

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Bentham C P School

September 2023

Academic Year 2023/2024

Governance Arrangements

Following an extensive Knowledge and Skills Audit during September 2019 the Governing Body of Bentham C P School re-constituted with the intention of making the Board more effective.

The Board of Governors is made up of (as per Instrument of Government)
Headteacher

1 Local Authority Governor

1 Staff Governor (Elected)

2 Parent Governors (Elected)

4 Co-opted Governors

Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are members who, in the opinion of the Board, have the necessary skills and knowledge required to effectively contribute to the successful Governance of the school.

All Governors undertake a comprehensive Knowledge and Skills Audit on an annual basis in order that the Board can continue to identify an appropriate and expert skills base. The exercise also assists to identify any potential 'skill gaps' should there be any future Governor appointments/elections. It also supports succession planning.

At the commencement of the academic year and, at the time of writing, there is a vacancy for a Co-opted Governor. The Board are in the process of actively recruiting a suitable candidate.

It is an expectation of Governors that they declare they have no business interests in the school and that they receive no gifts or any form of hospitality. Further, it is a requirement that Governors confirm on an annual basis that they are eligible to serve as a Governor. This is known as signing a 'Statutory Declaration'.

Governors are expected to undertake relevant training over the duration of the academic year, including Safeguarding. All Governors hold an Enhanced DBS Certificate and conform to the Disqualification Disclosure criteria.

The Governing Body is scheduled to meet nine times per academic year. As per the adopted Terms of Reference, each Governor serves a term of FOUR years. It should be noted that both the Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed (voted) on an annual basis.

The only other exception to this rule is the role of an Associate Governor.

An Associate Governor is appointed to the Board with a view to providing specialist knowledge in a specific area. An Associate Governor has no voting rights when subjects such as pupils and staffing are involved.

The school has appointed a number of Link Governors.

These Governors have expertise in specific areas and are the 'link' between members of the school and the Board of Governors in such areas as SEND, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Pupil Progress, Pupil Premium, EYFS and Sport Premium.

	<p>Members of the Board regularly visit the school and undertake learning walks/monitoring visits alongside the Co-Headteachers.</p> <p>Observations from these visits are reported back to the full Board of Governors at their scheduled meetings. Governors are NOT responsible for assessing the quality of teaching, nor undertaking lesson observations.</p>
Just Attendance	<p>The Governors at Bentham C P School have a good record of attendance. To date the school has NEVER had to cancel a Governors' Meeting due to it not being 'quorate' . This is where the number of Governors needed are in attendance in order to ensure that legal decisions, voting etc can be made at a meeting.</p>
The Work that we undertake/have Done	<p>The Governing Body have had a particularly busy year, specifically focussing on school improvement, self-evaluation, curriculum and assessment.</p> <p>In addition, Governors continue to be involved in budgetary monitoring, health and safety and issues surrounding the build quality and cost of maintaining the school.</p> <p>Governors have also committed to undertaking a number of training courses. Governors continue to consider 'vulnerable' groups of pupils at the school scrutinising and reviewing how the Pupil Premium funding has been and is being spent by the school. Considerations are made as to the impact of this expenditure, together with the subsequent additional curriculum support allocated to those individuals identified as needing intervention/additional support.</p> <p>Governors consider the outcomes of ALL children and continually monitor, evaluate and challenge the curriculum and school leaders. Additionally, Governors' challenge what provision the school makes for those pupils who are considered as 'Gifted and Talented'.</p> <p>The School's Health and Safety Link Governor regularly visits the school and supports the Co-Headteachers with their termly checks of the school premises. This also involves North Yorkshire Council's Health and Safety Adviser.</p> <p>During the Spring Term, Governors have the responsibility of approving the budget for Bentham C P School together with confirming compliance with the Schools' Financial Value Standards. (SFVS).</p> <p>At the commencement of the 2023/2024 academic year the school effectively provided seven classes. It is anticipated that this structure will be reviewed prior to the commencement of the Spring 2024 term.</p> <p>The school continues to offer up to 30 hours free childcare for children of Nursery age. All Nursery aged children attending the school are entitled to 15 hours FREE childcare, known as 'Universal' hours. In addition, some children will also be eligible for a further 15 hours free childcare 'Extended'. For those parents/carers who are not eligible for the FREE 'Extended' provision, the school offers parents/carers an opportunity to pay for additional sessions.</p> <p>One of the priority concerns for Governors is the safeguarding of children. The Board has a nominated Safeguarding Link Governor. In this role, the Link Governor is responsible for the delivery of a termly report to the Board as a whole, including feedback on termly meetings with the School's Designated Safeguard Lead and outcomes from Single Central Record checks.</p>

	<p>The whole Governing Body is dedicated and proactive in securing a safe environment both inside and outside of the school.</p> <p>One of the many roles of a Governor is reviewing, agreeing and adopting relevant School Policies.</p> <p>The Governing Body is dedicated in ensuring that all children's attendance is both regular and punctual. Attendance statistics are presented to Governors by the Co-Headteachers in their termly Co-Headteacher Report.</p> <p>The Board consider the School Development Plan at most of its meetings. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of the same by members of the Board, together with the monitoring of progress and effectiveness being made towards identified targets.</p> <p>A Performance Management of the Co-Headteachers is conducted every academic year. This procedure assists to identify targets for the future based around further raising standards, maintaining a healthy financial school and succession planning.</p> <p>Minutes of Governors' Meetings are public documents. If you would like to inspect Minutes from the meetings, you can do so by requesting copies of the same from the Clerk to Governors via the School Office.</p>
Future plans for Governors	<p>The Board of Governors are looking forward to the challenges which a new academic year ultimately brings.</p> <p>Governors are also looking forward to taking part in training courses and developing their skills and knowledge base.</p> <p>The role of a Governor is not only a responsible and demanding one, but also a constantly evolving role.</p>
How you can contact the Governing Body	<p>The Governors acknowledge that they are not absolutely perfect! As such, the Board always welcomes suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers, families and members of the community.</p> <p>Governors are keen to promote and encourage the pro-active engagement between members of its body and the community as a whole.</p> <p>The Governing Body serves the school and as such every member of the Board is approachable. There is a 'Governor Board' displaying current membership of the Board in the school's Reception area.</p> <p>For more information about the Board of Governors, please visit the Governors' Page on the school's website. www.benthamcpschool.org.uk.</p> <p>Finally, the above is not a comprehensive list of duties, responsibilities and projects the Governing Body is involved with. There is lots of additional work undertaken by the Governors of Bentham C P School. The information given is merely a brief overview of just a small proportion of the roles and responsibilities of a Governor.</p>