

Governing Body's and Trust Activity for Academic Year 2020 to 2021

This was an extremely busy year for the school therefore the Governing body also. The intricacies of leadership through the turbulent changes brought about by the Covid pandemic increased everyone's workload considerably. Different ways of working and supporting the school had to be sought and tested. Zoom sessions became the norm.

Although many members of the board were relatively new we had experienced leadership (Paul Tams and Claire Goldstone) and were fortunate that the membership was stable.

Members to August 31 2021

Phil Knowles

Governors to August 31 2021

Lorna Rourke	LR (Headteacher)
April Grimes	AG (Headteacher)
Claire Goldstone	CG (Co-Chair)
Lynne Proudlock	LP (Co-Chair)
Paul Tams	PT
Michelle Harvey	MH
Nicola Douglas	ND
Natasha Morgan	NM
Zoe Maguire	ZM (Staff)

Changes

Paul Tams stepped down as Chair but continues as a governor

Lisa Bird (Staff governor) resigned

Michelle Slater (parent governor) resigned

Zoe Maguire welcomed as staff governor

Governors and Governance

Following an external review of governance where trainings needs were highlighted Claire Goldstone was mentored by Rosemary Lovatt (NLG advisor) throughout the academic year. Although the work was initially aimed at our partner school, Forest Primary Academy, we gained great knowledge and practical support through CG as our Co-chair.

This included our patterns of meetings, the structure of our committees, monitoring and reporting.

Three new committees formed:-

Finance, Premises and Personnel to meet 6 times per academic year

Standards. 3 meetings per academic year

Audit and Risk also 3 meetings per academic year

All reporting back to FGB meetings

Professional minute taking, for all these meetings, is provided through Schools Choice. The increased number of meetings did have a knock on effect on the

funding of this service but it was agreed as not only necessary but a positive move forward for governance.

Sharing this information was made more efficient and accessible as we began using Schools Choice Governor Hub. Governors have instant access to documents, calendar, monitoring reports and can record any training completed.

Standardised forms for governor monitoring linked, through governor monitoring planning, back to the School Development Plan.

Training for governor is provided by Schools Choice, The National College, the Diocese and school itself. This has become more accessible through webinar and zoom sessions. Governor Hub is a great way for us to share recommendations for training with each other.

Governors have also spent time reviewing the partnership with Forest and looking at MATs as we look to securing the future of the school. This was looked at as both a joint venture with Forest and for Elveden alone as we have to join with a diocese approved MAT which limits our choices. An information evening has been attended by governors provided with All Saints School Trust who are one of the possibilities. Some face to face meetings have been held as well as virtual meetings to provide continuity of monitoring.

We were proud to participate and support the school during the visit from Ofsted which had the most positive of outcomes, the retention of the outstanding judgement. A truly excellent result following the extraordinary circumstances for over a year now. Headteacher and Governors attended a strategy day led by Rosemary Lovatt to collaborate on the School Development Plan for the academic year 2021-2022.

Finance and Premises

As ever finances have been tight however the provision for the children has been consistently high. The payroll was higher than normal due to maternity cover for two staff.

The main concern is the much-needed expansion of the buildings to provide for the increasing number of children. The CiF bid was successful however the building work has been held up due to Covid related issues, bat surveys, etc.

Pupil premium, catch up funding, sports premium and SEND funding has been used to provide for the best outcomes for the young people and all has been reported and approved through finance meetings.

Overall a busy year that saw positive moves forward in how the school is governed however we have much to do. Ofsted did give us a direction to follow so training in knowledge and skills learning will be one priority we take forward.