



Waterbeach Community Primary School

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

The Core Functions of the Governing Body

- ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined;
- ensuring that the Headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school; and
- ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

This statement seeks to outline the impact of governance arrangements at the school throughout the course of the 2024/25 academic year.

Governor Membership, Vacancies and Attendance

The Instrument of Government allows for 14 governors across different categories.

Current membership: 14

Current vacancies: 0

Through the course of the academic year, the Governing Body has had the following changes:

- A new headteacher
- An uncontested election to appoint a parent governor to replace one who resigned
- A new co-opted governor to fill a vacancy that arose in July 2024
- An existing associate member appointed to fill a co-opted vacancy that arose in July 2025

During the next academic year, we have one each of a staff, parent, co-opted and LA governor whose terms are due to expire. The expectation is that where possible we will re-appoint these governors. We will hold an election for the parent governor; we have already received one expression of interest in that role.

Chair: John Hall

Vice-Chair: Robert Schumann

Clerk: Helen Andrews

Attendance: Governors have demonstrated their commitment to the school with an overall attendance record of 81%.

The attendance record is available here:

<https://www.waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk/page/?title=2%2E++Governor+Meeting+Dates+and+Attendance+Register&pid=1916>

The Structure of Governance

As well as meeting as a Full Governing Board, there are also two committees, in order to ensure sufficient oversight, support and accountability towards areas of identified priority and statutory coverage.

The school names these committees as:

- Children's Committee, which mainly deals with curriculum and assessment
- Resources Committee, which mainly deals with the finance, HR and Health & Safety

All groups have a continued oversight of the school's safeguarding responsibilities and manage the updates of school policies aligned to the particular areas of responsibility.

In addition to the above, the body also has a Pay Panel and a Headteacher Performance Management Panel.

Committees related to specific statutory purposes, such as dealing with complaints or exclusions, are formed as they are required, in line with the relevant policies.

Impact of the work of the Full Governing Body

Over the course of the last academic year, the Governing Body has demonstrated notable impact with regard to:

- The school had its Ofsted inspection in March 2025 and retained its 'Good' rating. The governors were found to have a clear vision for the school.
- The school has a clear plan to develop the areas of the school where change and improvement is necessary.
- A new restructured senior leadership team has been recruited and will in place for September, providing a platform for the school's continued growth.
- The school received an Attendance Award from the Fischer Family Trust, showing that the monitoring of attendance is robust.
- We conducted a wellbeing survey of all the staff to ensure that they are supported and listened to.
- We have instituted an annual planner and planned improvements to our monitoring practice, to improve our effectiveness and accountability.
- Raised the profile of governors in the school.

The main challenges faced and addressed by the Board this year have been:

- A change in leadership inevitably brings extra challenges to the school and the staff and required extra support to help people through the changes.

- Due to a change in leadership and therefore school priorities, monitoring was not as effective this year as it should have been. We have now drafted a new monitoring schedule and approach for the next academic year that will ensure that the major changes in the SDP will be thoroughly monitored.
- A new school due to be built nearby has been postponed until WCPS is full. This brings significant uncertainty about future class occupancies and therefore with regards to future school budgets as pressure will rise on class sizes in the short term but then recede once the new school opens in a few years' time.

Impact of the work of the Children's Committee

Over the course of the last academic year, the Children's Committee has demonstrated notable impact with regard to:

- Provided challenge and support to a new headteacher as they have reflected on how the school runs and what the priorities for change should be.
- Supported the Maths lead through monitoring visits to in evaluating and introducing the new Ark maths scheme.

The main challenges faced by this Committee this year have been:

- Change in leadership.
- Adapting and coping with a transition year.

Impact of the work of the Resources Committee

Over the course of the last academic year, the Resources Committee has demonstrated notable impact with regard to:

- Continued engagement with the library volunteers and the parish council over the future of the community managed library on site
- Proposing and supporting free flu vaccination provision for staff to reduce absence due to illness
- Engagement with external bodies including parish council and local business to optimise use of resources
- Sourcing alternative swimming provision with school pool unavailable
- Overseeing the transition of school ICT infrastructure (notably broadband connectivity) away from county sourced service

The main challenges faced by this Committee this year have been:

- Severe resource constraints, including high levels of staff absenteeism and unprecedented safeguarding and special education demands, greeting the arrival of our new headteacher and impacting the budget
- Less than 1% increase in per-pupil funding, keeping our school at the minimum allowed per-pupil funding

- Maintenance issues threatening the sustainability of the school swimming pool.

Governor Training

Governors work collectively, so we are always able to benefit from our different points of view and considerations within meetings. However, the Governing Body has also benefitted from training courses on the following topics throughout the course of the year:

- Safeguarding
- Preparing for Ofsted
- Balancing School Improvement and Well-Being
- Improving Outcomes for Disadvantaged Pupils
- The Early Years

Governor Monitoring

As well as attending meetings, governors are also expected to visit school to understand more about school life and particular areas of priority (typically linked with different areas of the curriculum, or school development).

Throughout the course of this year, governors have undertaken particular monitoring in relation to:

- Health & Safety walks
- SCR inspections
- Maths: introduction of the new ARK scheme
- PPF effectiveness

Compliance

The Governing Body has ensured that an effective safeguarding culture is in place. Our work includes:

- Safeguarding is the responsibility of all governors. All school visits should include some aspect of observing safeguarding culture.
- The safeguarding link governor performs a monitoring visit each half term, examining the SCR and other safeguarding practice.
- Safeguarding has a standing item on every agenda and we receive reports from the headteacher on the subject at all FGB meetings, including for example, numbers of referrals, statistics on logged concerns and statistics on internet filtering.
- The health and safety link governor performs a termly walk around the school to monitor any hazards that may have arisen.

The Governing Body has ensured that the relevant policies and procedures are in place by:

- Reviewing policies as they are updated.

Forward Planning

The governing body is in the enviable position of having no vacancies and all positions are filled. The vice-chair has completed the LA's 'Taking the Chair' training and so there is some succession planning for the role of chair.

An annual planner has been put together for the next academic year, so we will be able to hit the ground running with monitoring aligned to the priorities identified in the School Development Plan that is already in place.

We have been in contact with the local authority and the developers of the new Waterbeach town about the development in the future of a new primary school on the site. The development of the town and the future opening of a new school are a major consideration in our strategic plans.

A key priority for the next academic year is to continue raising the profile of governors amongst the staff and to provide more opportunities for both formal and informal interactions.

'Inclusion for All Framework'

Inclusion is the removal of barriers and ensuring a culture of belonging for all pupils. Within the 'Inclusion for all Framework' we will create a sense of belonging and promote well-being and attendance through safeguarding, curriculum, special education needs and disabilities support, behaviour and transition.

Other information and Contact

Further information regarding the work of the Governing Body can be found at:

<https://www.waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk/page/?title=Governors&pid=10>

In addition the chair can be contacted at chair@waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk and the clerk at clerk@waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk.