



Cowling Community Primary School

Supporting Excellence In Education



Governing Body of Cowling Community Primary School Annual Governance Statement

July 2016

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all Governing Bodies, the three core strategic functions of our Governing Body are:

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

Governance arrangements

The Governing Body was reconstituted on 11th February 2015 to meet statutory requirements and to ensure the best structure and combination of skills and competencies to meet the needs of the school. The constitution is as follows:

1 Headteacher – Susan Marshall

1 Local Authority Governor – Revered Helen Collins

4 Co-opted Governors – Jon Batchelor, Donna Robinson, Deborah Raynsford, Jonathan McGill

2 Parent Governors – Jo Starr, Andy Hooper

1 Staff Governor – Kate Dawson

Our aim is to become an outstanding Governing Body. To achieve that aim it is crucial we have a good mix of skills, characters and commitment to provide the support and challenge the school needs.

To this end, during the 2015/16 academic year, there have been a number of personnel changes on the Governing Body. We have welcomed:

- Rev. Collings, who brings experience of teaching, governing and a focus on pastoral care;
- Deborah Raynsford, who brings experience of data analysis, Early Years teaching and has 2 (soon to be 3) children in school;
- Jonathan McGill, who brings experience in finance, data analysis and strategy development, and has 2 children in school;
- Jo Starr, who brings experience of data analysis, education and has 2 children in school



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- Andy Hooper, who brings experience of leadership, education, strategy development and has 3 children in school.

We now have a really strong team, with the enthusiasm, commitment and skills to support driving the school forward.

Specific experience in the following areas exists throughout the Governing Body:

- Experience/understanding of Governance;
- Understanding and experience of strategic planning;
- Experience of project management;
- Experience of Human Resources;
- Experience of performance management appraisal;
- Experience of financial planning/management;
- Experience of premises/facilities management;
- Links with the local community/businesses;
- Knowledge of the local/regional economy.

As Governors, we are well informed, undergo induction and ongoing training and have clear areas of responsibility. We have a programme of meetings throughout the school year which focus on specific areas of governance. The full Governing Body meets every half term, 6 times a year. We also have a Data Team which meets half termly to review the educational progress and attainment being achieved and predicted for every child. We also have nominated safeguarding, Pupil Premium and Sports Funding governors.

Attendance record of governors

A record of our attendance at meetings is kept by the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Work of the Governing Body 2015/16:

This has been a year of seemingly constant change, primarily as a result of government policy. Amidst all the changes in our education system we at Cowling have focused on improving the specific areas identified by the Ofsted inspection in 2015, which graded the school "good", and the Schools' own self-evaluation. These include focus on the Early Years Foundation Stage, writing (particularly boys), raising attainment in SPAG, embedding a new assessment system and related processes, and improving middle leadership.

Governors have focused on these areas through visiting school, undertaking learning walks and work scrutiny, interviewing pupils and staff members, delivering challenge at Governing



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Body meetings, detailed analysis of relevant data both at Data Team and Full Governor Body meetings and informal discussions with the Leadership Team.

The school currently receives Pupil Premium Funding to support the learning of some children. It is important the Governing body monitors how money is spent, and what the impact of that spend is on the childrens' learning. To that end we now have a Pupil Premium Champion, and the Governing Body receive regular Pupil Premium reports from the Headteacher.

We also face the challenge of the Governments' Academy Programme. Whilst the DfE has resiled from forcing all schools to become an Academy, the changing landscape of support for schools in Local Authorities means we have had to spend a great deal of time investigating the best way forward for our school. We have attended numerous presentations by Academy Trusts, the Local Authority, Schools Commissioners and local Headteachers. We have held individual meetings with many of these in order to fully understand the options available to us. We are in the process of developing our strategy.

During the Spring term, we approved the 2015/16 budget plan for the school.

We have received training in relation to Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment, "Prevent", "Life without levels", and data analysis. Our Chair is undertaking the Chair of Governors Leadership Development programme at Leeds Beckett University.

We have completed a detailed skills and training needs audit and will source appropriate further training for all Governors during the next academic year.

Approved minutes can be obtained by contacting the Clerk, Gilly Guy at the address below.

Strategic Planning for the future

We will continue to rigorously monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan and work closely with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team to ensure the School is the best it can be, welcoming external support when required.

During the next academic year, we intend to work with the school community to refine the School Vision to ensure it continues to meet strategic requirements, which will inform the strategic priorities and improvement plans for the future.

We will work on strategies identified from the Governing Body self-evaluation exercise to continue to improve our working practices. We will exercise strong stewardship and support



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and challenge in all areas to ensure the highest possible standards for the benefit of students and value for money.

We will crystallise the "Academy Issue", deciding on what gives all the children in our school now and in the future the best chance of fulfilling their potential.

How to contact your governing body

Information about the School's Governing Body is available on the Governors' page of the School website <http://www.cowling.n-yorks.sch.uk>. The Clerk to the Governors, Gilly Guy can be contacted at Gilly.Guy@northyorks.gov.uk