon

John Long
John Cope
Dave Thompson
Mike Cansdale
Steve Morrell

Prevent Training - online training

July 2017

Dave Thompson
John Cope

Governor Forum

Eastwood School
8th November 2016
6.30 - 8.00 pm

Dave Thompson

Governor Forum

Eastwood School
21st March 2017

Dave Thompson

6.30 - 8.00 pm

Governor Forum
Eastwood School
13th June 2017
6.30 - 8.00 pm

John Cope