



HEATHCOTE SCHOOL AND SCIENCE COLLEGE

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21

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 achievements made by the Governing Body during the Academic year 2020-2021. This statement celebrates the level of commitment that teachers, leaders, staff, Governors and pupils have shown to the school. The Governing Body have a very close working relationship with the Headteacher and works in partnership to bring continual improvements to the school and deliver the best life chances for our young people, within our financial budgets.

This year has continued to challenge us with Covid-19. The school and Governing Body has worked tirelessly to ensure the school remained open to children of key workers and our most vulnerable children during lockdown.

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

I am immensely proud to be Chair of Governors and I will continue to drive improvement in our Governance and strategic oversight to deliver the best outcomes for pupils and staff.

I hope that you find our Annual Governance Statement insightful.

Stay safe and well.

Mike Ashwell

Chair of Governors

Heathcote School & Science College

July 22



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Introduction

Welcome to the Annual Governance Statement for Heathcote School and Science College Governing Body for the 2020-21 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 elected 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 **three** new Governors who each bring their own skills and experiences to the team.

Attendance

Overall **65%** of Governors attended Full Governing Body meetings and **79%** of Governors attended Committee meetings. In addition, Governors made a significant contribution through participation in working groups, Governor training, Governor Disciplinary Committees and LINK visits to the 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, finance and H&S. 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.



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- **Pay Committee and Headteacher Performance Management Committee:** Meet annually to review performance and set pay for all teaching staff across the school 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.

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:

- TLR Restructuring
- Wi-Fi infrastructure upgrade
- Establishment of the Alternative Provision at Heathcote School

Governor Training

This year > **50%** of Governors attended training provided by LBWF, amounting to > **100** hours of training undertaken. Governors are required to attend training on regular basis to ensure a healthy balance of skills across the Governing Body.

Key achievements

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.



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- 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 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 extremely hard to ensure a balanced budget was submitted this year to the Local Authority.
- Governors took part in numerous LINK visits to the school.
- Governors were actively involved in the refresh of the school's infrastructure which included an upgrade to the Internet connectivity and better Wi-Fi coverage in the Sixth Form.
- Governors were involved in the purchasing of 96 Chromebooks for students, staff and vulnerable families
- Governors were actively involved in the upgrade of 150 desktop computers across the school delivering an uplift in performance to better support the Digital Curriculum.
- Governors were instrumental in driving the Year 7 PAN (Published Admission Number) from 240 to 180 in light of a reduction in the number of pupils across the Local Authority.



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- Governors were involved in the restructuring process to tackle the number of TLR posts which has not been equitable and created further pressure on school finance. This process was carried out in full consultation with the Unions and Staff and a new proposal which was transparent, clear, fair and equitable was accepted.
- Governors held their Annual Training Day on 26 June 21 at the school and looked at areas including: Improving Governance, Financial Awareness and preparing for OFSTED.
- 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. The Governing Body ratified a **balanced budget** in May 2021 with a revenue budget underspend of **£218,198** and a small surplus of **£1,990**. This was achieved through savings made on supply staff, rigorous monitoring of the budget, efficient use of premises and renegotiated contracts. It is planned to continue this into next year to ensure there is control of the supply staff budget. Governors approved a Capital budget of **£37,994** to carry forward.

Governors continue to closely monitor the schools financial position and moving into 21/22, 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 will 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. There are challenges ahead for the school which is not uncommon for Local Maintained Schools.

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 four cases that required Governors to meet, and they dealt with one fixed term exclusions and three permanent exclusions.

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 review the Behaviour Policy 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



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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 for their hard work and dedication this year. Covid-19 continues to challenge all aspects of the school and our local community. The Governing Body and the school have worked tirelessly to keep the school open during the pandemic and support our local community.

Governors would finally like to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to all the pupils that have worked their hard in very challenging circumstances. Also to the parents and carers for providing encouragement to enable pupils to keep learning during these troubled times.