

Hardenhuish Governing Body Report to Parents 2018

Introduction

The Governing body of Hardenhuish school is made up of a mix of community, parent and staff governors. In addition, there is a local authority governor and the Headteacher also sits on the board with full voting rights.

The governing body has three core functions that frame everything it does:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction;
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- overseeing and ensuring effective financial performance.

The full governing body meets six times a year at the end of a cycle of Policy and Resources, Staffing, Curriculum, and Pupils and Parents committee meetings. The governors also form panels to deal with matters such as admissions, pay, and the Headteacher's appraisal.

Outside the meeting cycle, governors visit faculties within the school, attend events, interview potential staff, and liaise on finance, attendance, equalities, and other areas. There are also governors dedicated to Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium, Child Protection, and Health and Safety.

Governors work closely with the headteacher and senior leadership team and also play a key role in monitoring the school finances with the Chair of Policy and Resources actively involved in the audit and preparation of the annual report. The Chair of P&R also attended seminars hosted by our auditors Bishop Fleming. The Responsible Officer, an appropriately qualified governor, also carries out internal audit checks and reports those to governors.

Governor Activity in 2018

Ofsted Inspection

A team of governors met one of the Ofsted inspectors when the team visited the school in January. The lead inspector concluded:

“They have improved their knowledge of what goes on in the school on a day-to-day basis, as well as sharing the leadership's vision. Governors were able to show inspectors how they have constructively challenged the leadership as well as supporting it. Governors are now more active in liaising with staff responsible for the various curriculum subjects and checking pupils' progress.”

He then set further targets for improvement – continuing to improve the attendance and progress of disadvantaged pupils to bring them more in line with the attendance and progress of other pupils and continuing to increase the rate of progress in the sixth form, particularly by reducing variability in achievement between subjects and between groups of students.

The governing body is now paying increased attention to these areas.

Training and learning opportunities

All governors received their annual safeguarding training and several attended additional courses such as Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Good Governance, New Governor, and the year-long NCTL Governor Leadership programme. There was additional attendance at the Academies Show in Birmingham, Wiltshire Governor Association meetings and networking events, and the National Governance Association regional conference.

Governor Activity

At the beginning of the school year most governors attended faculty and year group review meetings with the relevant departmental leaders, Mrs Percy, and other members of the leadership team.

During the course of the year, a number of governors visited their linked areas within the school to monitor the progress being made against departmental targets.

The Pupil Premium Governor attended a series of meetings focused specifically on the targeted progress of the children who benefit from additional funding to support their education. The SEN Governor also met, on a regular basis, the acting special needs co-ordinator to make sure children receiving extra help in and outside the classroom were making the right amount of progress. Both reported back to the governing body on their findings. The Child Protection Governor made regular reports to governors and liaised on any issues arising during the year, and the Health and Safety Governor attended meetings of the school's Health and Safety Committee.

One Governor with specific interests in data protection went to a Wiltshire Association of Secondary School Headteachers meeting with a focus on GDPR. Another attended the Chippenham Educational Foundation Meeting.

Governors attended their departmental events such as the Poetry Slam, visiting the new Year 7 on their residential trip to the PGL activities centre at Liddington and the Sixth Form Open Evening. A governor judged the popular Year 7 Smoothie Challenge. One governor also went to watch the Hardenhuish entries at the Rotary Senior Youth Speaks competition.

Celebrating Success assemblies were held at the end of the summer for each year group, and governors attended these and handed out awards to many of the children present. In the autumn, governors attended awards evenings for the Year 13 leavers and the Year 11 students who had taken public examinations this year.

Several governors attended the Remembrance Service at the school marking the centenary of the end of the First World War.

Governors are also involved with the Hardenhuish Educational Trust and the Friends of Hardenhuish. The first handles donations to the school and the second raises funds – both invest in adding value to the life of pupils at Hardenhuish. Governors joined the

Senior Leadership Team, staff, and Friends manning a stall in Chippenham for the Christmas Lights Switch-on in November.

One governor spent many months working on a new transport plan for the school and seeking out appropriate funding. This included attending council meetings discussing the development of the nearby Lidl store, and the impact that would have close to the school.

Finally, and very significantly, governors attended all the interviews for new teaching staff throughout the year, and played a leading role in the spring in the recruitment of the three new Assistant Headteachers.

Governing Body Changes

Rob Head was re-appointed as Community Governor in February. Geoff Wells, Kirsty Martin, Trevor Eddolls, and Viv Vines were re-appointed as Community Governors in July. Local Authority Governor Isabel Blackburn was also re-appointed

Parent governor Kirsty Clark left the board in July.

In October Kirsty Martin was elected Chair of Governors replacing Geoff Wells who had been Chair for several years. Rob Head was elected Vice Chair.

Isabelle Semichon joined the board in November.