

Annual Governance Statement 2018– 2019
for the Governing Board of Taverham Voluntary Controlled Church of England Junior School

In accordance with the Government’s requirement for all governing boards, the 3 core strategic functions of Taverham VC Church of England Junior School's Governing Board are:

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

Governance arrangements

The governing board of Taverham VC CE Junior School was re-constituted with effect from 1st May 2015 and totals 11 members. It is made up of -

2 foundation governors, 3 co-opted governors, 1 local authority governor, 3 elected parent governors, 1 elected staff governor and 1 headteacher. The governing board has also agreed to appoint associate governors where there is a clear benefit to the effectiveness of the board.

Foundation governors are appointed by the Norwich Diocese to help preserve the school’s founding Church of England character and support the school’s partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

Co-opted governors are members of the local community who, in the opinion of the governing board, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The local authority governor is nominated by the local authority (the local county councillor) and appointed by the governing board.

Parent governors are parents / carers of children at the school. They have to be proposed and seconded by parents and if there are more applications than vacancies, an election is held.

Staff governor is elected by the school staff.

One place should always be kept for the headteacher

An associate governor is not a full member of the governing board but brings particular skills and knowledge. That governor can only vote at committee meetings.

The Governing Board for 2018-19 comprised -

Name	Category	Role / lead area	Committee (see below)
Chris Wilson-Town	Co-opted governor (reappointed 18 March 2019)	Chair / Pupil Premium / English	PPF & CCS
Josie Rayner-Wells	Foundation governor	Vice-chair / Safeguarding / Looked After children	PPF
Neil Dyas	Parent governor	Chair of PPF / Training / Finance and contracts / Science	PPF
Claudette Bannock	Local Authority governor	Sports Premium	PPF
Paul Henman	Staff governor	Acting headteacher/ Leadership	CCS

Michael Holmes	Co-opted governor (joined 1 October 2018)	Mathematics	CCS
Fiona Johnston	Clerk		CCS & PPF
Matthew Lambert	Parent Governor (joined 26 November 2018)	Mental health and well-being (staff and children)	CCS
Tom Mitchell	Parent governor (resigned 17 June 2019)	Health and Safety	
Vicky Myers	Co-opted governor	Chair of CCS / SEND / Environment	CCS
Rev. Paul Seabrook	Foundation governor (reappointed 8 July 2019)	RE / Attendance	CCS
Paul Stanley	Headteacher – long term ill-health absence. Resigned 22 August 2019	Leadership	
Mary Wilson	Acting deputy head associate governor	SEND & Leadership	CCS

The term of office expiry date for each governor can be found on the school website. For the the last two months of the academic year, the board ran with a parent governor vacancy.

Organisation

The full governing board meets twice per term / six times in a school year. A number of topics are discussed and agreed at these meetings. However, in order for all of the work to take place effectively, the governing board has a committee structure in place.

In 2018 – 19, the committees and their key roles were:

Children, Curriculum and Standards (CC&S): Chair – Vicky Myers

- Ensures pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those identified as vulnerable or receiving Pupil Premium, are given every opportunity to develop personally, socially and academically.
- Ensures that the curriculum remains broad and balanced, that pupils have access to a good range of extra-curricula activities, including school trips, and that there is a high quality of learning and teaching.
- Ensures that key policies such as safeguarding and behaviour meet statutory requirements, and monitors how those policies are put into practice.
- Ensures that the school continues to reflect in Church of England foundation and is distinctively Christian.

Personnel, Premises and Finance (PPF): Chair – Neil Dyas

- Sets the school budget, ensuring that the available funds are spent on the agreed priorities and areas for development.
- Monitors spending throughout the year to ensure the school does not run into deficit and evaluates the effectiveness and impact of financial decisions.

- Ensures that the premises are safe and maintained, and that there are plans to meet the future needs of the school.
- Ensures that the school is appropriately staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils

The committees meet at least once and often twice a term and have the power to make decisions on behalf of the governing board. Committee minutes are reported to the next full governing board meeting. Both committees are able to commission working groups of governors to carry out specific tasks and report back to the committee so that decisions can be made; for example the Christian Distinctiveness working group discusses the school's Christian values and their impact. As indicated in the table above, governors have lead areas to enable the board to look in more detail at specific aspects of the school. Some areas are statutory requirements e.g. safeguarding, SEND. Whilst governors are attached to a committee, the committees are 'open' to every governor. Meetings of the full governing board and committees are expertly supported by a clerk from Educator Solution's Governor Services, Clerking Service.

The governing board had access to governor training and development through Educator Solutions Governor Services, the Viscount Nelson Education Trust and the Diocese of Norwich Governor Service.

Governors have a very good record of attendance; a meeting has never been cancelled and all meetings have been 'quorate' (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). Details of governors' attendance and training records can be found on the school website.

What the governing board has achieved in 2018 -2019.

The academic year 2018-19 has probably been the most challenging year in the school's history. The positive feelings generated by the successful Ofsted inspection in June 2018 were very soon dissipated by Paul Stanley's sudden and unexpected illness in early September. Acting leadership arrangements were immediately put in place with Paul Henman becoming acting headteacher, Mary Wilson, acting deputy headteacher, and governors agreed that Sam Jones should provide leadership support. Chris Wilson-Town and Josie Rayner-Wells met regularly with Paul Henman and Mary Wilson, and throughout the year, the governing board has acted quickly to agree the support and resources necessary to ensure that the school was effectively and efficiently led and there was no impact on children and the curriculum. In addition, the board made it clear to Paul Stanley and his family that there would be no pressure on them to come to a swift decision about his position.

As the complexity and seriousness of Paul's Stanley's brain tumour became clear, as did the likelihood that he would not be returning to the school, the governing board took a more strategic view and agreed the acting leadership arrangements would continue for the remainder of the academic year. Throughout there has been good communication with children and parents, and with the Diocese and local authority, both of which have provided very helpful support and advice. The decision in July 2019 to accept Paul Stanley's resignation from the headship on serious ill-health grounds was made with great reluctance, whilst recognising that it was the only decision that could be made.

This has been a very clear example how a governing board provides strategic leadership and support

In essence, the board's usual activities link closely to the year's School Development and Improvement Plan. For 2018- 2019 these were:-

OFSTED key issues (June 2018)

- Build on work to diminish differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the few areas that remain
- Ensure that the most-able pupils are sufficiently challenged in subjects other than English and mathematics

SIAMS key issues (Feb 2016)

- Increase pupils' knowledge, understanding and first-hand experiences of the diversity to be found within Christian denominations
- Deepen pupils' understanding and appreciation of worship by increasing opportunities to write prayers and to plan and lead worship
- Ensure that the good model and structure of whole school worship is consistently used within class and year group worship
- Develop and strengthen parental understanding of the church school distinctiveness by gathering their views and including them on appropriate working parties and in discussions

For this year's Annual Governance Statement, governors have decided to focus on the work of the two committees in order to give parents an understanding of the range of their activities.

Summary of the work of the CCS committee

The committee has continued to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of children, through the analysis of performance data. The data comes from termly assessments carried out by the staff; therefore the committee is able to evaluate this information three times a year. In addition there are specific reports on the progress of Pupil Premium children, children with SEND and other 'vulnerable groups'. The committee noted the usefulness of pupil progress action plans for each class. The Year 6 SATs were considered to be better than expected, though the committee agreed that the focus for 2019 – 20 should be on improving outcomes in reading. The committee considered that performance data showed the split of Year 4 classes had a positive impact, but acknowledged that this would need to be reviewed.

The committee also considers how intervention strategies and programmes are used and the impact they have on children progress. The committee agreed the PIXL programme was not having a significant impact, considering the cost and the need to have an additional member of staff. In partnership with the PPF committee, it was decided to end the intervention programme and release the member of staff.

A variety of monitoring visits during the year demonstrated to governors the range of curriculum. In particular a monitoring visit during Book Week showed classroom doors and displays showing imagination and humour – a stimulating learning environment. In addition, the range of extra curriculum clubs the school offer have been reviewed this year with feedback from school council

Summary of the work of PPF committee

This year PPF has been busy with challenges to budgets and a new improved approach to maintenance and improvements to the school and its surroundings. Its agendas focus on Premises, People and Finance.

Premises

A new Premises Development Plan has been implemented to ensure that all areas of the school are correctly prioritised to ensure that funds are spent in the right areas. The focus is on ensuring that the school and premises are safe for the children and that, as far as possible, there is early identification and intervention to repair areas before the damage or wear becomes significant. The new build was a continued focus to ensure that all snags and issues were identified and closed off.

People

Internal staff survey was completed to ensure that the staff felt valued and they had the resources to complete their job. The responses were very positive. Staff workload and well-being is an area that continues to be monitored by the governing board, and a governor has been identified to lead on this area.

Financial

There were a number of challenges to this year's budget because of reductions in government and local authority funding. The impact was to reduce Year 5 classes from four to three. This decision was not taken lightly but it was the right thing to do to ensure that the school's finances were kept within the permitted limits. The governors were very much aware of the potential impact on the classes affected, so additional focus was placed on ensuring that the children and teachers had the right level of support. There has been further work on ensuring that the money spent at the school has the most beneficial impact for the school. Committee decisions with this focus have included approving an asset register scheme to ensure that all items of value are correctly accounted for; reviewing the use and deployment of supply teachers, especially from staffing agencies, to ensure that they are used as a last resort because of the significant additional cost to the school. There has been a continued focus on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are supported through the use of the pupil premium funding and meetings are held with the designated teacher to lead the focus on pupil premium within the school. The committee also reviews and evaluates the impact of the Sports Premium grant. The school has continued to meet external financial assessments, such as school audits and the SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standards)

Governors' future work includes -

- Appointing a permanent headteacher and leadership team
- Reviewing structures and all school related expenditure to ensure that the school continues to be effective and achieve the best outcomes for children and staff, at a time of increasing budget pressures
- Having approved the School Development and Improvement Plan for 2019 -20, monitoring and evaluating progress and outcomes against the plan.
- Filling the current governor vacancy by the end of the spring term 2020 and developing a FGB succession plan
- Becoming more visible in the school, talking to children and meeting with staff, and at parent meetings / learning reviews and school activities.
- Understanding the new SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) framework so that the school is well prepared for a future inspection.

How the governing body can be contacted.

Suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents are very welcome – please contact Chris Wilson-Town, chair of governors, via the school office. Likewise, if you would like to know more about our work or becoming a governor. In addition, you can contact Paul Henman or have an informal conversation with any of the current governors.

The full list of current governors with 'pen portraits' and further information about the governing board can be found on the Governors' page of the school website. Governors' photographs are in the main entrance to the school and will be updated.

Minutes of all scheduled and constituted governors' meetings are available and can be requested via the school office.

Chris Wilson-Town
Chair of Governors

December 2019