

Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 for the Governing Body of Albemarle Primary School

There are three parts to the Department for Education's expectations of school Governing Bodies:

- Maintenance of the school's strategic vision and direction;
- Performance management of the Headteacher;
- Ensuring that school finances are looked after and used well.

These involve holding the school to account and offering the informed support and encouragement, which will enable it to thrive and secure the highest levels of success for all the students entrusted to us.

A. Governance arrangements

There are thirteen places in total on the Governing Body, there were several changes in the membership of the Governing Body throughout the year with the appointment of a new Staff Governor, a partnership governor and 2 Co-Opted Governors. Following the resignation of the Chair of Governors Jenny Grafton last November Annette Watson was appointed Chair of Governors with effect from 5th December. Currently there is a vacancy for a Co-opted governor which it is hoped will be filled early in the next academic year.

- 2 Parent governors
Alessandro Ricevuti (term of office 06/07/2023 to 05/07/2027)
Charlene Hinds (term of office 04/11/2024 to 03/11/2028)
- 1 Local Authority governor
Ms Chloe Horn (term of office 21/03/2024 to 20/03/2028)
- 1 Staff governor
Ms Jessie Maoza (term of office 06/01/2025 to 05/01/2029)
- 1 Head Teacher governor
Ms Natasha Mold (term of office 01/09/2024 to 31/08/2024)
- 2 Partnership governors
Ms Jenny Grafton (term of office 21/03/2024 to 18/11/2024)
Mr Will Pope (term of office 21/03/2024 to 20/03/2028)
Rev Giacomo (Jack) Belloli (term of office 05/12/2024 to 04/12/2028)
- 6 Co-opted governors
Ms Donna Goodsell (term of office 27/06/2024 to 26/06/2028)
Ms Catherine Pearson (term of office 02/03/2023 to 01/03/2027)
Mr Raghav Kapur (term of office 07/12/2023 to 06/12/2027)
Jason McKinlay (term of office 05/12/2024 to 04/12/2028)
Annette Watson (term of office 03/10/2024 to 02/10/2028)

There are a range of requirements placed upon all governors:

- A commitment to the school's vision and ethos, and the success of all our children.
- Be available to attend both Full Governors and Committees Meetings
- A willingness to learn and a capacity to engage forensic curiosity and analytical skills.
- Good inter-personal skills, the ability to work professionally as part of a team and take collective responsibility for decisions.
- Adequate skills in literacy and numeracy to interrogate critical data.
- Both individually and collectively, be well informed, undergo induction and ongoing training and have clear areas of responsibility
- Health, welfare and safeguarding expertise and oversight.
- Informed insight into the needs of the local and regional economy.
- Understanding of Governance and senior management in schools.
- Expertise in strategic planning and project management.
- Specialist knowledge of Human Resource Management and legislation.

- Performance management and appraisal.
- High-level budget planning and strategic financial management.
- Management of premises and facilities.
- Links with the local business and community organisations.

There are termly meetings of the full Governing Body and two committees covering Resources and Curriculum and Safeguarding. Governors are required to undertake statutory training and in addition complete specialist training provided by the Local Authority, members of the school's leadership team, and accessing outside provision offered online to support them in their role. All governors are required to complete a variety of compliance activities including a declaration of their business or other personal interests. This is detailed in the Register of Business or Pecuniary Interests which is available on the school website.

B. Attendance record of governors

A record of our attendance at meetings is kept by the Clerk and is available on the school website. This is to ensure that all meetings are quorate (this means that more than fifty per cent of voting members must be in attendance) to ensure that decisions can be made. To date no meetings have failed to meet this quoracy requirement.

C. Central themes ongoing from year to year

Issues identified in our Self Evaluation Form (SEF) continue to inform our focus on:

1. Quality of Education
2. Behaviour and Attitudes
3. Personal Development
4. Leadership and Management
5. Quality of Education in Early Years
6. Overall Effectiveness

External advisors and Improvement Partners visit the school to ensure continued improvement and progress, and to provide support to our Head teacher. Members of the school's Leadership Team regularly attend Governing Body meetings to brief on their specific areas of responsibility, with Governors both supporting and challenging information given and initiatives in place to ensure continued progress and use of best practice. The School Development Plan and SEF are regularly reviewed by both the full Governing Body and committees both to understand strategy and to evaluate progress against priorities. The Safeguarding Link Governor meets regularly with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, with a standing Safeguarding item being included on full Governing Body agendas for generic reporting as appropriate.

D. A year of change

2024/25 has been yet another year of change for Albemarle although the Governing Board are hoping for a more stable year ahead. The resignation of Mr Rob Farrell in Summer 2024 led to a selection process which resulted in the appointment of Ms Natasha Mold as Interim Headteacher with effect from 1 September 2024. The governors are very grateful to Ms Mold for taking on this role at short notice and for the guidance and insight she provided.

In the Spring term the Governing Board focussed on the recruitment of a permanent Headteacher which led to the appointment of Ms Emilie Haston who joins the school on 1 September. Ms Haston is an experienced Headteacher who will provide the leadership and stability that the school needs to move forward.

Governors have focussed on getting to know staff through visiting the school in their link governor roles and supporting the school at various informal events.

To ensure all pupils can take advantage of the quality teaching and various extra curricula activities the Governing Board has worked with the school to improve attendance, this will continue to be a priority going forward. The Governing Board supported the school in improving the behaviour for learning and ensuring that the curriculum met the learning needs of all pupils including improving the outcomes in writing. These will remain areas of foci for the school.

In common with other schools the pressure on finances means that the Governing Board are monitoring income and expenditure on a regular basis to ensure that this is in line with the budget.

E. Curriculum & Safeguarding Committee

In 2024/25, the Curriculum and Safeguarding Committee looked at specific priorities in the School Development Plan, in particular writing, behaviour and attendance. Alongside, the Committee focused on:

- Reviewing key data for early years, KS1 and KS2, to understand the progress of the school on attainment, discuss areas for focus, and benchmark our position against schools nationally and across Wandsworth.
- Reviewing a number of subject audits, including those for design and technology and history, and we agreed updates to policies, including our policy on relationships and sex education.
- Regular conversations about safeguarding and inclusion, including support for our pupils with SEND needs, to understand key issues, challenges and the range of development and support the school offers to help our children thrive.

F. Resources

In 2024/25, the Resources Committee worked closely with the interim Head Teacher, School Business Manager, and other key stakeholders to cover the following key areas:

- Ongoing support for the school in effectively managing its budget. This included ongoing monitoring of actual income and costs against projections, which was done every term in informal meetings and during every Resources Committee meeting.
- Support for the school on staffing needs, in particular, specialists dealing in behaviour and special needs.
- Monitoring the support being provided in the move to the new Financial System (Access) and the associated support provided by the chosen vendor
- Maintaining a contracts and premises register so that all parties are aware of upcoming renewals, expenses and potential risks that need to be considered.

The Committee looks forward to working closely with the new Head Teacher during the 2025/26 financial and academic year as we continue to build on the activities above.

The Governors look forward to supporting the school in the coming year and to getting to know those in the wider school community.

How to contact your Governing Body

Information about the board is available on the school website. You can contact us c/o the school:

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