

Governance Statement 2017-18

Annual governance statement for the Governing Body of Talbot Primary School Updated 20th July 2018

Further details of the matters found in this statement are contained in a series of topic-specific documents, including the Governor minutes

1. Roles of the Governing Body

The governing body, which in future will be known as the Governing Board of Talbot Primary School, conducts its business to take account of the three roles of the governing bodies as outlined in the Governors' Handbook:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the head teacher and senior leadership team.

The governing body also ensures that the school complies fully with all statutory requirements, and in particular safeguarding procedures. All staff have signed a record to confirm they have read Part 1 of the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education". During the course of this year the governors have considered and approved the school policy and procedure for data protection (GDPR).

2. The strategic direction of the school

Last year's annual report quoted the relevant section of the last OFSTED Inspection of the school, conducted in February 2017, which commented positively on the effectiveness of the Governing body. As Governors we have focused on regular evaluation of our own effectiveness and impact which will result in some important changes we are implementing for the 2018/19 school year. In essence these changes are designed to ensure that the Governing Board has greater focus on the strategic development of the school as set out in the School Improvement Plan. In moving towards an Outstanding school Governors play a key role in supporting and challenging the school leadership team towards achieving our shared school vision and objectives. The school's vision is a key shared statement of values and ambition:

"Talbot Primary will provide a safe and caring environment where the school values of 'courage, truth and loyalty' translate into meaningful characteristics so our children embrace challenge, build confidence, work hard and enjoy success, both independently and alongside their peers. We continue to build on our many strengths and enhance our capacity. As a school we aim to be outstanding so all children achieve their potential and where race, gender, disability and additional educational needs are embraced."

3. The composition of the governing body

The governing body re-constituted in 2015-16 and comprises 12 governors in total. Every governor appointed to the governing body is appointed on the basis of the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The number of governors in each category is determined through the Instrument of Government and is currently:

Role	Members
Head teacher	Parm Gill
1 elected staff governor	Sue Alpar

3 elected parent governors	James Parvin, Esther Davy, Louisa Smedley
1 local authority governor	John England
5 co-opted governors	Vicky Cooke, Wayne Gaskin, Niki Kilby, Elizabeth O'Shea, Gavin Sweet

During the course of the year each governor has updated their own skills analysis to ensure that individual skills and experience are used effectively and that as a Board we are aware of any skills gaps that we should seek to fill.

We currently have three Associate Governors in place: Rachel Greer, Kate Liddington (Assistant Headteacher) and Jude Rivers (Deputy Headteacher)

4. Meetings of the governing body

The full governing body meets 5 times a year; all meetings are clerked by a trained professional clerk. There are also 3 governing body committees which have delegated authority. The committees are:

- **Resources sub-committee** – finance, personnel and premises (meets five times a year)
- **Teaching, Learning and Curriculum review sub-committee** (meets five times a year)
- **Pupil Support sub-committee** (meets five times a year)

For the 2018/19 school year the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum sub-committee will merge with Pupil Support to provide a more strategic and holistic focus on school improvement, centred on the child. This change combined with steps to improve the coordination of governor leadership will be monitored carefully to ensure that we can produce stronger evidence of the impact that the school governors are having in working towards an outstanding school.

Overall Governors have good attendance at meetings. Apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis;. See Appendix for details of individual governors' attendance at meetings.

5. Governing Body priorities

The remit of the governing body and its committees

The School Improvement Plan for 2017-18 sets out the strategic objectives and action plans on three key areas, informed by the Ofsted Inspection Report, but essentially building on the priorities identified in previous years improvement plans. The three key areas are:

- Pupils accelerate their rates of progress in writing and are provided with more opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum
- Middle leaders develop their roles and responsibilities further so that they play a greater role in further improving the quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress
- Plans for improvement have clear timescales for when actions occur and clearly show what impact this will have on pupils' progress

Governors are assigned to each of these priorities and throughout the year they are tasked with reviewing progress and looking at evidence from different sources to assess the leadership team's own evaluation of progress. Activities include interviews with key staff members, in-school observation, reviewing documentation and effective challenge during the course of governor meetings. The lead governor reports back to the relevant sub-committee on their findings and their report and ensuing discussion is fully recorded. Further information can be found in the appendices to this report which include the reports from the chairs of the three sub-committees.

As a governing board we will be reviewing and updating our own governance development plan building on themes that were identified two years ago. After each of the themes there follows a note of the progress and impact that governors have made.

Following governor feedback the school leadership team has been encouraged to focus on a smaller number of key messages emerging from data analysis. These messages underpin the improvement plans for the school. There is now a stronger focus on presenting to governors the outcomes of data analysis rather than the complexity of the data.

Changes to the way that governor meetings are recorded ensures that the questions asked by governors are recorded along with the response. Similarly, the interviews with key staff as part of the governor review of the school improvement plan priorities have brought greater depth to governor's strategic challenge. Governors recognise that there is more work to be done to improve performance on this theme and the changes being made for 2018/19 are designed to support this.

School governors are very much aware that shared accountability is an essential part of good school governance. In practice this has seen governors assisting with the recruitment of staff, examining key records to ensure compliance with, for example, safeguarding requirements. The Resources sub-committee continually examines and challenges value for money across the school budget, however for governors the coordination and triangulation of our insight and analysis needs to be strengthened. For example, can we be sure that the effective management of the school budget is achieved whilst ensuring that the necessary resources are available to support the school improvement plan.

Individual training along with a programme of workshops and briefings has ensured an ongoing focus on training and development for governors. Safeguarding briefings for all governors have been maintained along with briefings on new legislation (GDPR) and curriculum developments. With the recently completed skills analysis we have an updated overview and will continue to focus on the individual strengths that each governor brings to the team. All governors now have access to online training and development resources which have been highly commended by those who have completed programmes. The Board has recently supported engagement with Governor Space, a government sponsored programme of training and development which will give added impetus to our board development and strategic impact.

Please see the attached appendices for:

- End of year summary reports from the Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment, Pupil Support and the Resources sub-committees
- Attendance of meetings

Appendix One: Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment (TLCA) sub-committee report, by Vicky Cooke

The Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment (TLCA) sub-committee had five 90-minute meetings during the school year 2017-18 (in September, November, January, April and June).

Following a review of sub-committee responsibilities in 2016, the TLCA sub-committee is required:

To take the lead on:

- monitoring and evaluating rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including any underachieving groups
- ensuring that the curriculum is balanced, broadly based, meets the needs of all pupils and complies with statutory requirements
- setting priorities for improvement and monitoring and evaluating the impact of improvement plans which relate to the committee's area of operation
- developing and reviewing policies relevant to this sub-committee as identified within the school's policy review programme and in accordance with its delegated powers

To accept full delegated responsibilities for the discharge of the following duties:

- Target setting
- To monitor and evaluate:
 - the effectiveness of leadership and management
 - the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement
 - the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance
 - the effectiveness of provision for children with special educational needs
 - the quality of the curriculum in securing high standards of achievement
 - the impact of any actions or interventions taken to address differential standards of achievement or rates of progress within groups of pupils (eg SEN, gender, free school meals, BME (Black, Minority and Ethnic), EAL, children in care etc)
- Identify and celebrate pupil achievements

To provide guidance to the full governing body for the following, which cannot be delegated:

- Setting realistic and sufficiently challenging statutory end of key stage targets
- The school's curriculum statement
- Approval of school policies on sex and relationships education and religious education

During the school year 2017-18 the TLCA sub-committee was specifically accountable for overseeing implementation of three priorities from the school improvement plan:

- Priority 1: Embedding a reading curriculum which secures fluency, comprehension and an increased percentage of children reaching Age Related Expectation (ARE) in reading.
- Priority 2: Raising attainment and progress rates in writing through the implementation a structured, consistent and uniform approach
- Priority 3: Raising attainment and progress rates for key groups through the thorough implementation of fluency, problem solving, reasoning and diminishing the gap measures in Maths

In each meeting, our agenda has focused on the following areas:

1. Outcomes for pupils
2. Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
3. Personal development, behaviour and welfare
4. Leadership and management

1. Outcomes for pupils

In 2017-18, Governors reviewed data and questioned the Senior Leadership Team, in relation to:

- End of year outcomes for 2016-17 and key areas for improvement in 2017-18, including a new approach for Maths teaching (September 2017)
- Target setting for Reception to Year 6 for 2017-18, including methodology, principles and impact (November 2017)
- Progress trackers for Autumn and Spring terms, including progress towards milestones (February and April 2018)
- Outcomes and measures of good progress for Early Years Foundation stage, Year One Phonics and Year 2 writing moderation - quantitative and qualitative evidence (June 2018)

Governors helped to ensure that targets were challenging yet achievable and each term reviewed progress and attainment of each year group and key sub-groups in the school. Governors were pleased that overall outcomes were very positive, and most targets were achieved or nearly achieved with good reasons where not.

2. Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The School's approach to teaching and learning has continued to shift significantly over the last 3 years; depth and breadth of learning is of paramount importance, teaching approaches are evolving and pupils are taking greater ownership and accountability for their learning. Growth Mindsets and Talk Matters are now embedded in the school culture and teaching. In 2017-18, Governors learned about the following and critically assessed the value and impact for children and the school overall:

- Monitoring and Evaluation Schedule for Autumn Term - detailed outline of activity across the school, including learning walks through the school, review of Guided Reading, Book Looks and inclusive strategies such as Pupil Voice to gain critical insight into children's experiences and feedback (November 2017)
- Monitoring and Evaluation updates (January 2018, April 2018)
- Monitoring and Evaluation summary for year (June 2018)
- Sports premium – how will be utilised through school year (September 2017)
- Teaching Assistants' CPD (continuing professional development), which is contributing positively to the quality of teaching and learning (January 2018)
- Headteacher's Learning Alliance joint teaching and learning review and subsequent report (April 2018)
- Feedback from parents through recent questionnaire and school actions as a result

Each Governor has special responsibilities assigned to them for a particular school priority or a statutory role. In each meeting, Governors shared reports on recent visits into school to learn about and critically assess progress in school improvement plan priorities of Reading, Writing, Maths, as well as phase and subject leadership (see below). Governors individually met with the respective subject lead to discuss an area in more depth and question and challenge the strategy/approach, impact and results accordingly. Governors have been struck by the depth of knowledge and passion displayed by teachers in their special subjects and their commitment to the school and pupils. Governors have received positive feedback on the impact of their visits from teachers and subject leaders, as their input has helped teachers to reflect critically on their work as well as celebrate success.

3. Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Governors were informed on key developments in this area as follows, and there was discussion on the impact of the school's efforts on:

- Changes to PSHE for the forthcoming academic year (September 2017)
- Learning Logs as central to pupils' homework for each term and how this approach has contributed to SMSC. Children have responded well to the flexible approach to further learning at home and there are minimum and maximum expectations for the homework, as well as a broad range of tasks to complete (November 2017)
- Online safety – curriculum provision, parental engagement and Digital Ambassadors (January 2018)
- Travel Plan and being on track to achieve Mode Shifts 'Gold' standard for the school's efforts to encourage sustainable travel through various activities and initiatives, including health and wellbeing, scooter and bicycle training and road safety.

4. Leadership and Management

As one of the school's key priorities, focus on developing the role of middle leaders, including phase leaders in the school and also now subject leaders. Subject leaders are responsible for their designated subject from Year 1 to

Year 6, with responsibilities according to the Ofsted framework. They develop subject plans each year, in agreement with the Headteacher and school Senior Leadership Team. Governors invited both subject leaders and phase leaders to attend sub-committee meetings through the year, to understand more about their work and progress, which is positively impacting teaching and learning. All middle leaders have experienced professional development during the year, through external training or networks such as Red Kite and/or coaching and mentoring in school.

Appendix Two: Pupil Support sub-committee report, by Elizabeth O'Shea

As the name suggests the Pupil Support Committee concentrates on the support of our children.

Our role as governors is strategic as opposed to operational. We do not receive any information about individual children.

Items regularly on our agenda are:

- Attendance
- Review of our offering, delivery and support to our children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and our children who qualify for extra funding from the government (Pupil Premium)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Alliances we are part of and the value derived
- Pupil and staff voice
- Curriculum related to health, wellbeing and relationships

One of the ways we review how well supported the children are is by hearing what they have to say. The children are regularly surveyed (method dependent upon age) to gain their views on a multitude of topics. Responses are positive overall with any negative responses being followed up either individually or collectively through assemblies or PSHE (personal, social, health education) lessons.

During the year we have received detailed reports from Mrs Mitchell (who manages Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), Mr Youdan (British Values - how we are ensuring the different elements are taught and they are instilled in our school culture), Miss Marsden who is responsible for the PSHE programme throughout the school and Miss Ambler who is responsible for e-safety. We also receive regular reporting from the senior leadership team (Mrs Gill, Mr Rivers and Mrs Liddington) on items such as the impact of Pupil premium for children.

A new curriculum for PSHE commences in September 2018 which is further reflective of our changing times.

We have also had reports from Esther Davies (SEND) and Liz O'Shea (Safeguarding) about their visits into school to scrutinise these areas.

We review the monitoring and supervision of vulnerable pupil groups, looking at anonymised case studies and passports which they develop with their teachers.

As a committee we are always pleased to see the importance the senior leadership team place on supporting all our pupils. It has also been pleasing to see the depth of knowledge Mrs Mitchell, Mr Youdan, Miss Marsden and Miss Ambler have and their proactive implementation and review of actions related to their areas of responsibility.

Safeguarding and child protection is also regularly on our agenda. We review policies and ensure statutory requirements are being met along with understanding the culture through obtaining pupil and staff feedback and it is pleasing and reassuring to see how seriously the senior leadership team takes safeguarding. As with Teaching and Learning our safeguarding is an area that the team are continuously evolving and improving based on evidence and advice.

As you would expect working within Talbot we are an ever evolving and improving board, striving to improve our practices and impact. Next year we are looking forward to continuing this journey.

Appendix Three: Resources sub-committee annual report July 2018, by Gavin Sweet

The Resources sub-committee remit is to take the lead in ensuring good governance on financial matters, staffing, equality and diversity, health and safety, and other regulatory policy and procedural issues. The resources subcommittee looks to ensure good value for money, good practice, and compliance with policies, and to advise or delegate major decisions to the full governing body.

School Finances

The Resource sub-committee has monitored the school budget during the course of the year, and Governors have consistently found that school finances are managed diligently and sensibly. The Resources committee also has visibility of Disposals and Capital spends; and this year has also considered PTA Accounts and School voluntary funds. At the end of the financial year in March 2018 the school budget was in good health and had again achieved a small surplus, against projections at the beginning of the financial year – an achievement given the concerns about falling income (as nursery provisions change), and rising costs (due to aging school fabric). Careful management (of for instance outgoings, resources and supply teacher resources), and improvements to supply contracts (such as washroom provision, printing costs) has really saved the school money.

The Resources committee has reviewed and questioned the Head Teacher and the leadership team where appropriate on any financial impacts. Key spends on updating, repairing and refurbishing school were supported - such as a new lighting scheme which will save electricity costs almost immediately, contribution to playground resurfacing.

We were delighted with the fantastic contributions received this year (more than £30K) from the school PTA which has gone towards playground and library refurbishments.

The school is required to maintain a value for money self-assessment known as the Schools Financial Value Standard. At each meeting a section of this document is considered by the sub-committee with the help of the school business manager. Financial benchmarking was also conducted periodically by reference to DfE data for similar schools. This provides comparative data on the spending patterns of similar schools in the city and the wider region. Talbot performs broadly in line with other similar sized schools and other local schools, both in terms of income and expenditure.

Staff and Performance issues

The Governing Board have reviewed both pay and performance policy documents. By way of reporting from the Head Teacher the governors have also been able to understand, question and scrutinise specific staffing or structural changes as these have arisen. The governors have been keen to see these plans, and also to note any financial implications. At different times, there has also been scrutiny of pay scale progression and performance. Governors have, for instance, questioned on numbers of staff looking for progression to upper pay scales. Governors assisted with the recruitment of new roles, particularly a new Superintendent and also a new School Business Manager to replace the retiring Julie Alvin.

Premises and Health and Safety

Governors have statutory responsibility for health and safety and it is the responsibility of this sub-committee to ensure compliance.

This year, again, annual audits (Health and Safety walks/reviews) have been conducted, as well as specific reviews of procedures that impact health and safety. A regular schedule of H&S checks is also monitored. Ongoing interest is paid to, for instance, fire risks, and some extra attention has been focussed recently following input from the fire service.

New policy and procedure has been developed to cover emergency evacuation, invacuation and lockdown procedures.

Committee topics of interest

As well as statutory and routine reviews and items brought to the attention of the subcommittee by the Head Teacher and senior leadership team, the Governors have also followed some topics of interest throughout the year, including:

- GDPR. With the introduction of new data protection legislation from May this year, Governors were keen to ensure the school adopted compliant policy and procedure and had the resources, such as a DPO, to execute these.
- Post-Bulge cohort. Governors have been concerned to ensure that the bulge cohort continues to progress without impact through the school.
- Premises/school fabric. As an older school with daily or weekly issues, the Resources committee is keen to understand risks and spending impacts associated with maintenance.
- School meals pricing. The price of school meals is a policy decision taken by the sub-committee, which is reviewed annually.

Governors have made several visits into school to look at various issues this year, which have included:

- *School Business Manager Recruitment.* Governors supported the HT in the short-listing and interviewing of candidates for the replacement of the SBM, a key role for the school with critical responsibilities around finance, HR, H&S.
- *Health and Safety Visit / School walk.*
- *School Travel plan.* Governors noted the successful work done by the school on the Travel Plan, moving to the Mode Shift support system, for which a Bronze award was achieved. Reduction in car impacts (with both safety and congestion aspects) remains a priority for Governors in their considerations.
- *Pupil Premium and Sports Premium.* Governors have looked at the spend and application of the Pupil and Sports Premium funding.

Routine Policy and Procedure reviews 2017/18

Governors provided annual reviews on a routine basis for a large number of policy documents:

- Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy
- Children + Young People in Public Care
- Health and Safety inc First Aiders List
- Lettings Policy
- Recruitment / Safer Recruitment Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Induction Policy
- Continuous Professional Development
- Capability Policy
- Grievance and Harassment Policy
- Schools Contracts Procedure Rules
- Disciplinary Policy
- Managing Attendance
- Risk Register
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Pay Policy
- School Uniform
- Work and Families Policy for School Based Staff
- Data Protection Policy – revised chain of reporting for
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation

Appendix Four: Attendance at FGB meetings, 2017-18 (5 meetings have been held this academic year)

Governor	Category	Term of office	Number of FGB meetings attended in 2016-17
Parm Gill	Headteacher	1st September 2014	5
Susan Alpar	Staff	13th October 2016 to 12th October 2020	4
Vicky Cooke	Co-opted	8th December 2016 to 7th December 2020	5
Esther Davy	Parent	3rd May 2017 to 2nd May 2021	5
John England (Chair)	Local-Authority	16th May 2017 to 15th May 2021	5
Wayne Gaskin	Co-opted	13th October 2015 to 12th October 2019	4
Rachel Greer	Associate	13th October 2015 to 12th October 2019	5
Niki Kilby	Co-opted	8th December 2016 to 7th December 2020	5
Kate Liddington	Associate	1st January 2015	5
Liz O'Shea (Vice Chair)	Co-opted	13th October 2015 to 12th October 2019	5
James Parvin	Parent	7 th December 2017 to 6 th December 2021	4
Jude Rivers	Deputy Headteacher	1 st September 2014	5
Louisa Smedley	Parent	3rd May 2017 to 2nd May 2021	4
Gavin Sweet	Co-opted	13th October 2015 to 12th October 2019	5
Leavers in last 12 months:			
Tanzeela Umer	Parent	4th September 2013 to 3rd September 2017	
Bill Urry	Local Authority	16th April 2013 to 15th April 2017	
Helen Haigh	Co-opted	12th December 2012 to 13th October 2016	
Jimmy Middleton	Staff	1st March 2013 to 13th October 2016	