

# Annual Governance Statement

## ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

### NORTH & SOUTH COWTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

As the Governing Body prior to the establishment of the Federation with Melsonby Methodist Primary School from 20 May 2019, we are proud of the school and its welcoming, inclusive ethos and strong family atmosphere.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Body at North & South Cowton Primary School are:

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

#### **Governance Structure**

The Governing Body was made up of governor roles as follows:

- 1 Parent Governor appointed by ballot of the parents at the school
- 1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority
- 1 Staff Governor appointed by ballot of the staff
- 1 Headteacher
- 2 Co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Body

The Governing Body appointed a NYCC Clerk who is responsible for arranging meetings, taking minutes and following up on all actions. The Clerk also advised on procedural matters and played a key role in the work of the Governing Body.

Governors were all appointed (except for the Headteacher), were independent and had equal status to each other. A Chair and Vice Chair were elected by the Governing Body and worked closely together with the Headteacher and the Clerk.

The Chair for the period November 2018 – May 2019 was Stuart Priestley, the LA Governor.

During the school year 2018-2019, the Governing Body was structured in accordance with the Circle method. This means that there are no committees, except

for the Headteacher's Appraisal & Pay Committee, which enables the whole Governing Body to take a broader and more informed holistic view of the school.

Governors visited the school regularly during the year to monitor key priority areas identified in the annual School Improvement Plan. Specific monitoring was undertaken for the areas of Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Finance. Formal monitoring visits allowed governors the opportunity to observe and communicate with staff and pupils and ensure that actions agreed in the School Improvement Plan were being actively undertaken by the school. After each visit, a formal report was prepared and presented at the next Governing Body meeting. From this the progress in the delivery of agreed school priority areas could be actively monitored and impact on the education of the pupils more effectively assessed.

From November 2018 to mid-May 2019, the Governing Body met 3 times, the Headteachers Appraisal Committee met twice. Several monitoring visits were undertaken, and governors visited informally supporting school events. The Chair of Governors had regular meetings with the Headteacher outside of full Governing Body meetings.

The overall attendance record of governors has been excellent, and every meeting has been quorate during the school year.

	Meetings 2018/19							
	<i>19th September 2019</i>	<i>22nd November 2019</i>	<i>SDC 10th December 2019</i>	<i>14th January 2019</i>	<i>4th March 2019 (Joint)</i>	Total		
Hannah Munro	1	1	1	1	1	5		100%
Stuart Priestley		1	0	1	1	3	1st mtg November	75%
Charlotte Noone	1	1	1	1	1	5		100%
Rachel Thompson	1	1		1	1	4	Not member SDC	100%
Debbie Cheesbrough	1	1		1	1	4	Not member SDC	100%
Trevor Watson	1	1		1	1	4	Not member SDC	100%

The Headteacher's Appraisal/Pay Committee was supported by an external advisor. Additionally, there was a facility to bring together small panel/committees as and when needed.

The Governing Body had previously set up Terms of Reference/Memorandum of Understanding for a Joint Panel with Melsonby Methodist Primary School, in order that we may collaborate, share the Headteacher and support each other as necessary.

The Governing Body and the committees all have clear terms of reference and all Governors are required to abide by a Code of Conduct.

### **Governing Body Skills & Knowledge Development**

The Governing Body recognised that to effectively fulfil its role, it must ensure that all its Governors have the required skills and knowledge to support the achievement of the school's priority objectives.

Recognising the importance of training and development, the Governing Body has a Training Policy in place and appoints a Training Governor to ensure that there is a committed and consistent focus on the areas where the Governing Body needs to develop. These are identified and monitored through regular skills audits of the Governing Body and an annual Governing Body self-evaluation. The Governing Body used relevant information channels to ensure it remains abreast and up to date on relevant developments in the education sector.

### **Governor Focus in Academic Year 2018-2019**

At the beginning of the school year, the Governing Body agreed with the Headteacher a School Improvement Plan. This annual planning document is used to identify the key areas on which the school and the Governing Body wish to focus during the academic year and includes scheduled milestones and measures to assist with ongoing monitoring as well as impact indicators so that the Governing Body could assure itself that the actions taken within the plan will improve teaching and learning outcomes for all children. In addition to school monitoring visits, the Governing Body used other school data including, SATS results, Local Authority data, government data (Analyse School Performance), FFT, the Ofsted Data Dashboard and regular internal school assessment data. Pupil progress and attainment is scrutinised through data analysis. Vulnerable groups including pupil premium and SEN children were closely monitored. During the 2018/2019 academic year, the school realised significant funding issues brought on by Government changes to school funding. A financial plan was put in place to ensure the impact to pupils will be reduced.

### **Governor focus areas for 2019-2020**

The Federation Governing Body will continue to develop and work towards the longer-term strategy of the school, to closely monitor financial status and progress against plan and to work closely with the Headteacher, staff and parent communities to deliver the best outcomes for our pupils.