

Wetherby High School Governing Body 2020/21

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 2020

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. Obviously, from March 2020, physical meetings in school became impossible but governors have continued to meet as scheduled via Zoom to carry out their statutory duties.

Wetherby High School governors have an excellent overall attendance record as can be ascertained from the 2020/21 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.

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 2020/2012

a) Resources Committee

The Resources Committee is best described as providing governance of 'running the business', an essential part of any successful enterprise employing in excess of a hundred people with a multi-million pound annual budget.

During the year, the committee's meetings were held online. Members conducted an in-depth review of the draft budget and, once approved by the full Governing Body, reviewed expenditure and income against that budget at each meeting. Any issues of exceptional spend, e.g. the renewal of the mobile phone contract, were scrutinized to ensure best value for money with operational effectiveness.

This committee is the first line in ensuring that safeguarding – keeping your children safe – is at the forefront of all activity within the school; the committee received safeguarding updates at each meeting as well as in-house training. At each meeting, the Site Manager provided detailed and comprehensive updates on all aspects of the school premises and Health & Safety. This goes far beyond making sure the classrooms are warm and rainproof. Electrical, fire and many more systems are thoroughly tested on a regular basis and reports made to the Committee.

We are the guardians of all school policies which are reviewed at meetings, ensuring they meet current best practice and have a lead Governor assigned. We also reviewed all recruitment and movement of all our staff, absence monitoring and any concerns raised by parents or others.

b) Quality of Education and Inclusion Committee

It has been a different year for the committee with all meetings done remotely. The group remained focussed on key issues even although external pressures impacted some of the work. The main thrust of the meetings were:

Ensuring staff and students were in a safe working environment

All students were well taught and not disadvantaged by the massive changes in exam assessment

Governors were given the opportunity to observe on line the quality of lessons being delivered

Good quality training provided by internal and external bodies

Positive responses to on line teaching by students and parents that ensured that the curriculum could be delivered

Thanks go to all the staff and students for their hard work especially the Headteacher for her clarity of vision and leadership.

6. The effectiveness and impact of the Governing Body

The partnership agreement between Wetherby High School and Carr Manor Community School which has been in place since 2014 is no longer needed as Wetherby High School functions independently, but maintains a close working relationship with Carr Manor. As reported last year, early in 2020, the Governing Body decided that the time was right to advertise for a permanent Headteacher. Unfortunately, the pandemic intervened and it wasn't until September 2020 that we appointed Samantha Jefferson as our Headteacher to work alongside Lucie Lakin who remained as Executive Headteacher. Ms Jefferson has had a baptism by fire this year but has led the school very successfully through an extremely difficult year.

The Governing Body has continued to work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to address areas identified for improvement in the Ofsted report in February 2019 as well as challenges presented by the pandemic.

We have continued to improve on the performance of our disadvantaged students and the Governors and staff are proud that Wetherby High School continues to be a truly inclusive community school. The pandemic has caused considerable disruption in school for both staff and students and we are immensely proud of the way in which our staff members have adapted to new ways of teaching and caring for our students.

Last year, governors took the decision to close the Sixth Form. There are now so many opportunities other than A-Levels open for post-16 students and Wetherby High School has always had a policy of encouraging students to take the best course for their particular interests and abilities. We have successfully established partnerships with other institutions such as the St. Aidan's/St. John Fisher Sixth Form, Notre Dame in Leeds, etc. to ensure that all of our students would be able to progress to whatever post-16 course was most appropriate for them.

Following extensive consultation with stakeholders last year, governors voted unanimously to join the Leeds Learning Alliance, along with Carr Manor Community School, Leeds Trinity University, Bankside Primary School and Leeds Rhinos. Governors felt that being a part of such a prestigious organisation would bring valuable opportunities for both staff and students. This year, other prestigious organisations such as Leeds United Foundation and Leeds City College have joined the Alliance, bringing even more potential opportunities for our school.

The Governing Body has long campaigned for a new school building and Leeds City Council confirmed at the end of the summer term that a new school will be built at the side of the existing one. There will inevitably be challenges along the way, but governors are delighted that our staff and children will finally have a modern building in which to work and study.

All governors have completed a two-part induction course and several have attended other training courses related to their specialist area such as finance, pupil premium and safer recruiting. Due to the pandemic, governors have been unable to spend time in school as they normally do but, thanks

to regular meetings of both the main Governing Body and the committees, along with detailed and comprehensive reports by the Headteacher and others, have been able to both support and challenge the school.