

Annual Governance Statement, Autumn 2025

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

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

In exercising their functions the Governing Body shall

- Act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school;
- Be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

Governor Code of Conduct

The Governing Body has a Code of Conduct which is reviewed and agreed annually at the first meeting of the new school year. All governors and associate members are obliged to abide by this code.

Governance Arrangements

We strive to ensure the Governing Body has the blend of skills, competencies and commitment to meet the needs and future requirements of the school, with the current constitution of the Governing Body as follows:

Name	Type of Governor	Current Term of office appointed	Current Term of office expires
Kate Dawson	Headteacher	30th September 2022	
Deborah Cross	Local Authority Governor	24th June 2024	24th June 2028
Sarah Boyd	Chair of Governors Co-opted Governor	30th September 2024	30th September 2026
Bethany Buckley	Co-opted Governor	10th October 2022	10th October 2026
Chris Maguire	Co-opted Governor	18th November 2024	17th November 2028
Sarah McEwen	Co-opted Governor	17th November	17th November

		2025	2029
Rebecca Paskin	Parent Governor	10th May 2024	10th May 2028
Victoria Wakeman	Vice-Chair Parent Governor	10th May 2024	10th May 2028
Emma Pease	Staff Governor	30th September 2022	30th September 2026

The Governing Body works closely with the Headteacher in determining the priorities of the school. The Governing Body has the support of the NYCC Governance Service to provide clerking skills and advice as needed. During the year, the Governing Body has continued to develop its knowledge and skills and has become a committed and capable source of support and challenge to the Headteacher and the school staff.

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

- Experience/understanding of Governance;
- Understanding and experience of strategic planning;
- Experience of primary education;
- Experience of project management;
- Experience of financial planning and budget management;
- Experience of performance management appraisal;
- Experience of risk and compliance management
- Experience of premises/facilities management;
- Links with the local community/businesses;
- Day to day engagement with the school as parents of students;
- Knowledge of the local and wider economy.

The Governing Body undertakes a skills audit annually and has developed a training tracker to ensure training needs are both analysed and tracked. Following the priorities of the school and aligning with the school improvement plan (SIP) (which is detailed later in this statement), the Governing Body reviewed the most appropriate structure for the monitoring of the school and core link responsibility areas are outlined below for the 2025/26 school year.

Safeguarding
Health and Safety
SEN including Pupil premium
SIP
Maths Link
Sports Premium
Behaviour and attendance will be continuously monitored by all.

In addition to the core governor responsibilities listed above, a Data Team reviews the educational progress and attainment, predicted and achieved for every child. Nominated governors are responsible for Safeguarding, Pupil Premium and Sports Funding, plus agreed sub-groups are in place for the performance review of the Headteacher, budget

monitoring and management, and complaints. Meetings are largely held in person in the school, with the option of virtual meetings to ensure maximum attendance.

Attendance Record of Governors

Our Governing Body holds a minimum of six meetings per year. A record of attendance at meetings is kept by the Clerk to the Governing Body and is available on the school website. The approved minutes for each meeting can be obtained by contacting the Clerk at the contact details provided below.

Governor Objectives

In addition to the core functions set out above, our Governing Body sets out its priorities and measures performance against four objectives:

Objective One: to build and grow a cohesive and aligned school governing body that is clear on the purpose of its role and the strategic vision and development plans for the school.

Objective Two: to establish and deepen Governing body understanding of the new School Improvement Plan; its objectives, progress against metrics and the impact activities are realising for the school community

Objective Three: to oversee and ensure an inclusive, positive and performing school community

Objective Four: governor roles are established through link responsibilities, tied to the School Improvement Plan priorities and overall performance of the Headteacher and the school.

Vision and Improvement Plan

The Governing Body continues to support the Headteacher to embed the shared vision that “every child has the chance to shine”, further reinforced through the “4 Rs”: Resilience, Responsibility, being Respectful and being Ready. The overall aims for the school are captured within the School Improvement Plan encompassing the following objectives:

1. The skilful teaching of reading develops a positive culture whereby children achieve reading standards above national average.
2. To develop and further the school’s vision through high expectations of all behaviours.
3. Teaching quality is consistently a high standard across school and all subjects so that progress across the school compares favourably to national standards.

The work of the Governing Body aims to support the school in achieving these objectives, the success of which was reflected through positive Ofsted Inspection feedback received in November 2024.

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 the impact of

spend is on the children's learning. To that end the Governing Body receives Pupil Premium reports from the Headteacher as a standing agenda item.

Financial Position

One of the key objectives of the Governing Body is to monitor the financial position of the school and ensure resources are being used appropriately. As costs increase, funding remains static and student numbers decline, maintaining a positive position on the budget has become increasingly challenging. In response, the Governing Body supported the Headteacher's decision to transition to a four-class structure ahead of the 2025/26 academic term, whilst maintaining appropriate staffing levels and resources, without which the quality of education our children receive would inevitably suffer. The Governing Body continues to support and challenge the Headteacher on the financial management of the school, which does at times, require some difficult decisions, such as increasing the cost to parents of school meals.

Strategic Planning for the Future

We will continue to develop and rigorously monitor progress against the new 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. We will work on strategies identified from the Governing Body self-evaluation exercise to continue to improve our working practices and look to recruit new governors that add to the skill needs identified. We will exercise strong stewardship and support and challenge in all areas to ensure the highest possible standards for the benefit of all our students while ensuring that every child has the chance to shine along with ensuring the best value for money.

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>. Governors can be contacted via the Clerk to Governors clerktogovernors@cowling.n-yorks.sch.uk