

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls  
2015-16**

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 (currently 1 of whom is a member of staff)
- 1 local authority governor
- 1 staff governor
- and
- the Headteacher

One co-opted governor, Ms Dimopoulou, resigned due a career move outside London and a new co-opted governor, Ms Hayat was elected. Staff governor, Ms Hallas, completed her term of office and a new staff governor was elected. One parent governor, Ms Scull, resigned towards the end of the summer term 2016.

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 and one sub-committee which meets as required:

- Curriculum
- Finance
- Staffing
- Premises (a sub-committee of Finance)

There is also a Pay committee which meets at least once per year to:

- review pay recommendations regarding staff pay (following the completion of annual performance management reviews)
- address any other pay-related matters.

The committees look in detail at specific aspects of the school, carrying out preparatory work to enable the governing body to adopt a 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 also participate in recruitment panels when there is a vacancy for a head of faculty or a member of the leadership team.

A list of governors including their roles and responsibilities is published on the school website.

<p><b>Attendance record of governors</b></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Governing Body</b></p>	<p><b>October 2015:</b> Governors reviewed the summer 2015 GCSE results. These were the school's best results ever with 73% of students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs including English and maths. Disadvantaged students achieved in the top 1% nationally and the school had been invited to join the London Schools Gold Club. The governing body discussed the initial analysis and the Headteacher reported on variances from predicted outcomes. Governors reviewed the curriculum model proposal for first teaching from September 2016 prior to consultation with parents/carers of Y9 students. Governors were made aware of responsibility to read Sections 1 and 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015) and to return their confirmation slips.</p> <p><b>December 2015:</b> 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 data</li> <li>- progress with the school improvement plan</li> <li>- staff vacancies/recruitment and staff development/performance management</li> <li>- partnership work with other schools, SSAT and Leading Edge.</li> </ul> <p>Specific items considered by governors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- presentation and discussion re school's visual identity review</li> <li>- support given to vulnerable students</li> <li>- interventions offer broadened to wider range of Y11 students</li> <li>- wellbeing programme to be offered to Y11 students</li> <li>- analysis of Y7 attainment in reading, writing and maths</li> <li>- development of new attainment system for KS3</li> <li>- Quality Assurance Review (QAR) to be conducted in February 2016 by WF Challenge.</li> <li>- the final GCSE curriculum model and timeline for introduction autumn 2016</li> <li>- the proposed targets for GCSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % A*-C including English and maths and A*-A grades</li> <li>• whole school average attainment and progress</li> <li>• attendance</li> </ul> </li> <li>- report on pupil premium expenditure</li> <li>- website compliance review and publication of governor information.</li> </ul> <p><u>External Review of Governance</u> Governors discussed the report of the external review of governance, which was very positive. The recommendations would be considered further and incorporated in the governing body's SIP and progress monitored.</p> <p>Governors ratified:</p>

- Equalities Statement; Pay policy, Data Protection policy; Financial Regulations
- the annual Health & Safety report for submission to the local authority.

**March 2016:** The Headteacher's report included all the items listed above. In particular governors were pleased that the school:

- was in the top 10% for pupil premium outcomes and progress
- had received a Pupil Premium awards 'Local Winner' award for 2015
- appears in the Good Schools Guide 2016 for the first time.

Governors discussed:

- analysis of pupil achievement, progress and standards
- draft QAR report from WF Challenge partners
- fixed term exclusions
- progress with the School Improvement Plan and schedule for 2016/17, including governor input
- letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner that all schools should become academies by 2022. Governors set up a working party to monitor and research.

Governors ratified:

- a large number of new statutory policies supplied by the LA policies, which had been scrutinised by relevant committees
- the School Financial Value Standard and Statement of Internal Control.

Governors' Code of Practice addendum introduced to include consent to publication of governor information on the school website. Governors signed forms at the meeting.

**May 2016:** This was the annual budget meeting where the governing body:

- considered and ratified the school's budget for 2016/17 and the three-year budget plan
- signed off the out-turn statement for 2015/16 financial year
- reviewed and approved the Best Value Statement 2016/17.

All had previously been discussed in detail and recommended for ratification by the Finance Committee.

- discussed the impact of funding cuts and the likely impact of the impending National Funding Formula.

In order to make savings, governors agreed to:

- continuing cuts being made to resource and maintenance budgets
- reducing staffing costs over three years by not necessarily replacing staff and regular reviews of the staffing structure
- to increase the school's lettings income (new provider tender).

Governors ratified the appointment of a new Deputy Headteacher recommended by the appointment panel (including two governors) after a two-day selection process.

Governors reviewed progress with the external review of governance's recommendations. Chair had applied to become a National Leader of Governance and had been invited to join the governing body of a local primary school to provide support.

	<p>Governors were delighted to learn that the school had won two SSAT awards for being in the top 10% of non-selective schools for achievement and progress.</p> <p><b>July 2016:</b> The main business of the summer term meeting was the school improvement plan (SIP) and school self-evaluation, plus the latest student progress data.</p> <p>Governors agreed the final update on the 2015/16 SIP outcomes and requested a high level summary of actions and achievements.</p> <p>Governors had previously had an opportunity to review and comment on the draft leadership section of the SIP for 2016/17 as well as their link faculty SIPs. The final draft of the SIP for 2016/17 (year three of the three-year strategic plan) was endorsed.</p> <p>Governors also noted the work the school is doing in relation to KS3 following the Wilshaw report, 'The Wasted Years', including student voice which will be addressed in the SIP and in faculty SIPs.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the school self-evaluation framework and made some requests concerning the presentation of the information.</p> <p>Governors discussed the Headteacher's report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student attendance</li> <li>- fixed term exclusions</li> <li>- the final predictions for summer 2016 GCSE student attainment</li> <li>- student progress data by year group.</li> </ul> <p>Governors ratified policies on: self-evaluation; marking, feedback and assessment; anti-bullying; cover; educational visits; positive behaviour for learning; flexible working. They also reviewed the policy checklist/schedule for 2016/17. The SEN budget plan was approved for submission to the local authority.</p> <p>A final update on staffing appointments and recruitment for September 2016 was received.</p> <p>During the year, a governors' task and finish marketing group provided input into the school's re-brand project, ready for the launch at the start of the 2016/17 academic year.</p>
<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 2016 GCSE results provided subject by subject and performance against national results</li> <li>• attainment of specific groups including pupil premium, SEN</li> <li>• attainment of individual pupils across all subjects</li> <li>• areas for improvement and evaluation of intervention plans</li> </ul>

	<p>Governors discussed elements of new Teaching &amp; Learning and the Marking, Feedback and Assessment policies being piloted for ratification by the full governing body later in the year.</p> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors agreed the arrangements for proposed residential/overseas trips for 2015/16. Link visit report presented by link governor for Science.</p> <p>Governors received: - an update on changes to school self-evaluation and discusses proposed new procedures on work sampling, collaborative book looks and tutor observations. - further details on the work of WF Challenge Partners Governors considered the RAISEonline, Ofsted Inspection Dashboard and FFT Aspire Dashboard reports on the school and interrogated the data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• progress and achievement</li> <li>• gaps between pupil premium versus non pupil premium students</li> <li>• in-school subject variances</li> </ul> <p>- a progress update on changes to the KS3 assessment systems, including Y7 baseline assessments, summer exams and other measures to be used.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• latest predictions for GCSE results and Progress 8</li> <li>• 2015-16 cohort profiles, Y7 attainment data, Y8 &amp; 9 progress data</li> <li>• evaluation report on the Accelerated Reader programme</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed: - the issues around girls' mental health and provision of support in WF and asked for a presentation on this in autumn 2016 - the draft QAR report and recommendations</p> <p>Governors reviewed the draft Self-Evaluation and the draft Anti-Bullying policies and suggested amendments.</p> <p>Governors receive updates on the school's work on international links, business and enterprise activities, collaboration with feeder primary schools.</p>
<p><b>Finance Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> The Chair and Vice-Chair were elected and the Terms of Reference were amended for approval. Governors reviewed: - the quarter 2 (half-year) finance report - the bid process for allocating funding for school improvement - the LA-revised Financial Regulations and raised some queries.</p> <p>Governors: - approved the financial scheme of delegation and bank mandates - agreed the school should keep a register of individual transactions over £10,000 - reviewed the latest health and safety report and special focus for next report.</p>

	<p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors scrutinised the quarter 3 report including expenditure to date, variances and predicted out-turn. Approved the School Fund 2014-15 audited accounts.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the declaration of business interests and the gifts/hospitality registers</li> <li>- the completed Schools' Financial Value Standard and Statement of Internal Control for ratification by the governing body</li> <li>- approved the appointment of a new lettings provider for 12-months.</li> <li>- received a report on the positive outcome of the procurement and contracts audit conducted by the LA.</li> <li>- reviewed a report from the DFE's financial efficiency matrix putting the school in the top decile nationally</li> </ul> <p>The school's budget allocation for 2016/17 was discussed, in particular the need to continue to identify savings in light of the proposed NFF, subject to priorities agreed.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors scrutinised the end of year finances (Q4) and budget plans in preparation for the governing body's budget meeting. The impact of funding cuts was examined and options for savings considered for 2016/17 and over three years. Governors discussed principles that might be adopted. Best value statement and year-end write-offs recommended for approval. Governors reviewed a progress update on the 2015/16 SFVS action plan and were briefed on the National Funding Formula consultation and likely impact on the school if the proposed formula was adopted by the Government.</p> <p>Final meeting of 2015/16:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- governors undertook benchmarking and best value training</li> <li>- governors examined national vs WSfG benchmarking data on staffing costs and on student achievement data using the DfE's efficiency metric</li> <li>- governors reviewed quarter 1 budget monitoring report and the termly H&amp;S report.</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.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staffing report and discussed teacher recruitment, agency staff and interim appointments</li> <li>- data on sickness absence (noting it was very low for the public sector)</li> <li>- report and evaluation of staff training and development in 2014/15</li> <li>- the pay policy for 2015/16 and a group of statutory HR policies from the LA.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b></p> <p>Governors received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an update on staffing and recruitment</li> <li>• staff professional development for the current year based on SIP priorities</li> <li>• the staffing review summary and discussed the recommendations.</li> </ul> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- staff attendance data</li> </ul>

	<p>- final draft cover and complaints policies and recommend for ratification  - six new and five revised draft HR policies from the LA – either statutory or best practice.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b>  Governors were updated on resignations and the recruitment position for September 2016. Governors also looked at the past year’s data on vacancies and the number of applications received. Promotional pack revised and school only advertising online as print very expensive.</p>
<b>Premises Sub-Committee</b>	<b>2015-16:</b> Premises items were addressed at Finance Committee meetings each term.
<b>How to contact the Governing Body</b>	The Governing Body would be pleased to receive comments/questions from parents/carers. Please contact the Chair of Governors, Gillian Barker, via the school office or via <a href="mailto:info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk">info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk</a>