

SEDBERGH PRIMARY SCHOOL ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

JULY 2017

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the core strategic functions of the Sedbergh Primary School governing body are:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**
- 2. Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

Governance Arrangements

The governing body of Sedbergh Primary School re-constituted in 2016 and is now made up of 2 staff governors (including the head teacher), 3 elected parent governors, 1 Local Authority (LA) governor and 6 co-opted governors. Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body and are people who, in the opinion of the governing body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The current governing body has a wealth of different skills and backgrounds. We have welcomed several members of the local community as co-opted and LA governors, including a current governor from Settlebeck School. At present we have one vacancy for a co-opted governor.

The full governing body meets 6 times a year and we have 2 committees who meet regularly and then report back. We have a curriculum and staffing committee and a finance and resources committee both of which have full terms of reference. We also have a specific safeguarding governor and governors with responsibility for SEN and health and safety. A pay panel consisting of chair of governors, chairs of both committees and the head teacher meet once a year following staff appraisal to agree on staff pay. There is a list of governors at the end of this document.

Attendance record of governors

Governors have excellent attendance at meetings and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not "quorate" (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).

What we have done this year

In September we welcomed our new headteacher, Matthew Towe. Three weeks later Ofsted inspected the school and judged the school to be "Good" in all key areas. They recognised that "The governing body has undergone significant change since the time of the previous inspection. Much of the school's improvement has come about because the governing body has tackled previous weaknesses in leadership and teaching. "

The Ofsted report included the following comments:

- Governors have been on a journey of improvement since the time of the last inspection and through that process have strengthened their role and impact significantly.
- Governors responded constructively to the review of governance that took place following the last inspection, and the governing body was reconstituted in July 2015.
- The new chair and vice-chair of the governing body have demonstrated that they are very committed to change and improvement but, at the same time, they have been careful to base their decision-making on a firm and robust understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they are able to support and challenge school leaders effectively.

- The governing body took decisive action to deal with weak leadership and teaching and has worked effectively to continue this improvement with the new headteacher.
- Governors are well organised and collectively provide a wide range of relevant skills and experience which helps to drive improvement. They have received effective training and support from the local authority, which has been valuable and timely.
- The chair and vice-chair of the governing body share the passion and determination of school leaders to continue to strengthen the school's performance at all levels.

The chair and vice chair of governors regularly attend Strategic Improvement meetings with the school's senior leadership team and LA advisors. Governors also attend staff meetings and have taken part, together with the staff, in creating the School Development Plan. We visit the school to meet with subject leaders, take part in learning walks and book scrutinies, watch assemblies and observe school council in order to monitor progress towards targets on the School Development Plan.

The curriculum and staffing committee spend time discussing key data, the results of pupil achievement and progress, so that we can be sure that the school is on track to fulfil its ambitious targets for all pupils. We are also concerned about our "vulnerable groups" of children and focus on how the Pupil Premium Grant is being spent by the school and what impact this has on their outcomes.

The finance and resources committee looks at the maintenance and development of the school premises, and makes decisions about how the school should use the budget. Early in the summer term, the finance and resources committee approved the 2017/18 budget plan for the school. The school management have budgeted carefully, taking into account a falling role over the next two years.

Governors are also particularly concerned about safeguarding and we have a nominated governor for safeguarding (Mrs Atkins) who gives a termly report to the governors about any safeguarding matters. Two governors, Mrs Atkins and Mrs Houlden, also performed a safeguarding audit with staff in the autumn term.

Last year, the governing body performed a full external review with help from the Local Authority. A parent, student and staff questionnaire has also been carried out this year and the answers received have been collated and considered by governors. School management have planned actions in response to the answers received.

One of the roles for the governors is reviewing and agreeing school policies, and this year we have considered a number of key policies including Child Protection.

The governors have all attended training relevant to their monitoring duties and the majority have completed training on RAISE Online, Safer Recruitment and the Channel General Awareness module with respect to the PREVENT programme. The chair and vice chair have previously attended Local and Cumbrian Alliance System Leader conferences, attended the Academies Show last November and have fostered links with other local primary schools' governing bodies.

Minutes of governing body and committee meetings are public documents- please ask at the school office if you would like to see any of the minutes of our meetings.

Future plans for the governors

Several of our governors, including the chair and vice chairs, have exceeded their initial term of 4 years and have stated their intention to pass on the duties at the end of this academic year. Therefore, we have been advertising for new interest and have clear vision of desirable skills after consideration of the skills matrix completed by all governors earlier this year. Jonathan Taylor, has subsequently been elected as the new

chair of governors on July 13th 2017, after spending six months completing a training course on being the chair of a governing body, and Stephen Hall was elected as vice chair.

How you can contact the governing body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the chair of governors, Jonathan Taylor, via the school office. Governors also attend parents’ evenings where we would be happy to chat with you.

You can see the full list of governors, their attendance at meetings and more information about what we do, on the governors’ page of the school website.

Sedbergh Primary School Governing Body

Governor

Mr Matthew Towe

Mrs Sophie Lawson

Mrs Nicola Jermy

Mr Andy Newbold

Mrs Anna Atkins

Mrs Tracy Houlden

Mrs Stephen Hall

Mr Jonathan Taylor

Mrs Pat Tunna

Ms Dorothy Vernon

Mr Steve Cayley

Karen Little

Category

Head teacher

Chair of Governors until July 2017, Parent

Chair of C&S, Co-opted

Chair of F&R, Parent

Safeguarding, Co-opted

Co-opted

Vice chair from July 2017, Parent

Chair of Governors from July 2017, Parent

LA

SEN, Co-opted

Staff

Clerk to Governors