

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls  
2014-15**

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 reconstituted in October 2014 and consists of a total of 15 governors as follows:  
 6 parent governors  
 6 co-opted governors (1 of whom is a member of staff)  
 1 local authority governor  
 1 staff governor  
 and  
 the Headteacher

Two parent governors (Ms J Athill and Ms J Harper) completed their terms of office shortly before reconstitution. At reconstitution, Ms Harper applied and was elected as a co-opted governor. Two new parent governors (Dr A Shah and Mr D Phelps) were elected by the parent/carers 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 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.

<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.
<b>Governing Body</b>	<p><b>September 2014:</b> Governors reviewed the 2014 GCSE result. These were the school's best results ever with 75% of students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs including English and maths. The governing body looked at an initial analysis by subject identifying any variances from predicted outcomes.</p> <p><b>October 2014:</b> The Governing Body reconstituted at an extraordinary meeting on 22 October 2014. It reduced in number from 21 to 15 governors as required by new legislation. All governors completed skills audits prior to reconstitution.</p> <p><b>December 2014:</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>- the GCSE curriculum model review and timeline for introduction autumn 2015</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 in relation to looked-after students.</li> </ul> <p>Governors ratified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- various school policies</li> <li>- the SEND information report for publication on the school website</li> <li>- the annual Health &amp; Safety report for submission to the local authority.</li> </ul> <p><b>March 2015:</b> The Headteacher's report included all the items listed above. In particular governors were pleased that the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- was in the top 10% for pupil premium outcomes</li> <li>- had submitted an entry for a national pupil premium award.</li> </ul> <p>Governors considered intervention support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific groups of vulnerable students</li> <li>• all Y9 students on spelling, punctuation and grammar support</li> <li>• Y7 catch-up.</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- progress with the proposed curriculum model changes for 2015/16 and with options choices for current Y9 students</li> </ul>

- teaching and learning review conducted by external consultants
- the school's budget share allocation for 2015/16 which would be 1.1% less than 2014/15 and the budget plan adjustments required
- the 2015-2018 provisional funding allocations and the need to make substantial savings over the next three years
- agreed the Finance Committee would look at principles and potential savings in preparation for the full governing body budget meeting in May 2015.

The Chair reported on:

- Governors' Day when governors spent the day in school undertaking training, faculty visits and strategic planning work
- Governance action plan: an annual forward work plan was introduced and approved
- New HR advisers, Browne Jacobson appointed following a tendering process by three governors, the headteacher and school business manager.

Following recommended good practice, governors agreed that an external review of governance be commissioned, to take place during the summer term 2015. The school's school improvement consultant would conduct the review and report back in the autumn term 2015.

**May 2015:** This was the annual budget meeting where the governing body:

- considered and ratified the school's budget for 2015/16 and the three-year budget plan
- signed off the out-turn statement for 2014/15 financial year

All had previously been discussed in detail and recommended for ratification by the Finance Committee. In order to make savings, governors agreed to:

- a number of proposed projects being cancelled for the foreseeable future
- 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.
- agreed to seek to increase the school's lettings income.

Governors were delighted to learn that the school had won a national pupil premium award as well as three SSAT awards for being in the top 10% of comprehensive school for achievement, progress and pupil premium attainment.

**July 2015:** The main business of the summer term meeting was the school improvement plan (SIP) and self-evaluation, plus the latest student progress data.

Governors considered and endorsed:

- the school self-evaluation document
- a final update on the 2014/15 SIP outcomes
- the final draft of the SIP for 2015/16 (year two of the three-year strategic plan) including the draft development plan for the governing body.

Governors had previously had an opportunity to review and comment on the draft leadership section of the SIP for 2015/16 as well as their link faculty SIPs.

Governors reviewed:

- the final predictions for summer 2015 GCSE student attainment

	<p>- Y10 and Y9 progress data towards GCSEs in 2016 and 2017 respectively  - options for a new Key Stage 4 curriculum model for 2016/17 and the timeline for consultation with staff and parents/carers.</p> <p>Governors ratified policies on asset management, whistleblowing and searching students.</p> <p>A final update on staffing appointments and recruitment for September 2015 was received. The SEN budget plan was approved for submission to the local authority.</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 2014 GCSE results provided subject by subject</li> <li>• attainment of specific groups and performance against national results</li> <li>• areas for improvement and intervention plans</li> <li>• a report on pupil premium initiatives and their impact.</li> </ul> <p>Governors commended the school’s schedule of work regarding improvements to pedagogic and data intelligence from the SIP.</p> <p>The SEN link governor reported that the new SEND information report was on track for approval by governors in December.</p> <p>New/revised numeracy, child protection and examinations policies were agreed for ratification by the full governing body.</p> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors considered the FFT Governors’ Dashboard and RAISEonline 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> <li>• Year 11 student destinations.</li> </ul> <p>Governors received the teaching and learning review and were briefed on actions taken and events scheduled. Governors discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strengths and areas for development identified</li> <li>- how this review will inform the school’s self-evaluation policy, quality assurance and coaching strands of the SIP</li> <li>- the need to review the school’s pay, performance management, marking and assessment policies.</li> </ul> <p>Governors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- updated on progress with SIP actions on marking and assessment and on information for parents regarding GCSE reform, exams support and careers guidance</li> <li>- assured that the school met the statutory requirements for SEN students and the SEND report was up on the school website.</li> </ul> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Governors considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the final set of student progress data for the year</li> <li>• current predictions for GCSE results</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• science curriculum options, student needs and course delivery with reference to prior attainment data</li> <li>• the new progress and attainment 8 measures to be introduced.</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the proposed new curriculum model and parental consultation timeline.</li> <li>- the collaborative borough secondary schools improvement programme, WF Challenge</li> <li>- a SIP update on behaviour for learning, anti-bullying policy and borough-wide policy on use of restraint.</li> </ul>
<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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quarter 2 finance report and asked for an asset replacement strategy to be drafted</li> <li>- the contracts summary and requested some extra details to be included.</li> </ul> <p>Governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- approved the financial scheme of delegation and bank mandates</li> <li>- noted that the school's cleaning contract had been renewed following a retendering process involving other schools</li> <li>- noted a disaster recovery plan was being drafted and requested contact details in the existing emergency plan be updated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Governors scrutinised the quarter 3 report including expenditure to date, variances and predicted out-turn. Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the new critical incident and business continuity plan</li> <li>- a new asset management policy</li> <li>- the termly H&amp;S update</li> <li>- the completed Schools' Financial Value Standard and Statement of Internal Control and asked for some minor additions to be included before these went to the governing body for ratification</li> </ul> <p>The school's budget allocation for 2015/16 was discussed, in particular the need for savings and priorities to be identified. Governors requested proposals including options appraisals for the next meeting.</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 2015/16 and over three years. Sensitivity analysis requested. Best value statement and year-end write-offs approved. Final meeting of 2014/15:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- governors reviewed quarter 1 finance report</li> <li>- discussed local funding formula consultation</li> <li>- agreed asset management policy for governing body approval</li> <li>- agreed to continue with their current policy of not paying governor allowances.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staffing Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> The election of the chair and vice-chair was held over until the governing body reconstituted. Committee terms of reference were reviewed.</p>

	<p>Governors were informed that the school was fully staffed and that the staff training programme for the year, based on the needs of the school improvement plan, was up and running.</p> <p>Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the draft HR support tender document</li> <li>- a new Disclosure Barring policy from the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Chair of committee was elected.</p> <p>Governors received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an update on staffing and recruitment</li> <li>• a report on staff professional development</li> <li>• an update on the HR tender process was provided (governors were on the tender panel)</li> <li>• an update on DBS checks completed</li> <li>• SIP progress update including details of staff wellbeing initiatives</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> <li>- draft cover and complaints policies and gave feedback</li> </ul> <p>A forward work plan had now been drafted for updating by the committee chair.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b> Vice-chair elected.</p> <p>Governors were updated on resignations and recruitment position for September 2015. Other schools experiencing recruitment difficulties but not WSfG so far. Staff vacancies now impact-assessed before advertising. Governors agreed updated whistleblowing policy.</p>
<p><b>Premises Sub-Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Autumn term:</b> Terms of reference reviewed. Chair/Vice-Chair same as Finance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Safety (H&amp;S) annual report agreed for ratification by the governing body before going to the LA.</li> <li>• Governors received the school's H&amp;S update and agreed some amendments to the draft H&amp;S policy provided by the LA before it went to the governing body for approval.</li> <li>• Lettings policy was agreed for governing body approval.</li> <li>• Governors discussed the school's 3-year premises improvement plan, use of school lodge and several proposed projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring term:</b> Premises items addressed at Finance Committee.</p> <p><b>Summer term:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lettings income report considered</li> <li>• Discussed how to increase income and requested proposals</li> <li>• Agreed new lettings service providers to be researched</li> <li>• Progress re premises improvement plan reported.</li> <li>• H&amp;S update received.</li> </ul>
<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, Gillian Barker, via the school office or via <a href="mailto:info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk">info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk</a></p>