

Wetherby High School Governing Body 2023/24

Chair: Cindy Bentley

Vice-Chairs: Paul Sibbons and Neil O'Byrne

The Constitution of the Governing Body is:

- Headteacher
- 1 Local Authority governor, recommended by the LA and approved by the Governing Body
- 2 Parent governors, formally elected through a ballot of parents
- 1 Staff governor, formally elected by staff employed at school
- 7 Co-opted governors, nominated and appointed by the Governing Body
- 2 Foundation governors, appointed by the Leeds Learning Alliance
- Names, photographs and pen portraits of all current governors can be found below.

The Governing Body operates with the following committees:

- **Resources Committee** – responsible for staffing, finance, property management, health and safety, nutritional standards
Committee Chair – Neil O'Byrne
- **Quality of Education and Inclusion Committee** – responsible for teaching and learning matters, including target setting, standards and achievement, SEN, monitoring teaching and learning, curriculum provision, behaviour, attendance, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and equality and diversity.
Committee Chair – Paul Sibbons
- **Pay Review Committee** – responsible for ensuring the implementation of the school's Pay Policy and Staff Appraisal Policy
- **Pay Appeal Committee** – responsible for hearing pay appeals and ensuring a fair and proper process has been followed.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all governors and is dealt with at full Governing Body meetings with regular reports by the Headteacher and the Lead Governor for Safeguarding, Neil O'Byrne.

Governance Statement for Wetherby High School Governing Body, July 2023

1. Overview

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

- a) **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- b) **Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and the health and personal wellbeing of its pupils**
- c) **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

The day to day management of the school is, in the main, the responsibility of the senior management.

The Governing Body also ensures that the school complies fully with statutory safeguarding procedures. All staff have signed a record to confirm that they have read Part 1 of the DfE statutory guidance document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. The Governing Body has familiarised itself with the document and the Lead Governor for Safeguarding works closely with the school to ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

2. The composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has a good spread of experience and expertise and regularly carries out a Skills Audit to ensure that this remains the case. The last audit was carried out in 2021 and received a very complimentary report from Governor Support Services. Co-opted Governors are nominated on the basis of the skills required by the Governing Body to carry out their appointed tasks and a willingness to take an active role in discharging these duties.

3. Meetings of the Governing Body and Attendance

The full Governing Body meets 6 times a year and all meetings are clerked by a trained professional clerk. The two main committees (Resources and Quality of Education & Inclusion) meet 5 times a year, prior to full Governing Body meetings, and have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Governing Body. This academic year, all meetings have been held in school, although governors have the option of participating via Zoom.

Wetherby High School governors have an excellent overall attendance record as can be ascertained from the 2022/23 attendance record shown above. Apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis. Governors are aware through the Code of Conduct, which they sign at the start of each academic year, that non-attendance may result in the removal of a governor 6 months from the date of first non-attendance.

4. The remit of the Governing Body and its committees

The school has a School Improvement Plan which is regularly updated and is informed by developments within the school and by support and challenge from the Governing Body. The main priority areas are:

- a. Raising standards and achievement in those areas which have been below expectations by continuing to improve attainment and pupils' achievement across all Key Stages; continuing to improve the progress of disadvantaged children in order to close the gap between them and their peers; monitoring levels of attendance and taking appropriate action where necessary
- b. Continuing to improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that the marking and feedback policy is used consistently through the school, that support and intervention match pupils' needs accurately so that all pupils make strong progress and that all teaching is good or outstanding.
- c. Implementing possible changes in examination systems and new curriculum innovations.
- d. Responding to any issues raised by outside bodies or individuals.

- e. Being aware of, and attentive to, the pressures on school staff, particularly the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, and responding in an appropriate way when and where necessary.

These priority areas are dealt with by either the Resources or the Quality of Learning & Inclusion committees and are always included in the Headteacher's comprehensive report at full Governing Body meetings.

5. The effectiveness and impact of Committees 2022/2023

a) Resources Committee

The Government has confirmed that we are in the highest priority group for a brand-new school; which has delighted pupils, parents, staff and governors. Whilst the details have to be completed before the new foundations are laid, it is business as usual. The safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff will always remain our highest priority and our wonderful maintenance team continue to make very tired buildings safe, warm and rain-free. This allows the pupils to concentrate on their work and achieving their goals and beyond.

Our established mantra of only spending money when essential has been adopted by all of our staff, with each practising spending restraint and being innovative in many ways. Not only is this a valuable contribution to reducing overall expenditure, it allows staff to support pupils to participate fully in the wider school activities, when their family circumstances might not otherwise allow them.

In the last year we have experienced a slightly higher than usual change across teaching staff, though we continue to recruit committed, dedicated teachers who are attracted to our ethos of ensuring every child reaches their identified potential or more.

Whilst we have experienced financial challenges, against the national trend we see an overall financial picture of shrinking expenditure whilst maintaining and improving teaching and pastoral care to our pupils.

b) Quality of Education and Inclusion Committee

The committee has had six meetings this academic year. There were a variety of issues discussed with some topics gaining more focus: -

- Monitoring results of external exams and the continual assessment of all year groups including progress 8 and EBACC.

- Emphasis on disadvantaged cohorts and pupil premium funding.

- Reviewing the broad and balanced curriculum which is constantly evolving e.g. introduction of Life Learning.

- Attendance has posed some issues following Covid. This is also a national problem which is high on the agenda for schools and government. Wetherby has kept a sharp focus on this by examining all possible measures to mitigate against poor attendance.

- External oversight of school progress has been sought to reinforce the school's assessment of teaching and learning.

Other areas requiring mention are:

Ongoing work on the development of coaching

Transition for years 7 and 11

Induction of new staff

Thanks to all members of the committee for their input and the Headteacher for the quality of the reports submitted to the group.

6. The effectiveness and impact of the Governing Body

We have continued to work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to address areas identified for improvement in the Ofsted report in February 2019.

As last year, one major area of focus for the governors has been to improve on the performance of our disadvantaged students and both we and the staff are proud that Wetherby High School continues to be a truly inclusive community school. The effects of the pandemic are still being felt, particularly in the area of attendance, which governors monitor closely.

Our involvement in the Leeds Learning Alliance has continued and our Chair is both a Trustee and Director. More and more schools, other educational establishments and commercial enterprises are becoming interested in the inclusive approach of the Alliance. It is a great source of support and information for our school. Our close relationship with Carr Manor Community School also continues with benefits for both of our schools.

The Governing Body has long campaigned for a new school building and we were all very excited when, in 2021, Leeds City Council announced that WHS would be rebuilt. Much of the groundwork had been done when the government announced in December 2022 that we would be included in their school rebuilding programme. It was then confirmed last term that we would be included in the first wave, so that initial investigations would start in September 2023.

All governors have completed a two-part induction course and, although we do have the opportunity to attend training courses provided by Governor Support Services, we have found it more relevant to hold half hour training sessions prior to the full Governing Body meetings, led by the appropriate member of staff. This ensures that all governors are kept up to date in areas such as safeguarding, inclusion and Ofsted requirements.

All governors have a scheduled visit to school once a year and take part in Staff Circles, coaching groups and sit in on lessons. We all find that this is a very useful way of getting to know staff and students. All new staff are invited to meet governors at the start of every year.

On Open Evening in September 2022, governors had a stand with plans of the proposed new school and also details of the Leeds Learning Alliance. It was a valuable opportunity to talk to prospective families/carers.