



HEATHCOTE SCHOOL AND SCIENCE COLLEGE

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20

Forward from the Chair of Governors

Being part of a Governing Body for a large secondary school such as Heathcote School and Science College is both challenging and rewarding in equal measure.

The Government has moved much responsibility on to Governing Bodies in recent years. Governors make up the UK's largest volunteering workforce, but regardless of being volunteers, Governors take their responsibility very seriously.

This Annual Governance Statement sets out the main organisational, challenges and achievements made by the Governing Body. This statement celebrates the level of commitment that teachers, leaders, staff, Governors and pupils have shown to the school. The Governing Body has a close working relationship with the Headteacher and strives to work in partnership to bring continual improvements to the school and deliver the best life chances for our young people.

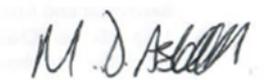
This year has been like no other year, the Covid-19 pandemic has challenged us all like never before. Despite the turmoil caused, the Governing Body has worked tirelessly to ensure the school remained open to children of key workers and our most vulnerable children during lockdown. During the summer break, the Governing Body worked with the school and Local Authority to ensure we could safely open in September, this was a huge undertaking.

Our work has continued at pace in very demanding conditions and is testimony to the passion and commitment of the Governing Body to ensure life at the school can continue for pupils and staff.

I am immensely proud to be Chair of Governors at Heathcote School and I will continue to drive improvement for all by leading on delivering the best governance this school deserves.

I hope that you find our Annual Governance Statement insightful.

Stay safe and well.



Mike Ashwell

Chair of Governors

Heathcote School & Science College

December 2020

Introduction

Welcome to the Annual Governance Statement for Heathcote School and Science College Governing Body for the 2019-20 academic year. The statement includes the main organisational, academic and financial challenges the Governing Body has been involved with this year.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has a strategic role with three core functions. These are to:

- Set the vision, ethos and strategic direction of School;
- Hold the Headteacher and senior leadership team to account for its educational performance; and
- Ensure public financial resources are effectively, efficiently and appropriately spent.

Governing Body membership

The Governing Body is comprised as follows:

- Six Parent Governors voted by parents
- Nine co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Body
- One Local Authority Governor
- One Staff Governor appointed by a ballot of staff
- The Headteacher

This year we refreshed our Governing Body with the introduction of five new Governors who each bring their own skills and experiences to the team.

Attendance

Overall 80% of Governors attended Full Governing Body meetings and 83% of Governors attended Committee meetings. In addition, Governors made a significant contribution through participation in working groups, Governor training, Governor Disciplinary Committees and Governor visits to school.

Our Committees

The Governing Body had three main Committees this year, with the following purpose:

- **Resources:** To provide overall scrutiny and put forward recommendations to the Governing Body and Headteacher on all matters relating to personnel, premises, security, health and safety and finance. The latter as outlined in the School's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
- **Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development (BAPD):** To advise the Headteacher and Governing Body on matters concerning pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, in particular to ensure that the requirements of pupils with special needs are met, and ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve their potential.

- **Quality of Education (QoE):** To advise the Headteacher and Governing Body on matters concerning curriculum for teaching staff and non-teaching staff.
- **Pay Committee and Headteacher Performance Management Committee:** Meet annually to review performance and set pay awards for teaching staff, including the Headteacher.

Governors visits ([LINK](#))

Governors are assigned to a specific area in the school that are either statutory or the Governing Body wishes to monitor more closely. Governors normally make two visits per year to monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan.

The focus areas for this year included:

- Safeguarding and Looked After Children
- SEND
- Data, Progress and Attainment
- English, Literacy, Maths & Numeracy
- Science
- More-able and Higher Attaining Pupils
- Pupil Premium
- Behaviour & Attendance
- Sixth Form
- Health and Safety
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Outward Facing and Community Engagement
- Careers
- Parent Engagement

Due to Covid-19, Governor visits were restricted this year. However, some visits went ahead and these were discussed at Governing Body meetings throughout the year. Two notable visits that took place were Health & Safety and Safeguarding to ensure the school remained safe for all stakeholders.

Working Groups

Committees or the Governing Body occasionally supplemented by the establishment of Working Groups who look at specific areas in much more detail. This year Governors were involved in the following Working Groups:

- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education
- IT Refresh programme
- Establishment of the Alternative Provision at Heathcote School

Governor Training

This year >50% of Governors attended training provided by LBWF. Governors are required to attend training on regular basis to ensure a healthy balance of skills across the Governing Body.

Review of the year

The following highlights the positive impact Governors have made to the school:

- Governors were instrumental in setting the School Improvement Plan and agreeing targets and objectives with the Headteacher.
- Governors were involved in the creation of the new Alternative Provision facility at the school. The new facility located in the Humanities Building is designed to support the social, emotional and mental health needs of young people aged 11-16, providing vital intervention to enable a return to mainstream education. The new AP team bring a wealth of specialist skills in coaching and mentoring which provides benefit to our own SEND team within the school.
- Active involvement in the Annual Department Reviews with the Heads of Department and the Headteacher to review and assess progress and provide challenge and support.
- Governors took part in the lesson observation process which was a quality assurance exercise to see how teachers are being assessed, trained and supported with their professional development.
- Despite the challenges of Covid-19, the Governing Body went above and beyond to ensure that the school successfully remained open throughout the pandemic, initially for vulnerable and key worker children.
- Governors took part in delivering school meals to vulnerable children across our community.
- Governors ensured that all the required policies were developed, reviewed and adopted in-line with DfE guidelines, to ensure the school is compliant with its statutory obligations.
- Governors have ensured that information displayed on the school's website meets statutory requirements.
- Governors have sought to ensure that the school's financial resources are used diligently. Governors worked very hard to ensure a balanced budget was submitted this year to the Local Authority.
- Governors took part in link visits including Health & Safety and Safeguarding and played a key role in ensuring the school was safe for all.
- Governors were instrumental in helping to shape and drive the IT refresh across the school to help the drive the Digital Curriculum and supported the move to Google Classroom.

- Governors were involved in shaping and supporting the rollout of the remote learning policies that enable teaching to continue during the lock down phase.
- The Headteacher and SLT worked throughout the Summer holidays and the Governing Body supported with ratifying ever changing Risk Assessments to ensure that the school was able to fully open in September 2020.
- Governors took part in training to ensure their skills are updated and relevant. Training included topics such as: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Disciplinary and Grievance Management, Finance, HR, Gangs, Exclusions, Complaints, Headteacher Performance Management and Governor Accreditation.

Schools' Finance

The financial position of the school continues to be challenging. This year the Governing Body ratified the budget in May 2020 with a revenue budget underspend of **£131,668**. This is largely due to the effects of Covid-19, but mainly due to savings made on supply staff and rigorous monitoring of the budget. It is planned to continue this into next year to ensure there is control of the supply staff budget.

Governors approved a balanced budget for 2021 with a small surplus of **£1,045**

Governors noted there was a Capital budget of **£70,240k** to carry forward. **£100k** has been spent on capital of which **£54,408** of this was match funding from LBWF, and the remainder was funded from the school's devolved formula capital.

The school has taken steps to implement robust monitoring of the net cash position each month and flagging issues to the Local Authority as necessary.

Governors continue to closely monitor the schools financial position and moving into 20/21, the focus will continue on accurate budget forecasting, cash flow and ways to save money.

Governors will provide ongoing support to ensure the school continues to take steps to build robust Financial Systems and Governance. Governors continue to take part in external audits to ensure good practice is built into our processes and any corrective action can be put into place.

Behaviour, exclusions and complaints

Where pupils are excluded through either a fixed or a permanent exclusion, the Governor Discipline Committee (GDC) is established to support the appeal process. There were eight cases that required Governors to meet and they dealt with six fixed term exclusions and two permanent exclusions.

Similarly, the Governor Complaints Panel dealt with one complaint from a parent.

Governors continue to monitor the number of exclusions and continue to work hard with the school and Local Authority to develop strategies to reduce exclusions, whilst implement policies to ensure Heathcote School is a safe environment for pupils and staff.

Staff

Performance, recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a challenge. Governors continue to work with the Headteacher and staff to constructively challenge and assess each subject department at annual reviews. These have allowed the Governing Body to understand the strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching and environment at Heathcote School and provide opportunities to improve.

Conclusion

The Governing Body wish to thank our Headteacher, Ms Hillman and her entire staff at Heathcote School for their hard work and dedication this year. Covid-19 has challenged all aspects of the school and our local community. However, the school has risen to the challenges and despite everything, the Headteacher has managed to keep the school open during the pandemic and supported our school community.

Governors would finally like to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to all the parents and carers for providing encouragement to their children to enable them to keep learning during these troubled times.

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