

What is a Governing Board?

The governing board exists to make sure that the school runs effectively. It is a strategic role and acts as a check and balance on the performance of the school and the headteacher, who runs the school on a day-to-day basis.

The core functions of our governing board are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of the staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
4. Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

Governors Report – 2022/2023

The past year has been one of renewal and refreshment for our governing board. We have successfully re-established our two committees, the Resources Committee which looks after finances, premises, staffing and health and safety; and the Pupil Progress Committee, which oversees the curriculum and pupils' academic progress. The Resources committee meets four times a year, to coincide with the financial milestones throughout the school year and the Pupil Progress Committee meets twice a term. Both committees monitor their respective areas of responsibility on a regular basis and report back to the full governing body, which meets twice a term.

Once again, we have welcomed several new governors to the governing board during this past year.

Following the departure of Tracy Thompson at the end of last year, we are delighted that Caryl Shephard has joined the board as our new staff governor. Caryl has been at the school since 2015 and she teaches Class 4 (Years 5 and 6). Caryl's passion is music and she is also music co-ordinator in the school. As an experienced teacher she will provide back up and support to Mari and will act as staff liaison with the governing board. Caryl also serves on the Pupil Progress Committee.

This year we were sad to say goodbye to our two longest-serving governors, Jo Johnson and Jeremy Durant. Their experience will be missed and we are most grateful to both of them for staying on during the changes last year and providing us with continuity and stability whilst we transitioned to our new governing board.

Charles Mackain-Bremner, has very kindly agreed to join us as our new parent governor. Charles lives in Scagglethorpe and has two children, one of whom is currently at Settrington School and one of whom left us last year to go to senior school. Charles sits on the Resources Committee and is our link governor for Health & Safety.

We also say hello to Kelly Reppold, Head Teacher at Malton Primary School, who joins us as a Co-opted governor. We are most fortunate to have two head teachers in addition to Mari on our governing board and their shared experiences and combined best practice can only benefit our pupils and our school. Kelly has kindly agreed to chair our Resources Committee and is our link governor for the Research School.

Our Governing Board currently consists of:

Sue Blagden – Chair, Safeguarding Governor

Helen Patterson – Vice Chair, Chair of FOCAS

Helen Smith – SEND Link Governor, Chair of Pupil Progress Committee

Karen Storey – Ex-officio Foundation Governor

Kelly Reppold – Chair of Resources Committee, Research School Link Governor

Charles Mackain-Bremner – Parent governor, Health & Safety Link governor

Mari Palmer – Headteacher

Caryl Shepard – Staff Governor

Helen Lowdell – Clerk to the Governors

We still have a vacancy for a Foundation governor. However, we are hoping that the new vicar who will be joining the parish over the summer will be agreeable to joining our board in this role.

Our vision for the school – and how we'll get there

The governing board is responsible for setting the school's vision (what the school will look like in three to five years' time) and strategy (what the school will do to get there).

Last September, the governing board began a review of our longer term strategy to ensure that our vision and how we will get there will be fit for future purpose. Our vision and our values were discussed and agreed at a meeting in September and these values were shared with our stakeholders and applied across all elements of the School Development Plan.

Now that we have a more stable governing board, it is our intention this year to build on these values and agree our longer term strategic priorities to assure the future of the school. In particular, we will need to look at how to grow the school to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of pupils. In the short to medium term, our biggest challenge is a lack of physical space and the governing board is very conscious that the current school premises can no longer reasonably accommodate the number of children and adults we are being asked to welcome into our school.

We are also obliged as a governing board to accept that academisation is probably the best option to ensure the future of our school. In my last annual report, I stated our intention of looking at how best to integrate seamlessly into whichever multi-academy trust most closely fits our own Christian ethos and our values. To this end, governors have attended a programme of presentations throughout the year by a variety of academy trusts and federations who seek to be potential future partners for our school. This coming year, we will build on what we have learned; the governing board will now undertake a rigorous selection process to narrow down the potential list of 'targets' and, ultimately, agree our choice of academy trust that best fits our unique and wonderful school.

This process will begin with a governors' full strategy day at the start of next term and will continue throughout the year as we refine our plans and narrow down our options. We will keep parents informed on a regular basis and the board would welcome any feedback.

The best education for all pupils

The governing board is responsible for holding the headteacher to account for the education of pupils and the management of staff. The mechanics of this process were outlined in my last annual report to parents so I will not repeat them again here. I will however say that Mrs Palmer and her staff have worked tirelessly to fully embed the excellent new curriculum that they have designed

and implemented and this curriculum is now beginning to prove itself as the academic results come through and the performance of our children can once again be objectively measured. Our SATs results for both KS1 and KS2 were largely positive and the staff and governors were pleased to note that all our children performed as expected or better than expected in all subject areas. It is important to remind ourselves that not all children are academic and not all children will excel at every subject. As a nurturing school with a broad church, we seek to bring the best out of each child and ensure every child is valued for their own individual worth.

Collective worship is a cornerstone of our faith and we have continued to celebrate our Christian values and demonstrate our commitment to the Christian faith regularly at school. However, we also need to give special thanks this year to Canon Veronica James who has very kindly led some of our church services and ensured that, in the interregnum between vicars, the children have had a continuity of religious guidance and wisdom and have felt the presence of God through attending the village church. Again, our Harvest Festival, Carol Service and Easter Service, together with our Leavers' Service have all been made possible by the generous leadership and guidance of Canon Veronica and we are truly in her debt.

We are in the fortunate position of once again having more applications to join the school than we have places available. Our pupil numbers are currently at 87. 10 pupils will leave us this term and we will welcome 10 new starters next year, keeping our roll at 87. However, our current facilities are still only designed for 63 pupils, so as I have already outlined, space is at a premium.

The governors have reviewed and approved all statutory policies and familiarised themselves with other school policies throughout the year. The governing body has also approved the budget and monitored expenditure against budget. We are delighted that the school will once again benefit from Research school funds and from the knowledge and expertise that this association brings.

The future

The anticipated SIAMs and OFSTED inspections have still not materialised! They are expected imminently and will undoubtedly overshadow much of school life for a brief spell when they finally arrive next year. This will put added pressure on a staff body already working at or near their limits and these inspections will ask a lot of the children as well. However, the governing board is confident that the school is now 'inspection-ready' and the hard work and dedication of Mari and her team will pay off. Our children have the benefit of a nurturing, happy atmosphere conducive to positive learning and a professional and supportive staff that is second to none. In our school, everyone matters.

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.
Love your neighbour as yourself.*

Sue Blagden
Chair of Governors.

July 2023.