

Annual Governance Statement

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/16

HOLME ST CUTHBERT SCHOOL



The Department for Education requires that Governing Bodies publish an annual statement to parents. Governing Bodies are the key strategic decision makers and vision setters in every school and academy and play a major part in the school's accountability. Governing Bodies have a vital role to play in driving up school and pupil performance and ensuring that resources are used well to ensure every child has the best possible education.

As the Governing Body of Holme St Cuthbert School we are proud of the school and its warm, welcoming, inclusive and strong family atmosphere. We fully support the school vision – 'A Community of Learning - Growing Together

In accordance with the Government's requirements the Governing Body at Holme St Cuthbert School concentrates on the three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Head teacher 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

In order to do this during the academic year 2015/2016 the Governing Body was made up of 12 governors as follows:

4 Parent Governors appointed by ballot of the parents at the school,

1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority,

2 Staff Governors appointed by ballot of the staff,

1 Head teacher,

3 Community Governors appointed by the Governing Body

School governors are all volunteers and give a huge amount of their time for the benefit of the children. Governors (aside from the Head teacher) are all appointed, they are independent and have equal status to each other and while they may represent the views of their appointing body, they act first and foremost in the best interests of the school.

A Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the Governing Body and both work closely with the Head teacher and the Clerk. A professional Clerk is appointed who organises the meetings, takes minutes and follows up on any actions. The Clerk works closely with the Chair and Head teacher and advises on procedural matters and therefore plays a pivotal role in the work of the Governing Body.

During the school year 2015/16 the Governing Body was structured in accordance with the Circle method. This means that there are no committees, with the exception of the Appraisal Committee, Finance & Curriculum, which enables the whole Governing Body to take a broader and more informed holistic view of the school. Other advantages include the reduction in the number of evening meetings for the Head teacher, thus improving the work/life balance; no repetition of information; more opportunities for governors to be fully informed and able to act more strategically; and the improved use of governor skills by matching visits to skill sets and interests. A monitoring timetable is in place so Governors visit school & monitor different aspects of school life in accordance with the School Improvement Plan. We have numerous monitoring forms and governors choose the relevant one for their monitoring.

During 2015/16 the Governing Body met 6 times, the Head teachers Appraisal Committee met once & the Curriculum committee at least 4 times. There were numerous monitoring visits undertaken and governors also visited informally supporting school events such as plays, curriculum evenings and 'Friends' evenings. Furthermore the Chair of Governors met the Head teacher and Clerk on a regular basis.

The Head teacher's Appraisal Committee is supported by an external advisor. Additionally there is a facility to bring together small panel/committees as and when needed. The Governing Body works together with Oughterside Primary School, in order that we may collaborate and support each other as necessary. The Governing Body and the committees all have clear terms of reference.

The Governing Body takes part in the annual cycle of school improvement by its interpretation and analysis of school data including, government data (RAISEONLINE), Phonics Screening Check, Baseline Assessment, Ofsted Data Dashboard and regular internal school assessment data. Through data analysis pupil progress and attainment is scrutinised and vulnerable groups including pupil premium children are closely monitored. Data monitoring together with external reports such as Ofsted mean that the Governors play an active role in the development of the annual School Improvement Plan. Governors meeting yearly to input information for the following years SIP.

Governors are also expected to undertake training to fulfil and improve their role. During 2015/16 a number of courses were undertaken individually and all new governors attended governor induction training run by the Local Authority or were given Powerpoint displays of previous training. The Governing Body as a whole received training on Child Protection, Safeguarding and PHSE/British Values and Radicalisation. **The major focus for the Governing Body in the last 12 months has been on progress and attainment in reading using the Reading Intervention Programme and changes in EYFS & KS1 area.**

Governors have also been heavily involved in decisions on the outdoor area development & future development. This year as in the SIP we have successfully completed a Fairy Garden & Mud kitchen area with decking.

The Governing Body annually approves a 3 year school budget and regularly monitors the in-year budget. It works closely with the school finance officers and the Local Authority Schools Financial Services. Close scrutiny of the budget during the financial year 2015/16 meant that the year-end outturn resulted in a positive balance. During the last school year the outdoor area was greatly developed with a new climbing area, fairy garden & mud kitchen area. Lockers were purchased so that all children had their own locker. The two larger classrooms were re-designed & painted. In 2016/17 Friends are helping fund 3 new interactive boards which will greatly improve workable IT provision for children & staff.

Looking forward to 2016/17 the Governing Body will continue in the vision & ethos of the school. Some governors terms of office will be up so new governors will be appointed to provide an involving working group.

This report is just a snapshot of the activities and work that go on within the school by the incredibly strong team of dedicated staff and governors. Being a governor is a fulfilling role and if you would like to know more about the work of the governing body or have any comments/questions in respect of this statement please email the Clerk: admin@hstcuth.cumbria.sch.uk.