



Leadgate Primary School



Annual Governance Statement

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/16

The Department for Education requires that Governing Bodies publish an annual statement to parents. Governing Bodies are the key strategic decision makers and vision setters in every school and academy and play a major part in the school's accountability. Governing Bodies have a vital role to play in driving up school and pupil performance and ensuring that resources are used well to ensure every child has the best possible education.

As the Governing Body of Leadgate Primary School we are proud of the school and its warm, welcoming, inclusive and strong family atmosphere. We fully support the school vision - "Caring , Sharing , Learning Together".

In accordance with the Government's requirements the Governing Body at Leadgate Primary School concentrates on the three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

In order to do this during the academic year 2015/2016 the Governing Body was made up of 12 governors as follows:

2 Parent Governors 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 Partnership Governors appointed by the Governing Body,

5 Co-opted governors appointed by the governing body based on a skills audit.

School governors are all volunteers and give a huge amount of their time for the benefit of the children. Governors (aside from the Headteacher) are all appointed, they are independent and have equal status to each other and while they may represent the views of their appointing body, they act first and foremost in the best interests of the school.

A Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the Governing Body and both work closely with the Headteacher and the Clerk. A professional Clerk is appointed (from the local Authority) who organises the meetings, takes minutes and follows up on any actions. The Clerk works closely with the Chair and Headteacher and advises on procedural matters and therefore plays a pivotal role in the work of the Governing Body.

During 2015/16 the Governing Body met 8 times, the Headteachers Appraisal Committee met twice, and the Pay Committee met once. There were 19 monitoring visits undertaken and governors also visited informally supporting school events such as plays, music evenings and Parent Teacher Association evenings. Furthermore the Chair of Governors met the Headteacher and Clerk on a weekly basis.

The Headteacher's Appraisal is supported by an external Education advisor from within the County. The Governing Body and the committees all have clear terms of reference.

The Governing Body takes part in the annual cycle of school improvement by its interpretation and analysis of school data including, SATS results, Local Authority data, government data (RAISEONLINE), Phonics Screening Check, Baseline Assessment, Ofsted Data Dashboard and regular internal school assessment data. Through data analysis pupil progress and attainment is scrutinised and vulnerable groups including pupil premium children are closely monitored. Data monitoring together with external reports such as Ofsted mean that the Governors play an active role in the development of the annual School Improvement Plan. This is further supported by termly statements and annual reports from all middle and senior leaders alongside working reports from all support staff.

Governors are also expected to undertake training to fulfil and improve their role. During 2015/16 a number of courses were undertaken individually. The Governing Body as a whole received training on Child Protection, Safeguarding and PHSE/British Values and Radicalisation. The Governing Body is a member of the National Governors Association and uses this and other relevant information channels to ensure it remains abreast and up to date on relevant developments in the education sector.

The major focus for the Governing Body in the last 12 months has been on :

- 1) Supporting the school in an ongoing period of transition from two separate schools into one primary school
- 2) Ensuring the school continues to deliver an excellent standard of education, achievement and attainment while non-target driven skills are also developed throughout the school.
- 3) Reviewing financial information to identify areas where savings can be made without impacting on the standard of learning delivered.
- 4) Ensuring staff across both sites continue to be developed and supported in their roles.

The Governing Body annually approves a yearly school budget and regularly monitors the in-year budget. It works closely with the Headteacher to monitor finance and the Local Authority Schools Financial Services. Close scrutiny of the budget during the financial year 2015/16 meant that the school was dealing with eliminating a substantial end of year deficit.

The governing body works closely with onsite private child care – ‘Happy Smiles’. This provides day care for children. Many of the children who attend the childcare eventually join the school and enjoy a smooth transition between these two settings.

Looking forward to 2016/17 the Governing Body will :

- 1) Continue to review and update school policies to ensure Leadgate Primary meets all its statutory obligations within the current OFSTED framework.
- 2) Review the current knowledge areas of all governors to establish any training needs or areas for development that can be addressed by Governor Training.
- 3) Continue to monitor and manage the school finance to ensure the school is operating at its most effective across two sites and within budget.

This report is just a snapshot of the activities and work that go on within the school by the incredibly strong team of dedicated staff and governors. Being a governor is a fulfilling role and if you would like to know more about the work of the governing body or have any comments/questions in respect of this statement please direct email enquiries to the Clerk: p2259.admin@durhamlearning.net