

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls  
2017-18**

The Governing Body's three core strategic functions are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school, its financial health, probity and value for money

**Governance arrangements**

The Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls (as reconstituted in October 2014) consists of a total of 15 governors as follows:

- 6 parent governors
- 6 co-opted governors
- 1 local authority governor
- 1 staff governor
- and
- the Headteacher

One co-opted governor, Ms Harper, resigned during the year and a new co-opted governor, Ms Niyazi was elected. One parent governor finished their term of office, Mr Billington, and a new parent governor, Dr Morgan, was elected to the governing body.

The full Governing Body meets twice in the autumn term, once in the spring term and twice in the summer term. There are three committees which meet once per term:

- Curriculum
- Finance (incorporating Premises when required)
- Staffing

Each committee reports back to the full Governing Body termly.

In addition, the Pay committee meets at least once per year. Its role is to satisfy the Governing Body that pay recommendations (following the completion of annual performance management reviews) and any other pay-related decisions are quality assured and in line with the school's pay and performance management policies.

The committees look in more detail at specific aspects of the school, to enable the governing body to adopt a high level strategic approach to governing the school.

Governors also serve on ad hoc panels to consider pupil disciplinary or staffing matters and appeals if required.

Governors participate in recruitment panels when there is a vacancy for a head of faculty or a member of the leadership team.

	Details of governors, including their respective roles and responsibilities and other required information, are published on the school website.
<b>Attendance record of governors</b>	All Governing Body and committee meetings must be attended by a specified minimum number of governors for decisions to be binding. Governors have an excellent record of attendance, details of which are published on the school website annually.
<b>Governing Body</b>	<p><b>October 2017:</b> Governors reviewed the summer 2017 GCSE results and initial analysis. Summer 2017 saw the first subjects (English and maths) based on the new GCSE syllabuses being examined and graded using the new 9 to 1 system, where a grade 4 is described officially by the Department for Education as a standard pass and a grade 5 as a strong pass. All other subjects were graded on the existing A* to G system for the final time.</p> <p>The school's Progress 8 at 0.74 provisionally and Attainment 8 at 53.2% were both well above national average, with progress being the strongest ever. Of those students who took the Ebacc suite of subjects 68% achieved a 4 or C and above in those subjects.</p> <p>The Governing Body elected Ms Barker as Chair and Mr Billington as Vice-Chair until his term of office ended in December 2017. Governors agreed the membership of committees, panels and link governor responsibilities.</p> <p><b>December 2017:</b> The Governing Body elected two Vice-Chairs, Janeen Hayat and Daniel Phelps, to assist the Chair of Governors with preparations in what was likely to be the year when Ofsted inspected the school.</p> <p>Governors discussed the possibility of whether the school might be expanded as the local authority had explored this with the school. Finding extra space, teacher recruitment and funding in the current climate were concerns as was the potential impact on local co-educational schools.</p> <p>The school's safeguarding policy is updated annually. Governors discussed the updates with members of the leadership team and ratified the policy. A number of other policies had been reviewed in committee and were ratified by the full governing body. Governors also received a report from the safeguarding link governor and the chair of governors who had completed a monitoring visit to check the school's Single Central Record. They were able to provide assurance that the required processes and procedures were being implemented robustly.</p> <p>The Headteacher gave her first termly report of the year to governors. The termly report enables governors to monitor and ask questions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student numbers and attendance including looked-after, SEN and pupil premium students</li> <li>- student progress, targets and tracking data</li> <li>- intervention plans to support student progress</li> <li>- safeguarding, behaviour and safety and exclusions data</li> <li>- progress with the school improvement plan</li> <li>- staff vacancies/recruitment and staff development/performance management</li> </ul>

- partnership work with other schools, SSAT and Leading Edge
- the new Teaching School Alliance and National Support School work (which the school gained at the end of July 2017)
- the Headteacher's new work as a National Leader in Education.

Specific items considered by governors were:

- The school's latest self-evaluation, testing its conclusions
- Pupil Premium report including attendance, exclusions and the effectiveness of interventions such as counselling for vulnerable students
- Year 7 numeracy and literacy catch-up report, including the impact of interventions and outcomes for students by the end of the year
- Equalities statement and objectives.

**March 2018:**

Governors noted that following a Section 8 (one day) Ofsted inspection, a draft report had been received by the school for factual checking. The final report was eagerly awaited as the leadership and governance of the school believed it now to be 'outstanding'. Within the latest inspection framework, Ofsted would need to return and conduct a Section 5 (two day) inspection if this was a recommendation of the Section 8 inspection.

Governors were given updated guidance on pupil exclusion panels from the local authority.

In response to the Headteacher's termly report, governors discussed:

- an increase in student turnover (leavers and joiners) and one student whose parents had elected to home school
- update on internal and external staff appointments, in particular the new heads of faculty for English and for maths appointed for September 2018 (governors participated on the selection panels for these key posts)
- the uncertainty surrounding the new GCSE grade boundaries in summer 2018
- data on Y11's progress, High Achieving Pupil Premium, Looked After Children , and other groups of students
- a new partnership with Forest School whereby each school benefits from support in specific subject areas.

Governors reviewed:

- proposed school visits, including overseas trips for which risk assessments would be required before approval
- staff involvement in the Erasmus-funded international research on project-based learning
- summary results of the staff survey
- link governor visit reports on behaviour, English, Science and ADT.

Governors ratified the revised examinations policy and discussed an initial draft for the revised data protection policy which had to be compliant with the requirements of the new GDPR coming into force on 25 May 2018.

Governors ratified the School Financial Value Standard 2018-19 (and reviewed 2017-18 action plan outcomes) and the Statement of Internal Control.

	<p>Governors were notified of a proposal by St Mary's Church to submit a planning application to extend the Welcome Centre and build a block of flats, both of which may overlook the school site. Governors agreed to monitor.</p> <p>Governors discussed the local authority's decision only to offer one additional form of entry and no new accommodation which wasn't sustainable in the view of the school and the governing body.</p> <p><b>May 2018:</b>  At the annual budget meeting the governing body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ratified the final out-turn statement for 2017/18 financial year and devolved capital out-turn</li> <li>- ratified the school's budget for 2018/19 including income and expenditure and the predicted carry forward (which was very small)</li> <li>- approved the three-year budget plan 2018-21 having noted certain uncertainties, including teacher and support staff pay rises and increases in pension contributions</li> <li>- noted likely sources of additional income from lettings, including renting space to the borough's Music Service, but accepted the need for more fundraising given the possible impact of the National Formula</li> <li>- reviewed and approved the Best Value Statement 2018/19.</li> </ul> <p>All had previously been discussed in detail and recommended for ratification by the Finance Committee. Governors welcomed the Finance Committee's decision to monitor the impact of budget reductions on a termly basis and to bring any concerns to the governing body</p> <p>Governors discussed the interim report on the phase one staff consultation on various models for restructuring Teaching &amp; Learning Responsibilities as the current model is under review. Governors agreed to review the phase two proposals with an updated timetable and governing body milestones at the summer term meeting.</p> <p>Governors ratified all the various GDPR documents and agreed to adopt the recently published GDPR policy from the local authority as it had been agreed to buy in its Data Protection Officer service as well.</p> <p>Governors discussed link governor reports on careers &amp; work-related learning, mathematics, performing arts and language and learning development.</p> <p>Details of the St Mary's planning application were discussed and queries posed by the school. The Chair agreed to write a letter to the planning committee setting out the governing body's concerns. Two other governors wrote letters as well expressing their concerns.</p> <p>The headteacher reported confidentially on performance management, as did the chair of governors.</p> <p><b>July 2018:</b> The governing body meeting was postponed until early September as it was unlikely to be quorate due to England's involvement in a World Cup match. The postponed meeting took place on 4 September 2018.</p>
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Governors received a report on the school trip to Zanzibar in July which had been very successful and potentially life-changing for some students.

Governors agreed to delegate a decision on a pilot project involving 1-2-1 tablet devices to a smaller group of governors due to timing constraints. The decision would be reported back to the October 2018 governing body meeting.

The TLR review stage two timetable was agreed and a summary report on progress to date.

The Headteacher presented her final report of 2017-18 (which had been first circulated in July). Governors asked for further details of two students whose parents/carers had opted to home-educate. Also further information at curriculum committee on the work the school is doing to increase the accuracy of predicted grades of the new GCSEs now that they have been examined for the first time in most cases.

Governors congratulated the school on yet again receiving two educational outcome awards from the SSAT for being in the top 10% of non-selective schools nationally for student progress and the top 20% for student attainment in 2017 examinations. Also for gaining a second accreditation within the SSAT's Framework for Exceptional Education – this time for transforming practice in the use of assessment and data.

Governors reviewed the policy checklist and noted the progress made so that there was a manageable number of reviews due in 2018-19. Three policies were ratified: Managing Sickness Absence; Charging; and Fundraising.

Governors also:

- reviewed the outcomes of the 2017-18 school improvement plan (SIP)
- noted that some actions were still in progress as they were part of the 3-year strategic plan 2017-20 and some had changed due to circumstances
- approved the school improvement plan (SIP) for 2018-19 - which governors had already had an opportunity to comment on.

#### **OFSTED INSPECTIONS**

At their final meeting of the school year, governors and the leadership team celebrated the successful outcome to the school's Section 5 Ofsted inspection in mid-June. The school is now officially judged to be 'outstanding'! The one area for improvement: for all teachers to use highly effective questioning to deepen pupils' understanding and learning' is now part of the school's improvement plan 2018-19.

Thanks must go to the Headteacher, her leadership team and all staff in the school for their dedication and hard work which continues year after year, whether the school is due for inspection or not. The most important thing for governors and staff alike is that the girls leave the school as confident, happy and successful young women who are ready for the next stage of their lives. We are pleased to report that this comes across strongly in the latest Ofsted inspection report.

<p><b>Curriculum Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> The Chair and Vice-Chair were elected. Terms of reference were reviewed.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the detailed analysis of summer 2017 GCSE results</li> <li>• attainment of specific groups including pupil premium, SEND</li> <li>• subject-specific factors where progress was not as good as expected</li> <li>• Key Stage 3 tracking data</li> <li>• Draft Pupil Premium report</li> <li>• Update on SIP actions including faculty self-reviews, self-evaluation activities and school-based micro-research.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors reviewed the arrangements for residential and overseas trips to include Zanzibar for approval at next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the following policies: sex and relationships education, exams, lockdown procedures, as well as Waltham Forest’s Behaviour, Attendance and Children Missing Education exclusions guidance, which were all recommended for ratification by the governing body.</p> <p>Governors received a detailed progress update on school improvement plan actions relating to this committee.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the official Inspection Data Summary Report for the school and noted the strong progress, with English in the top 1% national for 2016 and 2017. Also that WSfG’s disadvantaged students consistently outperform non-disadvantaged students nationally. Also the current Y11 mock exam results and predicted grades.</p> <p>As part of its ‘self-challenging school’ work, governors reviewed the faculty self-review reports and self-evaluation judgements with next steps. Governors concluded there is a very robust system in place.</p> <p>The school’s submission to SSAT’s Framework for Excellence for accreditation in transforming practice in use of assessment and data was shared with governors.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors received updates on current progress data for all year groups and explored trends and areas for future focus with school leaders.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the updated Ofsted action plan following the latest Section 5 inspection</li> <li>- feedback from parent/carers surveys for all year groups</li> <li>- the residential trip to Zanzibar</li> <li>- a report on the Headteacher’s trip (self-funded) to Apple HQ with the SSAT Leading Edge group of 17 headteachers</li> <li>- an update on the school’s Erasmus+ funded research on project based learning</li> <li>- update on the Teaching School Alliance work and progress in its first year.</li> <li>- the Deputy Headteacher’s article on use of assessment, data, policies and monitoring to support teaching and learning following accreditation success.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Finance &amp; Premises Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> The Chair was elected and the Terms of Reference were reviewed and agreed with no amendments.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quarter 2 (half-year) budget monitoring report</li> <li>- additional income due from Teaching School status</li> <li>- National Funding Formula update and local funding formula consultation responses</li> <li>- 3-year budget plan update.</li> </ul> <p>The LA's updated Financial Regulations including a scheme of delegation were recommended for Governing Body approval as were the updated lettings policy and critical incident plan.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Pupil Premium report to parents for governing body approval</li> <li>- the Y7 numeracy and literacy catch-up premium report for governing body approval</li> <li>- the Asset Register and annual stock take certificate</li> </ul> <p>The committee approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the audit of the School Fund account (with no recommendations from the auditors)</li> <li>- the business interests and the gifts/hospitality registers</li> <li>- the latest health and safety report with a focus on security and trees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors scrutinised the quarter 3 budget monitoring report including expenditure to date and predicted out-turn. Likely in-year deficit due to some higher than expected one-off costs and some unexpected increases in operational costs, eg for recycling, weather events. Virements and additional allocations were endorsed as was the list of payments over £10K.</p> <p>Governors discussed various options and ideas for saving money.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and approved the completed Schools' Financial Value Standard, including outcomes from the 2017-18 action plan, and the Statement of Internal Control for ratification by the governing body</p> <p>The school's budget allocations for 2018/19 and 3-year budget were reviewed. The termly H&amp;S report was discussed.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors scrutinised and endorsed the end of year budget monitoring report (Q4) and the final out-turn for the governing body's budget ratification meeting.</p> <p>Governors agreed the 1-year budget plan for ratification by the governing body Earmarked funds for carry-forward were also agreed.</p> <p>The 3-year projected budget plan was discussed and endorsed for ratification by the governing body. Updates to the 3-Year Budget Plan would continue as a</p>
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	<p>standing item on each Finance Committee agenda, to enable the business manager to alert them to any developments, positive or otherwise.</p> <p>Best value statement was reviewed and recommended for endorsement by the governing body. Year-end write-offs (none), virements and additional allocations, direct debit and standing order mandates, payments over £10K and the schedule of contracts/SLAs were reviewed and approved as necessary.</p> <p><u>Final meeting of 2017/18:</u> Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quarter 1 budget monitoring report</li> <li>- an update on the 3-year budget plan and revised working scenario in light of latest information available</li> <li>- an update on negotiations with the borough's music service to hire The Lodge and use the school for music lessons.</li> </ul> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- and remitted policies on fundraising and on charging for ratification by the governing body</li> <li>- the business manager's report on the 5-year premises improvement plan's progress</li> <li>- a report on the impact of the increase in school meals price in September 2017 and were pleased to find that take-up had increased</li> <li>- the termly health and safety update.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staffing Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> The Chair and Vice-Chair were elected. Terms of reference were reviewed and recommended for governing body approval unamended.</p> <p>Governors received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an update on staffing and recruitment</li> <li>• a summary 'map' of the school's staff wellbeing</li> <li>• comparative data on staff attendance</li> <li>• a report on continuous professional development for 2017-18.</li> </ul> <p>Governors reviewed policies on recruitment and selection, disciplinary procedures, maternity and pay and recommended these to the governing body for ratification.</p> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors discussed the staffing update and the continuing professional development reports.</p> <p>There was a detailed discussion on the TLR review consultation document, the changing context in education and possible model structures which reflect external factors now affecting the school, particularly recruitment of new faculty heads in core subjects.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors received updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- resignations and the recruitment position for September 2018 and other staffing matters, including the TLR staffing structure review</li> <li>- staff training and development</li> </ul>

	<p>- two temporary posts for additional responsibilities: one for student leadership, the other for oracy, and a career development opportunity for an associate assistant headteacher</p> <p>- Teaching School Alliance opportunities for staff in participating secondary schools to apply for four temporary research posts.</p> <p>Governors also reviewed the LA model HR policy on managing sickness absence and recommended it for ratification by the governing body.</p>
<p><b>How to contact the Governing Body</b></p>	<p>The Governing Body would be pleased to receive comments/questions from parents/carers. Please contact the Chair of Governors via the school office or via <a href="mailto:info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk">info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk</a></p>