

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of Mowbray School 31 March 2020

As defined by the Department for Education (DfE) in The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, the core functions of all governing bodies include:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

It is expected that in exercising their functions the governing body shall:

- act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- 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.

The governing board of Mowbray School has a code of conduct which is reviewed and agreed annually. All governors and associate members are obliged to abide by this code.

Governance arrangements

The Governing board of Mowbray School, reconstituted in 2015, is made up of:

- 2 Parent governors
- 1 Staff governor
- 1 Head teacher
- 1 Local Authority governor
- 7 Co-opted governors

The range of skills brought to the governing body which contribute to the effective governance and the success of the school are as follows:

- an enthusiasm to learn about and understand the work of the school and use personal skills to the benefit of the school
- an understanding of good business governance and financial management
- knowledge of education in general and a good understanding of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and the effect this has on curriculum
- the ability to interpret and understand pupil and other performance data and indicators
- experience in the well-being and safeguarding of children and health care in general
- knowledge of Buildings and Maintenance
- an awareness of Health and Safety requirements
- an understanding of personnel management
- a willingness to attend meetings, visit the school and contribute to its success

The full Governing board has had a programme of 5 meetings throughout the school year with additional meetings as necessary. Part of the work of the governing body has been delegated to 3 principal subcommittees as follows:

- **Business Subcommittee** which has a remit which covers Finance, Human resources, Head teacher performance review and general issues relating to the “business” of running Mowbray School
- **Teaching, Learning and Student well-being Subcommittee** which has the remit of ensuring and monitoring the curriculum, the learning process and progress of students, monitoring teacher performance and considering ways of improvement and support. The committee also considers child safeguarding and associated issues
- **Governor Well Being and Development Subcommittee** to ensure that the governing body represents a range of skills, is well informed and carries out its function effectively.

Each Subcommittee has met on at least 3 occasions each year and such other times as deemed necessary. Each committee reported back to the full Governing board summarising the work that had been undertaken and that committees recommendations.

During the year the following number of meetings were held:

- | | |
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| • Full Governing Board | 5 |
| • Extraordinary FGB Meeting | 0 |
| • Business Subcommittee | 6 |
| • Teaching, Learning and Student well-being Subcommittee | 5 |
| • Governor Well Being and Development | 2 |

In addition, the Chair and Vice-chair of governors have regular meetings with the Head teacher and attend other meetings as necessary with the local authority and other agencies to understand and promote key issues with regard to the improvement and development of the School.

Governors continue to be encouraged to visit the school and have taken part in ‘learning walks’ to gain a better understanding of the school.

The Link governor role has extended so that a governor will be appointed to have an interest focus a reporting responsibility for each of the following areas:

- Safeguarding
- Staff well being
- Governor issues
- Health and Safety
- Ripon Satellite development and integration

The Terms of reference for each Subcommittee/Link governor are reviewed and updated annually.

Full governing board meetings are preceded by a 15/20 minute training/information session to further improve governor knowledge and awareness of current issues including changes in curriculum, school performance and development as well as other regulatory changes affecting the School.

All health and safety and school well-being issues will be the responsibility of the full Governing body with specific issues being delegated to a Health and safety Link governor as indicated above.

This governance arrangement came into effect during the year and has been further reviewed. Governors have now determined that it would be more efficient for most work to be undertaken by the full governing board meeting on a more regular basis with one 'strategic' subcommittee to deal with financial and staffing issues.

The coronavirus epidemic will delay the consideration of this and any changes will not now be implemented until the emergency has ended.

The work we have done through the full Governing Board meetings, Subcommittee meetings and Governor Link Roles.

During the year the governors were delighted that, despite a number of external challenges, its satellite primary school provision at Ripon, known as Mowbray School-Ripon, opened as planned on 1 January 2020.

Mowbray School-Ripon is an extension of Mowbray School with the same management team ethos, procedures, curriculum, opportunities and performance ideals and the governors were delighted that they were able to hold their March 2020 full governing board meeting at this new School site in Ripon.

At 31 March 2020 there were 14 Pupils on roll at the Ripon site. It is anticipated that in September 2020 pupil numbers will have increased to 30.

The final phases of Capital improvement works necessary to complete this facility are still in progress but it is planned that, despite coronavirus, all work will be completed by September 2020.

The creation of this provision assists the Local Authority satisfy part of the increased demand for special education places. There are still a number of difficulties to overcome not least of which is a lack of Local Authority funding for Capital projects. The resulting shortfall will be a financial challenge to overcome in the next financial year.

Overall the number of children on roll at Mowbray School continues to increase. At the 31 March 2020 there were 238 pupils on roll at our two schools.

The Governing body have been actively involved in making best use of its financial resources to ensure that good facilities are available at both Bedale and Ripon together with the appropriate staffing levels and management resources to ensure that the whole school is well placed to support all the needs of all its students.

In a climate where funding for Schools is continuing to reduce, it is proving increasingly difficult to 'balance the budget', but by careful planning we believe we have been able to ensure that the necessary resources are available to maintain facilities and continue to improve standards going forward.

The governors acknowledge the tremendous commitment and dedication of all members of staff within the School and are grateful for their individual enthusiasm and hard work. In doing this the

governors fully support and promote all measures which improve the development and well-being of staff.

The governors also addressed a concern that senior management within the school, the size of which has nearly doubled over a six-year period, required further support. The governors were delighted that with effect from February 2020 Mr Tearle, our then Head teacher, became Executive Head teacher and Mrs Pickles, the then Deputy Head teacher, became Head of School. In due course the leadership team will be further reinforced by the appointment of a new Assistant Head teacher.

The Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) curriculum has been fully introduced into school and pupils grouped into different 'Pathways of learning'. This will provide a more structured and individualised approach for all students.

During the year there have been a number of reviews and in particular governors were pleased to be able to take part in the reassessment process which led to the re-accredited of the school by Investors in Pupils. The Inspector's report was particularly complimentary of the standards demonstrated and achievements of our students. During the year the school received the following awards;

- Optimus Well-Being Award 2019
- Emotion Coaching Organisation 2019-2021
- Autism Accreditation 2017-2020
- Attachment Aware School 2019
- Alex Timpson ARC National Award Nov 2019' National winner 2019
- Makaton Friendly School 2019
- Bedale Makaton Friendly Town 2019
- International Eco School Award 2019
- National Careers Award 2020 in recognition of the high standard of the school's careers advice
- Rebound Centre of Excellence 2020

The school continues to be a member of Challenge Partners which it sees as an excellent means to improve standards and share good practice. In February 2020 the school participated in a three day Quality Assurance Review from them and were graded as being effective, a grade below the highest of four levels.

The governors are determined to ensure that student outcomes are the best that can be individually achieved and are pleased that the school continues to perform exceptionally well. This is reflected not only by students at each key stage but also in increased examination and qualification success.

The governors believe they have in place a robust structure to ensure the necessary links are in place to enable them to monitor performance at all levels and identify areas where additional resources and support are necessary. An important part of this work involves visits to the school to learn more about its operation and the needs of our students. This experience, together with comments from peer reviews and insight training, ensures governors are better able to measure progress and achievement and enable them to make decisions based on greater understanding and knowledge.

The work of the governing board is summarised in the minutes of its meetings which are available through the school office.

Coronavirus

The pandemic has had and continues to have a major impact on the school. This will unfortunately continue for some time to come. The nature of the school's student population causes additional safety issues and concerns. The Head of School and Executive Headteacher, together with the Leadership Team have worked tirelessly to understand and best interpret the guidance applicable to the school's circumstances. Appropriate measures were introduced to comply with the standards and requirements laid down to keep staff and students attending school as safe as possible.

The Ripon site closed in March 2020 but it is intended that it will reopen on the 29th June 2020, until the end of term, several pupils from the Ripon site have been based at the Bedale site, whilst it was closed.

Pupils who have attended school during this period, have either been children of key workers, Looked After Children (LAC) or were risk assessed by staff and for safeguarding reasons provided for in school. The Teachers and parent liaison officers have been able to contact and provide ongoing support and guidance to families and carers. Students have been provided with remote learning activities, linked with our curriculum, by staff working from home, this has been co-ordinated by Heads of Departments, Mrs Oliver and Mrs Staple.

Future planning is very difficult in circumstances where guidance and regulation are changing on a frequent basis. It is still not clear when and how the School will reopen for all students and staff. There continues to be a number of difficulties to overcome not least of which is the provision of School Transport.

In the circumstances making plans for the future is difficult and not straightforward but the underlying principle that has been adopted and will continue, is to ensure that whatever arrangements are put in place are as safe and risk free as possible and in accordance with the regulations and guidance issued by the Government and Local Authority.

Strategic Planning for the future

The major concern in planning for the future is Coronavirus and maintaining the safety of our students and staff.

Whatever plans are put in place by management, will comply with the best interpretation of the regulations and requirements issued by Government and the Local Authority. Governors hope that there can be a return to normality later in the year but this is outside the school's control. Appropriate resources will be made available to ensure that whatever requirements or other changes are necessary will be available to ensure a workable school environment at both Bedale and Ripon that is as safe and risk-free as possible in all respects for all staff and students.

The governors will continue to strive to put in place a governance structure to enable governors to carry out their work efficiently and effectively.

Subject to the impact on learning and other restrictions of Coronavirus during the forthcoming months, the governors intend to review the new pathways of learning curriculum during the course of the year to determine its impact on students' progress, learning and achievements. They will also review the development and success of the new Careers policy to assess progress and outcomes resulting from the preparation for adulthood emphasis.

Coronavirus will adversely impact on school budgets which are already stretched to the limit. The governors are acutely aware of the financial constraints and will continue to monitor the situation but governors recognise that it will be necessary to consider utilising reserves which had been earmarked for other purposes to underwrite future deficits.

The Governing body are well aware that, despite increasing the size of the school and developing a satellite primary school in Ripon, the number of students seeking places where the school could satisfy need, considerably exceeds the places available. This is a difficult challenge which adds yet further pressure on management and teaching staff alike.

This is a problem throughout the whole of North Yorkshire not just Mowbray School and is aggravated by an environment of reduced school funding. Although the governors will continue to explore pragmatic ways in which this can be addressed during the forthcoming year it is very unlikely in current financial circumstances that any progress can be made.

Disappointing though it may be, in the current financial climate the governors have little option but to look inwards to the school's existing student base to ensure that we continue to provide the best education prospects and outcomes for them rather than attempting to solve a problem which should be addressed by the Local Authority.

How to contact your Governing Board

Information about the school's Governing Board is available on the governors' page of the school's website. Contact should only be made through the School.

Mowbray School Governing Board – Membership

	Category	Start date	End date	Position
Robert Dunning	Co-opted	22 Mar 2019	21 Jan 2022	Chair
Helen Peacock	Co-opted	22 Jan 2019	23 Jan 2023	
Fiona Pearman	Co-opted	22 Mar 2019	23 Jan 2023	Staff link
David Yea	Co-opted	22 Jan 2019	23 Jan 2023	
Jonathan Tearle	Headteacher	n/a	n/a	
Anne Herbert	Local Authority	14 Sept 2017	13 Sept 2021	Safeguarding link
Simon Holden	Parent	10 May 2019	9 May 2023	Vice Chair
Jen Berry	Parent	29 Nov 2016	28 Nov 2020	
Angela Staple	Staff	10 May 2019	9 May 2023	
Karen Pickles	Associate	23 Jan 2019	22 Jan 2020	

Jeremy Melhuish	Co-opted	13 Feb 2019	12 Feb 2023
Philippa Clarke	Co-opted	26 Mar 2019	25 Mar 2023

At the date of this report there is 1 vacancy for a Co-opted Governor.

Register of Interest

Robert Dunning	None
Helen Peacock	None
Fiona Pearman	None
David Yea	None
Jonathan Tearle	None
Anne Herbert	None
Simon Holden	None
Jen Berry	Teacher Recruitment / retention at Red Kite Trust
Angela Staple	married to a member of staff
Karen Pickles	Governor at Kirkby Malzeard Primary School
Jeremy Melhuish	None
Philippa Clarke	None

Mowbray School Governors' Attendance record for 2018/19

	Percentage Attendance at the following meetings				
	FGB	Extra-ordinary FGB*	BC	T,L&S C	H,S & S C
Robert Dunning	80	100	100	100	
Helen Peacock~	20	0	0	x	x
Fiona Pearman	60	50	x	x	
David Yea	80	100	50	x	
Jonathan Tearle	80	100	100	100	
Anne Herbert	100	100	x	100	x
Simon Holden	80	100	75	40	x
Jen Berry	60	0	x	60	x
Angela Staple	100	100	x	100	x
Karen Pickles+	100	100	x	100	x
Jeremy Melhuish^	100	100	x	x	
Philippa Clarke	100	0	50	100'	x

Please note this does not reflect attendance at subcommittee meetings, visits to school, learning walks, separate non scheduled meetings, training and attendance at panel meetings.

Key

+ Associate Governor

~maternity leave during majority of year

^ became a governor part way through the year

' invited to join this committee partway through the year

*Extraordinary FGB meetings are held at very short notice so governors can find it difficult to re-arrange prior commitments
x governor is not a member of that sub committee