

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls
2019-20**

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 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

During the year, two of our parent governors, Ms Sanderson and Mr Clifford, resigned. We wish them both well and thank them for their considerable contributions to the governing body. Two new parent governors were elected, Ms Balibrea and Mr Saunders, and they attended their first meeting in the summer term.

Ms Hayat came to the end of her term of office in May 2020 and was re-appointed as a co-opted governor. Mr Ramlagan's term of office as staff governor was extended until June 2021 with staff consent.

Sincere thanks goes to all governors for their commitment and contribution to the governing body of the school during their terms of office. It takes time and dedication and is entirely voluntary.

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 & Premises
- Staffing

Each committee reports back to the full Governing Body termly. During 2019-20, governors agreed to merge the Staffing Committee with Finance & Premises, to form a Resources committee to be operational from September 2020.

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.

	<p>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.</p> <p>Governors also serve on ad hoc panels to consider pupil disciplinary or staffing matters and appeals if required.</p> <p>Governors participate in recruitment panels when there is a vacancy for a head of faculty or in the leadership team. In January 2020, Ms Davies announced her intention to retire from her role as Headteacher at the end of the summer term.</p> <p>Details of governors, including their respective roles and responsibilities and other required information, are published on the school website.</p>
<p>Attendance record of governors</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 annually.</p>
<p>Governing Body</p>	<p>The academic year 2019/20 began as normal for the governing body. However, with the arrival of Covid-19 in February 2020 and schools being told to close from 20 March for all except vulnerable and key worker children, governing bodies had to change their ways of working – much like everyone else.</p> <p>The clerk to the governing body for the past five years, Mrs Tatam, retired during this academic year. She has been an exceptional clerk, whose advice and guidance we valued very much. We wish her a happy and fulfilling retirement.</p> <p>October 2019: Governors reviewed the summer 2019 GCSE results and initial analysis. GCSE results for the Year 11 group were even stronger than in 2018, with 80% of students achieving 5 grades 9-4 including English and Maths. In addition, 32% of entries from all subjects were awarded a 7-9 grade, again an increase on the previous year.</p> <p>The school's Progress 8 at 0.62 and Attainment 8 at 55.5 were both well above national average as classified by the DfE, as were results for disadvantaged students.</p> <p>Governors were given a comprehensive update on the roll-out of iPads to all Year 7s. These will transform teaching and learning over the coming years and better prepare students for life beyond school and their future careers. The school also moved to cloud-based storage and had rolled out Windows 10 and Office 365 over the summer. These technological advances were very timely, given the events that unfolded in early 2020.</p> <p>The Governing Body elected Ms Barker as Chair and Ms Hayat and Dr Morgan as Vice-Chairs. Governors agreed the membership of committees, panels and link governor responsibilities. Ms Snowsill, the new KS3 deputy headteacher was welcomed to her first governing body meeting since joining the school in September.</p>

December 2019:

Governors started the meeting with safeguarding training, delivered by Ms Pratt, Assistant Headteacher and the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Headteacher gave her first termly report of the year to governors. Its format had been updated to take account of the new Ofsted inspection framework.

The termly report enables governors to monitor and ask questions about:

- student numbers and attendance including looked-after, SEN and pupil premium students
- student progress, targets and tracking data
- intervention plans to support student progress
- safeguarding, behaviour and safety and exclusions data
- progress with the school improvement plan
- staff vacancies/recruitment and staff development/performance management
- SSAT accreditation for professional learning within the Framework for Exceptional Education
- partnership work with other schools, SSAT and Leading Edge, WF Challenge
- the work of the WF Green Teaching School Alliance and National Support School (which the school gained at the end of July 2017) including running teacher specialist subject training in Physics; funding three research projects in other WF schools and chairing the board/leading steering group
- the Headteacher's outreach work as a National Leader in Education including supporting an academy in south London which resulted in an Ofsted judgement of Good (previously RI); and supporting two schools in Haringey and another in Hackney
- Headteacher induction and support for two new headteachers in the borough at LA's request and Chair's NLG work with two other secondary schools in the borough
- approaching/planning with all four Teaching Schools in WF to make a hub application when the DfE rolls out the new hub structure, following its test and learn pilots.

Specific items discussed by governors were:

- supporting SEND students in accessing the curriculum
- the progress of high prior attainment pupil premium students
- CPD planned on use of questioning in the classroom
- increase in safeguarding needs within the school and the planned introduction of the Safeguard program.

The Health & Safety annual report was approved by governors. The Financial Regulations & Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Asset Register Assurance Certificate and the 3-year budget plan update were all endorsed.

Safeguarding: It was confirmed that all governors were up-to-date with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2019.

Governors ratified the following updated policies:

Safeguarding
Health & Safety
Lettings

	<p>Pay</p> <p>Also, the following local authority updated model policies: Disclosure & Barring Staff Code of Conduct Flexible Working</p> <p>Governors approved the Pupil Premium and the Year 7 Numeracy & Literacy catch-up premium reports 2018-19 for publication on the school's website</p> <p>Governors received the LBWF's GDPR full audit report. They noted the action plan for 2019/20 and would monitor this during the year.</p> <p>Governors looked at the costs of providing papers for their meetings. They considered some alternative options and agreed to move from hard copy to electronic copies and use of laptops instead.</p> <p>March 2019: This meeting had been due to take place on 24 March. As schools were told to close and a national lockdown was brought in on 23 March, governors were unable to meet. Instead, governors made decisions on a small number of items via proxy voting. A record of these can be found on the school website in the area containing governing body minutes.</p> <p>The recruitment of a new headteacher had to be suspended due to the pandemic. The current headteacher, Ms Davies, had agreed to stay on until the end of 2020 to enable a successor to be appointed in the autumn term, if possible.</p> <p>Teaching School – WSfG invited by the DfE to apply to become a TS Hub as an outstanding school, and separately invited to consider applying to become a behaviour hub. Training courses suspended. Research projects completed. The Headteacher and senior colleagues continued the tailored support programmes with two academies and from January 2020 provided Tier 1 support to a Redbridge school. Another Tier 1 support project with a school in Havering was due to start in March but had to be postponed.</p> <p>May 2019: At the annual budget meeting, the governing body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ratified the final out-turn statement for 2019/20 financial year and devolved capital out-turn, noting the in-year deficit balance - ratified the school's budget for 2020/21 including income and expenditure, and the predicted carry forward - approved the three-year budget plan 2020-23, having probed the plan for eliminating the deficit position and potential savings - reviewed and approved the Best Value Statement and the SLAs/contracts for 2020/21 <p>All had previously been discussed in detail and recommended for ratification by the Finance Committee. Governors asked questions and discussed the potential impact of additional Covid-19 related expenses, including the loss of lettings income and increased cleaning costs for the foreseeable future. Savings had been</p>
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made in other areas such as agency supply staff and through furloughing catering staff. The Chair reported that she had signed off the SFVS for submission to the LA by the deadline, after the Finance Committee had reviewed it.

Safeguarding: The LA's Covid-19 addendum to the safeguarding policy was signed off by the Chair as an urgent matter for implementation. It was then circulated to all staff.

Instead of the standard headteacher's report, the headteacher and chair presented a joint report for the period since lockdown to date detailing the actions the school had taken. This was a summary of the regular updates the headteacher had sent to the chair throughout. The priorities were the safety of all and the learning and wellbeing of students and staff. Governors discussed the remote learning arrangements for students and access to technology, safeguarding checks being carried out, the free school meal vouchers scheme, provision for vulnerable and key worker children and planning for Year 10s to return to school in some format in June.

Governors received an update on the likely timing of works to replace the defective concrete roof beams on Block A as soon as possible, since this came to light following a survey by the LA.

An extra governing body meeting was held in June to review and approve the school's risk assessment prior to Year 10 students returning to school.

June 2020:

The governing body met to review the school's risk assessment and the plan for opening to Year 10 students from 15 June in detail. Governors noted that staff and unions had been thoroughly consulted and asked questions about the wellbeing and safety of staff and students while in school. The risks to mental health and wellbeing, as well as increased risks to BAME staff, were also added to the RA by the headteacher. Governors were confident that all practical safety measures and procedures were in place and thanked schools leaders for their diligence and careful planning.

Governors received an update from the KS4 deputy headteacher on students' remote learning, levels of engagement and follow-up action where there were concerns, noting that this had been covered in detail at the recent curriculum committee meeting.

The headteacher reported that up to 60 Year 6 children from St Mary's Primary were using one of the buildings on the school site as there is insufficient space for social distancing in their own school. The Year 6 pupils were then joined in a separate bubble by St Mary's Year 5 vulnerable children. Governors agreed that a formal agreement from the LA, requested by the headteacher, was essential.

July 2019:

Governors reviewed the headteacher's report. A Covid-19 impact report was also presented to governors. This included arrangements and additional measures put in place for safeguarding and child protection from 20 March to 30 June 2020, as well as details on attendance of vulnerable and SEN children. Also,

	<p>the current and planned measures in place to ensure the safety of all, as well as the additional costs. Governors noted the wellbeing monitoring and support offer to staff during remote working, plus planning for September full re-opening.</p> <p>The school confirmed that Year 10 students will have been able to touch base with all their GCSE subjects by the end of term. The plan for wider re-opening in September was discussed. This had been reviewed at the curriculum committee meeting.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the end of year report on the 2019/20 School Improvement Plan, what had been achieved with online training and what had been impacted by Covid-19. All teaching staff have iPads for teaching and learning. The move to Office 365 had enabled use of Teams, remote teaching and use of learning apps. The roll-out of iPads to Year 7s was now progressing, subject to deposits being paid. Plans were in place for the incoming Year 7s in September.</p> <p>Governors noted that the introduction of the new Relationships and Sex Education curriculum had been delayed until spring 2021 by the Government. Consultation with parents would start in the autumn term.</p> <p>Teaching/National Support School outreach: Work now completed with two Haringey schools. Headteacher was back in touch in June with one school in neighbouring boroughs to restart support programmes for them which had to be suspended in March due to Covid. A second no longer required support. The Headteacher invited to contribute to the DfE's School Recovery Offer where there is funding to offer vulnerable schools 5 days' support from an NLE to help them reopen. A match has been made with two academies in Essex. Contact is imminent.</p> <p>Proposed changes to SEND provision in the borough were noted and their potential impact on the school was discussed.</p> <p>Terms of Reference for the new resources committee were agreed for use from September 2020. An updated cover policy was ratified. The updated Business Continuity Plan and Critical Incident Plan was signed off.</p> <p>Governors were concerned that the school had been informed by the LA that the work to replace the roof on Block A would not now start until the summer holidays and would continue until early in the spring term 2021. Discussions were ongoing on temporary replacements for the six classrooms that would be out of action. Governors supported the school's push for portacabins on-site, especially with the additional challenges of Covid-19 that would be evident come September.</p>
Committees	<p>The committees meet once per term throughout the school year and focus on the following areas: Curriculum Finance & Premises Staffing.</p> <p>The detailed work carried out in committee is mainly fed into the full governing body meetings. A minority of matters are delegated to committees for decision</p>

<p>Curriculum Committee</p>	<p>but are always reported to the next full governing body meeting via committee minutes.</p> <p>During the year, governors reviewed the attendance at committee meetings and agreed to merge the Staffing and Finance & Premises committees in order to ensure that meetings are consistently quorate.</p> <p>A summary of 2019/20 follows.</p> <p>Autumn term: The election of Chair and Vice-Chair was postponed as the meeting was not quorate. Terms of reference review was also deferred.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed outcomes from summer 2019 GCSEs including: WSfG versus national/ girls; Key Stage 4 outcomes by subject and variations; by group including Pupil Premium and SEND; exam re-marks</p> <p>Spring term: Reviewed the following updated policies for ratification by the governing body: Educational Visits; Anti-Bullying; Self-Evaluation; Positive Behaviour for Learning.</p> <p>Governors reviewed and discussed the latest Analyse School Performance data from the DfE including a comparison of student progress in English, modern languages, humanities, science and mathematics. Also the Year 11 GCSE grade predictions following December 2019 mock examinations.</p> <p>Governors noted the changing cohort profiles of students in the school in relation to pupil premium, support needs, EAL, ethnicity and prior attainment.</p> <p>Governors received overviews of: the quality of teaching and learning per faculty; faculty and pastoral self-reviews and next steps which would help to inform discussions during link governor faculty visits.</p> <p>Summer term: Governors were updated on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the detailed review and consultation on the marking and assessment policy • the development of the remote learning curriculum plan in consultation with heads of faculty now in place • students' remote learning engagement and the school's response • implementation of the new RSE curriculum from summer 2021. <p>In the absence of GCSE summer exams in 2020, the planned process for predicted grades and rankings for GCSE grades was explained to governors and included arrangements for pre-grading faculty preparation; faculty grading and rankings; external moderation by Fischer Family Trust – all prior to submission to the exam boards. Governors appreciated the huge amount of work the school leaders and staff had done from a standing start.</p>
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<p>Finance & Premises Committee</p>	<p>Autumn term: The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee were elected and the Terms of Reference were reviewed and agreed with one update.</p> <p>Governors reviewed: - the quarter 2 (half-year) budget monitoring report - an update on the 3-year budget plan.</p> <p>The following updated policies/documents were reviewed, changes made as appropriate, and then remitted for approval by the full governing body: Model Financial Regulations & Standing Orders; Health & Safety; Lettings; Pay; Scheme of Delegation and Asset Register assurance certificate.</p> <p>The audit of the School Fund account 2018/19 (with no recommendations from the auditors) was approved. The business interests and the gifts/hospitality registers for staff and governors were noted.</p> <p>Governors reviewed: - the Pupil Premium report to parents for governing body approval - the Y7 numeracy and literacy catch-up premium report for governing body approval - the Health & Safety Report covering risk assessments, fire drills/evacuations, accidents on site, and future actions.</p> <p>Spring term: Governors scrutinised the quarter 3 budget monitoring report and noted any variances since the budget was set. The report on payments over £10K was reviewed and signed off.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the outcomes report on the Schools Financial Value Standard 2019-20 action plan. The School Business Manager took governors through the new SFVS introduced by the DfE for 2020/21. Governors then reviewed the draft answers for the 2020/21 SFVS (22 questions) and endorsed the SFVS for ratification by the governing body.</p> <p>The Statement of Internal Control and the Asset Management policy were reviewed and recommended for ratification by the governing body.</p> <p>The school's budget allocations for 2020/21 financial year and the LBWF Budget Share Summary were noted. Governors also discussed the 3-year budget plan update and the termly H&S report.</p> <p>Summer term: Governors reviewed 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 and also the 3-year project budget plan. Earmarked funds for carry-forward were also agreed. It was noted that this year there would be no need for a cash advance to cover front-loaded costs.</p>
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	<p>Best value statement was reviewed and recommended for endorsement by the governing body. Year-end write-offs (nil), 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>Governors were informed about the need for the roof on Block A to be replaced, following a condition survey by the LA.</p> <p>Final meeting of 2019/20: Governors reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the quarter 1 budget monitoring report - a Covid-19 additional expenditure report, a claim for almost £29K would be submitted to the Government. <p>The updated Business Continuity and Critical Incident plan was remitted for ratification by the full governing body.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the termly health and safety update and noted that a full 5-day audit is expected soon.</p>
<p>Staffing Committee</p>	<p>Autumn term: The committee chair and vice-chair for the year were elected. The Terms of Reference were reviewed and no changes were required.</p> <p>Governors received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an update on staffing and recruitment • a report on continuous professional development and plans for 19/20 • performance management target setting guidelines for 19/20 • an update on CPD and staffing aspects of the school improvement plan <p>Governors reviewed policies on: Dealing with allegations against staff (LBWF) Disclosure and barring guidance (LBWF) Bullying and harassment Staff Code of Conduct Initial Teacher Training Pay Flexible Working (LBWF).</p> <p>Spring term: Governors discussed the staffing report and noted that overall staff absence was low. Two interim associate assistant headteacher roles had been agreed for 2020/21 to increase capacity in the leadership team - providing opportunities to middle leaders - and a third interim associate AHT to cover a maternity leave.</p> <p>Governors received an update on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recruitment plans for appointing a successor to the current headteacher who was retiring at the end of the current academic year and recent staff briefing by the Chair - CPD this year and plans for 2020/21

	<p>The following LBWF updated policies were reviewed and remitted to the governing body for ratification: Staff Induction Policy & Procedures; Probation Policy – Support Staff; Employment of Close Relatives – Policy and Procedure; Maternity Leave Procedure; Paternity Leave Procedure; Adoption Leave Procedure; Capability Policy - as was the school’s NQT policy.</p> <p>Summer term: Governors received updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - resignations and the recruitment position for September 2020 and other staffing matters, including some socially distanced recruitment of teachers - online staff training and feedback - progress with school improvement plan in light of the disruption to normal school operations this year - the impact of Covid on Teaching and National Support School activities. <p>Governors discussed staff wellbeing and mental health in the current pandemic and were briefed by school leaders.</p> <p>Governors considered the proposed changes to the cover policy, which had been consulted upon, and agreed to remit it to the governing body for ratification.</p>
<p>How to contact the Governing Body</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 info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk</p>