

Governance statement 2019–20

Annual governance statement for the Governing Body of Seacroft Grange Primary School

9th August, 2019

Further details of the matters found in this statement are contained in a series of topic-specific documents, which can be found on the governor page of the School website.

1 Roles of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of Seacroft Grange Primary School conducts its business in order to fulfil the three roles of governing bodies, as outlined in the Department for Education *Governance Handbook*, 2019:

1. ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

2 The strategic direction of the School

As was recognised at the most recent Ofsted review, which rated Seacroft Grange as a **good school**, there were radical, positive changes in 2015 – 16 and these matured further, during 2016 – 17, 2017 – 18 and 2018 – 19. Hence, the Governing Body believes that Seacroft Grange is on the right strategic path. For 2019 – 20 and beyond, we seek to continue the initial steps of the challenging journey to ultimately becoming an outstanding school. This is reflected in the School's vision:

“We want the best for and the best from everyone in our learning community”

By making the best a minimum expectation, this forms the basis of an **aspirational ethos** that is essential for the school's success, in serving a deprived community. We achieve this vision by **“investing in the Gold Standard”**, not just financially, but in everything Seacroft Grange is and does.

3 The composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body reconstituted in September 2017, to reflect the School having become a full member of the Leeds East Primary Partnership and comprises 12 Governors in total, plus an Associate Governor. Every Governor co-opted to the Governing Body was selected on the basis of the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the School. All of the non-staff Governors have been appointed in the period November, 2014 to February, 2019. The number of Governors in each category is determined through the *Instrument of Government* and is currently:

Role	Member(s)
Foundation Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Prof. William Gale (Chair)■ Vacant
Co-opted Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ms. Jo Fiddes■ Ms. Ellen Moss■ Mr. Richard Selfridge (Vice Chair)■ Vacant
Elected Parent Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ms. Bernadeta Jakaitis■ Ms. Kerry Kelso
Local Authority Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Mr. David Jenkins
Senior leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Mr. Chris Florey (Headteacher)■ Ms. Hannah Cloke (Deputy Head)
Elected Staff Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ms. Kathryn Horrex
Associate Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ms. Janine Wilson

There is currently two vacancies on the Governing Body, one for a Foundation Governor and the other for a Co-opted Governor.

4 Meetings of the Governing Body

The full Governing Body meets four times a year for standing meetings, with additional *ad hoc* meetings, as needed to address specific topics. There are also five Governing Body committees, which have delegated authority and meet three times a year:

- Education and Standards;
- Pupil Welfare and Community Support;
- Personnel and Resources;
- Continuous Improvement;

- **Head's Performance Management Review**, which also serves as a staff pay committee.

All meetings are clerked by a trained professional clerk. The only exceptions are the:

- Continuous Improvement Committee, which operates using a workshop format, with a single in depth agenda item, which is clerked by the Chair;
- Annual Data Meeting of the full Governing Body, which focuses on gaining insight into the School's data and as such does not have formal business;
- Head's Performance Management Review, which is supported by a Senior School Improvement Advisor, who prepares the minutes.

5 Attendance at meetings

Current Governors attend consistently and participate actively in meetings. Governors only miss meetings with good reason. Those Governors who were struggling to attend meetings, due to other commitments, have left the Governing Body. Apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis. Governors are aware, through the Governor Code of Conduct, that non-attendance, which includes apologies not being accepted, will result in the removal of a Governor, six months from the date of first non-attendance.

6 Governing Body priorities

6.1 Top level priorities

1. Educational outcomes, encompassing both attainment and progress.
2. Quality first teaching, that delivers "1" throughout the school.
3. Effective leadership, without which "2" will not occur.
4. Governance that drives "1" to "3" forward.

6.2 Key enablers

- a. Making sure that the children are learning ready, which implies that:
 - a.i. children attend fully;
 - a.ii. behaviour is addressed effectively (including low-level behaviour) and;
 - a.iii. children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported appropriately.
- b. Safeguarding children in the School and the broader educational environment.
- c. Effective financial management, such that spending has maximum impact on our top level priorities.

6.3 Specific priorities for 2019 — 20

- i. Further embed the LEAP priorities, throughout everything the School does. The LEAP priorities are:
 - Leadership: Quality and performance of extended leadership.
 - Excellence in reading, writing and mathematics: Through accelerated pro-

- gress, seek to bring the percentage of children, who achieve age related expectation, in line with that nationally.
- Attendance: Bring attendance in line with that nationally, by focusing on parentally endorsed absence.
 - Progress: A major focus on increasing the percentage of children, with a good level of development, in the early years foundation stage. Then building on this through key stage 1 and into key stage 2.
- ii. Continue those changes needed, per Ofsted, for Seacroft Grange to ultimately become an outstanding school:
- i.1. by continuing a relentless, systematic and strategic focus on quality first teaching and standards, gradually increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of years 2 and 6;
 - i.ii. by focusing on oracy at all levels, increase the confidence of pupils in explaining their learning and expressing their views, such that those in key stage 2 do so freely and fluently;
 - i.iii. further enhance the role, support and training of distributed leaders throughout the School, so that they fully can evaluate the impact of actions and where needed bring about improvements;
 - i.iii. work with parents to provide them with clarity on the School's approach to home learning and support them to maximise the value added by home learning for their children.

7 Effectiveness of the Governing Body

The Governing Body met with Governor Support Services (GSS), in January 2016, for an “External Review of Governance — One Year On” update and to analyse systematically the current performance of the Governing Body. It was recognised that the Governing Body had made enormous strides in 2015.

The review update concluded that the Governing Body should continue on the course now set. Specific recommendations were made for training in complaints procedures and finance, both of which have been undertaken, with refreshing where appropriate. Whole Governing Body training is used for crosscutting matters, such as safeguarding. Individual Governors receive training relevant to their assigned role on the Governing Body. Training needs have been identified, based on the outcomes of periodic skills audits, the most recent of which occurred in 2018–19. A training plan was then formulated, in light of these needs and is refreshed annually.

The Governors recognise the importance of further deepening their knowledge of and impact on the School's pupil progress and attainment data and for 2016–17 onwards therefore instituted an annual *data evening*, at which Governors seek to improve their insight (and hence influence) into:

1. What the School's data are, in detail.
2. The underlying story of why the data are that way.
3. What can be done to improve both progress and attainment?

The Governing body periodically analyses its performance in terms of the:

- Competency Framework for Governance, published in 2017 by the Department for Education and the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

- Twenty questions, posed in 2015 by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Education Governance and Leadership.

8 Impact

- Bringing Seacroft Grange into the Leeds East Primary Partnership (LEPP), first as an associate member and now a full member, to enable the School to benefit from collaboration and sharing of best practice with other schools that understand and seek to respond to the context of Leeds East.
- The Governing Body recruited a new Headteacher in September 2015, following the previous Headteacher's relocation. The current Headteacher is an individual with the vision, leadership skills, experience as Deputy Head in a successful school in another deprived area and ability to carry the broad School community with them, needed for the future success of the School.
- The Governing Body had a pivotal role in the recruitment of a new Deputy Headteacher, starting in September 2017. We have recruited an individual with a combination of leadership experience and having taken on significant external roles.
- Driving forward the development of distributed leadership.
- Promoting aspiration, through the School vision and ethos (captured in the Vision 2020 document on this web site) and challenging the Head to translate this into practical action by means of the *Gold Standard*.
- Producing the right blend of evolutionary and revolutionary change.
- Targeted, strategic investment in:
 - ◆ ICT for both classroom learning and information systems;
 - ◆ an outdoor area for EYFS and year 1, targeted especially at children who are below age related expectation, on entry to the School;
 - ◆ the 84 experiences programme to overcome experience impoverishment and hence difficulties with creative writing;
 - ◆ renovation, enabling the previous behaviour unit to become the "Gateway to Gold", with a positive, rather than punitive message about behaviour;
 - ◆ renovation of the School hall;
 - ◆ renovation of individual classrooms;
 - ◆ ongoing improvements to the School's infrastructure (e.g. new smart boards and classroom furniture), to provide both children and staff with a quality learning environment.
- Driving forward improvements in how the School Development Plan is structured.
- Instituting financial checks and balances and focusing spending on specific educational priorities, identified in the *School Development Plan*.
- Reforming the Pupil Premium.
- Introducing new ways of thinking about strategy.
- The Governing Body's ongoing challenge to the Head reveals opportunities for improving various aspects of how the School operates. For example, we recog-

nised that more concise, focused reports would both be of greater utility to parents and would free up staff and leadership time.

9 Ofsted prediction

The school was last inspected in June, 2016, where it received a good improvement judgement. The school is undertaking the initial steps of the challenging journey towards becoming an outstanding school.