

Greenfields Community Primary School Governing Board

Governance Impact Statement 2018/19

1. Governing Board

In 2018/19 Greenfields had a Governing Board of 15 governors, comprising:

- Parent Governors x 2
- Foundation Governors x 2
- Co-opted Governors x 8
- Headteacher Governor
- Staff Governor
- Local Authority Governor

These governors bring a wide range of experience and skills. At our most recent Ofsted monitoring visit in June 2017, HMI found that:

“Governors are committed to the ongoing success of the school. They show a willingness to review their own performance and develop further expertise. They willingly took part in a review of governance in 2014. As a result, roles have been clarified and systems to check progress have been intensified. The chair makes new governors clearly aware of the demands of the role, such as the need to be present at key school occasions, for example enquiry learning reflection weeks. Appropriate committee structures are in place to monitor standards and finance. The headteacher provides governors with detailed but accessible half-termly updates on pupils’ progress. They explore this progress information in detail and use the expertise of local authority partners to check the accuracy of the information they receive. Governors have defined roles for key areas such as safeguarding and they carry out their responsibilities diligently.”

The GB will be considering proposals, in September, to reduce the size of the board. This is in line with recommendations made when the board reconstituted in 2015 and is part of the Governance Action Plan (GAP).

The GB operates with a chair and two vice-chairs. The vice-chairs each chair one of the two main committees. Other governors take on the committee vice-chair and clerking roles, as part of our approach to building the capacity of the GB.

We have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- b. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- c. Overseeing the school’s finances to make sure money is well spent.

In order to carry out this work we:

- work closely with the school staff team
- have six full Governing Board meetings a year; two in each term. Three of these are full business meetings and three are topic-based meetings. These were agreed as part of last year’s GAP. The topic based meetings will allow governors to focus on specific pieces of work, in greater depth. Governors also participate in school self-evaluation meetings with staff.
- work on committees to which the Governing Board has delegated key areas of responsibility. These meet on a regular basis and report in writing to the full Governing Board.
- visit the school
- engage in appropriate training

2. Activity & Impact in 2018/19

Activity	Outcomes/Impact
<p>We have taken part in whole school priority setting with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff</p>	<p>Governors help to ensure that the school focuses on key improvement priorities and bring another perspective to the discussions. They then feel greater ownership of these shared priorities and can feel confident discussing them with stakeholders and partners.</p> <p>Notable achievements this year have been the school being awarded Quality Marks in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion • Art • PE & School Sport • Healthy Schools (including PSHE)
<p>We have fulfilled all of our safeguarding duties</p>	<p>All statutory checks have been diligently carried out – including the Single Central Record and the annual Local Authority Safeguarding Audit. Governors have engaged in both whole-school training and specific governor sessions. The Child Protection Policy is fully up to date.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Governor had termly meetings with the Headteacher, in her role as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.</p>
<p>We have reviewed the GB to ensure continued fitness for purpose</p>	<p>The Governance Action Plan (GAP) has been monitored throughout the year. As part of this year's GAP, governors are examining the constitution of the GB, with a view to reducing the size, in line with most schools of this size.</p>
<p>We have further developed our Governor Handbook</p>	<p>This guides how we work and defines our strategic role to complement the operational/management role of the SLT</p>
<p>We have continued to hold an additional full GB event to focus on data analysis</p>	<p>This event has allowed governors to undertake rigorous examination of the data and ask challenging questions to help the school to continue its improvement journey. In 2019/20, this session will be cemented into the work programme as one of the three new topic based GB meetings. Governors are improving their level of challenge in this area.</p>
<p>We have prepared and delivered joint reports, with key staff, covering key areas such as Safeguarding; SEN; Pupil Premium; and PE Funding</p>	<p>These areas are evaluated for impact, to ensure that these resources are being effectively targeted and help pupils to progress and achieve</p>

Activity	Outcomes/Impact
<p>We have taken part in staff recruitment.</p> <p>Governors are involved across the range of staff appointments, as we believe that all staff are integral to the success of the school.</p>	<p>We are very clear that when we recruit, new staff must have the potential to take us to the next level. Processes are robust. This year, we have made two new teaching appointments, appointed a new Out of Hours Service manager and strengthened the capacity in the school office.</p>
<p>We have sought to improve stakeholder engagement.</p>	<p>Governors attend parents' evenings and engage parents, carers and pupils in discussion around key issues. Each term has a different focus but the same simple questions: "What works well?"; "What could be better?" The outcomes feed into the discussion for school priorities. Although this has been relatively successful, governors are looking at new ways to improve engagement in the 2019/20 GAP.</p>
<p>We have attended key assemblies such as the Remembrance Assembly; Star Achievers assemblies and Greenfields' University Graduations</p>	<p>Governors help school to celebrate key achievements; mark important events; and have the opportunity to engage with members of our wider community.</p>
<p>We have accompanied external visits</p>	<p>Governors interact regularly with staff and pupils. They are able to see the learning that is taking place and how it is being achieved. This leads to more informed discussion in GB and with school leaders.</p>
<p>We have set and monitored challenging targets for the Headteacher</p>	<p>Three governors, working with the School Development Partner, set the performance objectives and then monitor/support during the year. Objectives are always linked to the school's priorities and designed to drive improvement. Governors are increasing their effectiveness in carrying out the 'critical friend'/'</p>
<p>We have undertaken moderation, observation activities</p>	<p>These include KS1 writing moderation sessions and meetings with the School Development Partner – both at GB meetings and other sessions</p>
<p>We have taken part in sessions to understand more about the 'daily life' of the school</p>	<p>This includes activities such as National Poetry Day; National Story Telling week; Reflection Weeks; Smart Weeks; The North Tyneside Dance Festival.</p>
<p>We have taken part in regional conferences</p>	<p>We involve ourselves in Schools NorthEast events, as well as those organised by the NGA and the Local Authority. These events help to improve our skills and knowledge. The networking opportunities allow us to access and learn from best practice, outside of our immediate school.</p>

3. Budget Management

Governors have helped to ensure that the school budget balances, whilst maximising resources available for the provision. In most years, there is a small surplus that governors ensure is spent to the benefit of our pupils. We have recently agreed to buy new interactive whiteboards for all classrooms throughout school and to buy new laptop computers/tablets for the 4 classes in upper key stage 2.

We established new systems and payment mechanisms to increase the efficiency of our Out of Hours provision.

Each year, the GB submits a document to the Local Authority by 31 January, showing that we meet the Schools Financial Values Standard (SFVS). This involves a process of self assessment to ensure that all spending and budgeting decisions are based on prudent and careful housekeeping. It also assists us to ensure our resources are targeted on our identified priorities. The LA Auditor commented on this year's submission:

"Thanks for your SFVS and supporting documents. As usual all areas are well supported in your comprehensive response."

4. Governance Improvement Priorities for 2019/20

- Improve Engagement with Partners & Stakeholders
 - Expanded Parents'/Stakeholders' Survey
 - Governor Pen Pictures for website
 - Governor Newsletter
 - Greater interaction with School Council

- Strengthening the Governing Board
 - Reconstitution of the GB
 - Re-defining the criteria for Co-opted Governors

Harry Corlett

Chair of Governing Board

September 2019