



# BOUGHTON-UNDER-BLEAN & DUNKIRK METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Annual Statement of Governance for the Governing Body 2023-2024

*Doing all the good that we can*

We believe passionately that children have the right to achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally within an inclusive and safe school setting. We aim to make learning exciting and challenging, underpinned by our Methodist values of mutual care, courtesy, consideration and respect. We will prepare pupils to be upstanding members of the community and lifelong learners who live and work in an ever-changing diverse world.

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it* Proverbs 22:6

### **GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW**

In accordance with the Government's requirements, our governing board adheres to the three core strategic functions of a School Governing Body, ensuring:

- That the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the School are clearly defined
- That the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the School
- The sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

The Governing Body are fully supportive of the School's Methodist ethos and values as outlined below:

We aspire for all our children to become confident, happy and caring individuals who achieve personal success and develop a love of learning and a life built upon our school values.

**Boughton-under-Blean & Dunkirk is a Methodist Primary School and our Methodist values are at the heart of everything we do.**

- Forgiveness
- Friendship
- Trust
- Justice
- Perseverance

**These are then underpinned by our learning values.**

- Communication
- Independence
- Aspiration
- Engagement

**Our whole school ethos is built upon and guided by them. Every school policy is written with this in mind and implemented in way that reflects our vision of doing all the good that we can and developing children as life long learners.**

## **GOVERNING BODY CONSTITUTION**

The Governing Body of the school is made up of a maximum of 13 full members who give their time for the benefit of the school. The members undertake the following positions (for the respective terms of office):

- Head Teacher
- 1 Staff Governor (3 years) elected by the staff of the school
- 1 Ex-Officio Governor (ongoing) appointed by the Methodist Church
- 2 Foundation Governors (4 years) appointed by the Methodist church
- 2 Parent Governors (3 years) elected by the parents of the school
- 1 Local Authority Governor (4 years)
- 5 Co-opted Governors (3 years) appointed by the Governing Body

The Governing Body is further supported by a Clerk from The Education People Clerking Service, Debbie Stryzyk.

At the start of the academic year, the Board welcomed a new ex-officio governor. The Board voted to convert the Chair to a co-opted governor (utilising the vacant position that was held) allowing for a parent governor election to take place in T1. Across the rest of the year, 2 co-opted governors and 1 parent governor came to the end of their terms of office and decided not to continue their governance roles. This was due to personal circumstances, or because their children have now finished their time at this school. The foundation governor vacancy was filled by the Methodist church. Finally, the staff governor decided not to stand again after several years' service and an election took place at the end of T6 to appoint a new staff governor. One of year governors stepping down also held the role of Vice-Chair and so the Board conducted an election totalling a new Vice-Chair.

In total, the Board has welcomed 7 new governors in the 23/24 academic year and is pleased to confirm that they enter the 24/25 year with all governor roles filled and no vacancies. The Board would like to thank all departing governors for their contributions to the School.

The school website has been maintained with details of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body operates a circle model of monitoring, meeting as a Full Governing Body 6 times a year. In addition to this, Governors work in pairs to monitor particular areas of the School Improvement Plan. The Board considers annually whether this remains the most appropriate method of monitoring for the School.

Attendance records for FGB meetings can be found on the School website, along with any declared conflicts of interest.

## **GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Increasingly the focus is ensuring the right blend of skills is available to effectively discharge the Governing Body's duties. To assist with this, we undertake an annual skills audit using the template provided by the National Governance Association (NGA) to assess if there are any gaps in terms of knowledge and experience to enable the Governing Body to recruit appropriately skilled people. It is also used to close the gaps in experience for any existing Governors.

This is to be considered further when recruiting new governors and with a view to succession planning. The skills audit identifies potential areas where governors could benefit from additional training, and all governors are encouraged to take advantage of the series of courses operated by The Education People, to improve the overall skills base.

Governors have been divided into monitoring pairs, linked to key priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) to provide consistent monitoring of the school

priorities. In the academic year 23/24, we continued to hold a specific additional area of Monitoring, reviewing Whole School Wellbeing.

Governors undertaking monitoring visits complete a Monitoring Report following their visit, based upon The Education People standard template, which identifies what had been observed and any potential actions for either Senior Leadership Team or Governors. These reports are issued with any associated papers in advance of a Full Governing Body Meeting for review and discussion.

Non-Confidential Minutes of Full Governing Body Meeting are public documents and are available on the School website.

The following gives details of the Governor's areas of monitoring responsibility in 23/24:

Quality of Education: J Bennett, J Perkins  
Behaviours & Attitude: C Clayson, A Cummins  
Personal Development: C Clayson, A Cummins  
Leadership & Management: K Petts, C Clayson  
SIAMS: B Feast, R Pritchard  
Health & Safety: A Cummins, K Petts  
Safeguarding: J Perkins, J Bennett  
SEN: J Mayer, A Cummins  
EYFS: B Feast  
Wellbeing: K Petts  
Finance: D Munro, J Mayer  
Pupil Premium: J Mayer, D Munro  
Governor Training: J Mayer  
Data Protection: D Warner

#### **ACTIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT 2023-2024**

The key activities undertaken during the course of the academic year included:

- Reviewing, challenging and assessing the impact of school priorities from the School Improvement Plan (SIP), in particular with regard to Whole School Wellbeing.
- Undertaking strategic monitoring visits seeking evidence of the impact of the way the school delivers its learning.
- Reviewing and approving updated and additional school policies.
- Holding to Head Teacher to account in obtaining parental feedback and assessing the results.
- Welcoming a number of guests to the FGB meetings to further evidence aspects of school performance and to endorse Governor Monitoring findings.

The impact of the work undertaken by the Governing Body is that:

- Governors have actively strengthened their skillset to ensure effective governance and have improved their position with regards to ongoing succession planning and undertaken appropriate training through The Education People and Methodist Academies Schools Trust
- Governors have supported the Head Teacher to make budgetary decisions in response to cuts in funding and rising costs to purchase goods and services.
- Governors have provided an appropriate level of challenge to the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team as evidenced in the Monitoring Reports and Minutes of FGB meetings.

Under the new Chair of Governors, a Governing Body Self- Evaluation (supplied by The Key) was issued to all Governors. A full review and Action Plan was prepared and shared at the start of the new academic year, focusing on those areas with the lowest scores and/or the highest impact on the operation and effectiveness of the Board. In broad terms, these actions were:

- To improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Governing Body in the 3 key areas of Communication and Relationships, Monitoring and Visits to School, and FGB Meetings.
- To deepen and strengthen links with the School with particular focus on the role of the Teacher Governor, informal visits to School, and Recognition.

#### **Plans for Academic Year 2024-2025**

With a high number of newly appointed governors to The Board, the main focus this year is to ensure our governors are fully trained, supported and competent in the delivery of their roles. There will be a further Governing Body Self-Evaluation in T3/4 allowing those newer members to settle before we further assess and action-plan for our continued success and effectiveness. The Governing Body welcome any feedback or suggestions, and can be contacted through the School Office. Alternatively, the Chair of Governors, Mrs Jenny Mayer, can be contacted directly on [Jenny.Mayer@bad.kent.sch.uk](mailto:Jenny.Mayer@bad.kent.sch.uk)