

GOVERNORS' HEALTH CHECK REPORT

Name of School: West Road Primary	Name of Headteacher: Mrs K Thompson	Date: Monday 23 April 2018
Name of System Leader: Mrs G Ayre	Attendees: Mr A Pettigrew Chair of Governors Mrs E Walker Mrs L Bramhill Ms N Clarke Mrs J Nassau	

Aspect	Evidence/Prompts	Evaluation		
		Emerging	Developing	Secure
Strategic Leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy				
a clear and explicit vision for the future set by the board and is communicated to the whole organisation;				✓
strong and clear values and ethos which are defined and modelled by the board, embedded across the organisation and adhered to by all that work in it, or on behalf of it;				✓
strategic planning that defines medium to long-term strategic goals, and development and improvement priorities which are understood by all in the organisation;				✓
processes to monitor and review progress against agreed strategic goals and to refresh the vision and goals				✓
mechanisms for enabling the board to listen, understand and respond to the voices of parents/carers, pupils, staff and local community				✓
determination to initiate and lead strategic change in the best interests of children and young people				✓
procedures to manage risk; ensuring that they are aligned with strategic priorities and improvement plans and that appropriate intervention strategies are in place				✓
an informed decision on whether to form, join or grow a group of schools				✓
2 Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance				
rigorous analysis of pupil progress and attainment information with comparison against local and national benchmarks and over time;				✓
clear processes for overseeing and monitoring school improvement and providing constructive challenge to executive leaders;				✓

a transparent system for performance managing executive leaders, which is understood by all in the organisation, linked to defined strategic priorities;			✓
effective oversight of the performance of all other employees and the framework for their pay and conditions of service;			✓
a regular cycle of meetings and appropriate processes to support business and financial planning;			✓
effective controls for managing within available resources and ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money.			✓
3 People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity	Emerging	Developing	Secure
understand the purpose and role of governance and have all the necessary skills, as outlined in the <i>Competency framework for governance</i> , to deliver it well			✓
effective chair and vice-chair with the ability to provide visionary strategic leadership;			✓
provide sufficient diversity of perspectives to enable robust decision making;			✓
recruited through robust and transparent processes against required skills which are set out in a role specification;			✓
use active succession planning to ensure the board, and the whole organisation, continues to have the people and leadership it needs to remain effective;			✓
employ a professional clerk, and as necessary a company secretary, to provide expert advice and guidance and to ensure the efficient and compliant operation of the board.			✓
4 Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities	Emerging	Developing	Secure
appropriate board and committee structures that reflect the scale and structure of the organisation and ensure sufficient and robust oversight of key priorities;			✓
clear separation between strategic non-executive oversight (governor) and operational (day-to-day) executive leadership which is supported by positive relationships			✓
processes for ensuring appropriate communication particularly to ensure transparency of decision-making;			✓
published details of governance arrangements which are reviewed regularly;			✓
5 Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements	Emerging	Developing	Secure

plans to ensure that key duties are undertaken effectively across the organisation such as safeguarding, inclusion, special education needs and disability (SEND), and monitoring and oversight of the impact of pupil premium and other targeted funding streams;			✓
6 Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance	Emerging	Developing	Secure
regular skills audits, aligned to the organisation's strategic plan			✓
processes for regular self-evaluation and review of individuals' contribution to the board as well of the board's overall operation and effectiveness;			✓
commissioning external reviews of board effectiveness			✓
documentation which accurately captures evidence of the board's discussions and decisions as well as the evaluation of its impact and which complies with legal requirements for document retention.			✓

This was a very positive visit with all areas deemed secure. This was elicited through a focused discussion with governors, a brief conversation with the headteacher, viewing of the governors' section on the website and sampling of policies, minutes of meetings and other documentation e.g. reports of visits to the school.

The school is quite rightly looking very carefully now at need to do to aspects of governance relation to governors to secure an outstanding judgement in Leadership and Management in the future. Much is dependent on pupil outcomes this Summer which governors know they need to improve upon. Indeed, many of the systems, processes and practices undertaken by governors at West Road Primary School is worthy of sharing with other schools within the local area and beyond. The Chair has given permission for key documentation and ideas to be shared with other schools e.g. Governor Induction, Action Plans etc.

There are many strengths:

- A committed and strong group of governors who are very ably led by a forward-thinking and very experienced Chair of Governors.
- Governors work together well as a team and have pupils' achievement and well-being at the centre of all that they do.
- There is a wide range of expertise on the Governing Body and their skills are used well to drive the school plans and priorities forward and carry out their roles responsibly.
- Governors demonstrate that they understand the main strengths and areas for development of the school and through a range of visits, meetings and discussions are kept abreast of the latest information and updates.
- Governors welcome training and support to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills further so that that they can do their very best for pupils, staff and the local community.
- An audit of skills is used to identify gaps and shape plans for the future.
- Governors embrace health checks such as this one and also more detailed reviews e.g. teaching and learning to help celebrate successes, identify possible gaps and consider areas for further improvement.
- Governors attend each termly Standards and Effectiveness Partner (StEP) Meetings to obtain an objective view of the school.

- Governors monitor carefully how the school spends additional funding e.g. pupil premium funding, to meet priorities, and they also expect information as to whether this is having the required impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have a good grasp of how well pupils are achieving across the school and hold leaders to account.
- There is an appropriate blend of challenge and support. Challenge is seen in minutes and throughout documentation e.g. 19.03.18. they know that data and outcomes for some pupils need to improve this Summer.
- An accredited External Adviser is commissioned through the Teaching School to ensure robust and rigorous Performance Management of the Headteacher. Governors also monitor closely the management of teachers' performance and the links between this and teachers' pay progression.
- Safeguarding is checked regularly, and allocated governors carry out checks relating to this aspect e.g. audit by LB. Follow-up checks are also made to ensure all actions identified are addressed.
- Good structures are in place together with good communication so that roles and responsibilities carried out well and due to their signed Code of Conduct, there are clear expectations of high standards and appropriate contributions so that governors lead by example.

Areas for development

Governors through their self-evaluation systems have already identified a need for

- someone with financial expertise to be targeted when there is a vacancy on the governing body.
- governors to be even more active with the School Council. It was suggested that Curriculum could be a key theme here to align with the StEP visit this term.
- another questionnaire to be undertaken this year and to include all the staff e.g. Caretaker, Dinner Supervisors, TAs, administrative staff etc.
- the planned enhancements to the website to be undertaken as soon as possible.

Other suggestions arising from the Health Check are as follows:

Governors to sustain the existing good practice and enhance further by

- putting in place a Governors' Visits Book so that there is an immediate and concise overview of Governors' Visits which showcases their presence within the school.
- completing brief, bullet-pointed minutes of the weekly meetings between the Chair of Governors and Headteacher.
- looking at the Long-Term Plan/overview of the curriculum so that they are assured that it is broad and balanced and that pupils get their entitlement.
- sharing their good practice with other schools within the local area and beyond.