

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls  
2022-23**

The Governing Body's three core strategic functions are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and for the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its funding is spent appropriately

Since 2020, the National Governance Association has added another recommended strategic function:

4. Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

<b>Governance arrangements</b>	<p>The Governing Body of Walthamstow School for Girls consists of a total of 15 governors as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 parent governors</li> <li>6 co-opted governors</li> <li>1 local authority governor</li> <li>1 staff governor</li> </ul> <p>and the Headteacher</p>
<b>Membership</b>	<p>The term of office for a governor is four years, after which they may re-apply, provided they meet the requirements.</p> <p>During the academic year 2022-23, we said farewell to three governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr R Khan, parent governor</li> <li>Mr R Malik, co-opted governor</li> <li>Ms R Simpson, staff governor</li> </ul> <p>and prior to this, Ms A Wills, staff governor, stepped down at the end of July 2022.</p> <p>Sincere thanks to all of them for their contributions to the governing body of the school during the periods they served as governors. It takes time and dedication and is entirely voluntary. We wish them all the very best for the future.</p> <p>During 2022-23, we welcomed the following new governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr M Lerpiniere, co-opted governor</li> <li>Ms M Service, parent governor</li> <li>Ms T Cassango, staff governor</li> </ul> <p>Three existing governors were also re-appointed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms G Barker, co-opted governor</li> <li>Mr S Urrehman, co-opted governor (formerly a parent governor)</li> <li>Mr A Beg, LA governor</li> </ul>

<b>Meetings</b>	<p>The full Governing Body meets twice in the autumn term, once in the spring term and twice in the summer term. There are two committees which meet once per term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum</li> <li>• Resources (finance, staffing and premises)</li> </ul> <p>Each committee reports back to the full Governing Body on a termly basis.</p> <p>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> <p>The committees look in more detail at specific aspects of the school, to enable the Governing Body to maintain a high-level strategic approach to governing the school, as we are required to do. 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 within the leadership team. A number of governors have undertaken safer recruitment training as recommended for such panels.</p> <p>Details of governors, including their respective roles and responsibilities and other required information, are published in the governing body section of the school website. Minutes of meetings from 2022-23 are also available in the same location.</p>
<b>Attendance record of governors</b>	<p>All Governing Body and committee meetings must be attended by a specified minimum number of governors (quorum) for decisions to be binding. Governors have an excellent record of attendance, details of which are published on the school website annually in the governing body section.</p>
<b>Overview</b>	<p>Although 2022-23 was the first whole school year post-pandemic, the impact on students' mental health and wellbeing continued. The launch of the Wellbeing Hub in September 2022 was therefore welcomed by governors.</p> <p>After extensive consultations with all stakeholder groups, including staff, parents and students, governors approved the school's new vision and values: courage; compassion; aspiration and integrity.</p> <p>A new Parent/Carer Code of Conduct was ratified by the Governing Body as it had become apparent that this was now needed.</p> <p>In the summer term 2023, Ms Snowsill, Deputy Headteacher KS3, retired. The Governing Body wished her all the best for the future.</p>
<b>Priorities</b>	<p>The Governing Body's areas of focus during the year were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the mental health, wellbeing and safety of the school community, especially vulnerable students and their families</li> </ul>

<p><b>Governance impact/ effectiveness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing outcomes and recommendations from the external safeguarding audit</li> <li>• monitoring the curriculum changes</li> <li>• monitoring teaching and learning and the progress of all students, and specific groups such as those with SEND or who were disadvantaged</li> <li>• reviewing student voice initiatives and achievements</li> <li>• to ensure the school's finances remained stable and spending is sustainable in the longer term</li> <li>• monitoring and reviewing progress with the school's 3- year strategy and school improvement plan 2021-24, including a reviewing the priorities for 2023-24</li> </ul> <p>Governors monitored progress with the SIP and participated in a review of the school's self-evaluation form in the summer term 2023 during Governors Day. Progress with the annual plan for achieving the aims of the SIP were reported regularly at committee meetings and monitored by the Governing Body on a termly basis.</p> <p>All governors are now required to attend safeguarding training and to read Keeping Children Safe in Education and confirm they have done so in the autumn term. This is tracked to ensure the governing body is compliant. We also received a report from Ms Pratt, Assistant Headteacher and WSfG's Designated Safeguarding Lead, providing evidence that the school was compliant with the latest guidance as we are required to do.</p> <p>Governance oversight of safeguarding, including the maintenance of the Single Central Record continued throughout the year with reports from the safeguarding link governor at governing body meetings for discussion, The safeguarding governor and the Chair of Governors were interviewed as part of the external audit of safeguarding commissioned by the school.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the establishment of a Wellbeing Hub within the school, given the ongoing mental health needs of students since the pandemic. Like many schools, the number of students with special needs also increased.</p> <p>Governors monitored the school's attendance figures on a termly basis. The persistent absence data was noted, although it was in lowest quintile nationally. Work was ongoing to increase attendance overall, which was lower than pre-pandemic and below leadership and governor expectations, although in the top 10% nationally in the autumn term. Attendance improved somewhat in the spring term 2023. There were also still some concerns around parents taking their daughters out of school for unauthorised holidays in term-time which the school was addressing. A full-time Attendance Officer was recruited for autumn 2023.</p> <p>Exclusions data is also monitored by the governing body each term. Governors look for patterns of exclusions and if any, the reasons behind them as well as the support and actions taken to ensure students were in school.</p> <p>With the return of national exams, GCSE grades awarded to students in summer 2022 were reviewed in autumn 2022. As the Government did not wish students</p>
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	<p>to be disadvantaged, grade boundaries were more generous than in 2019, the last time conventional exams had been sat. Attainment figures were higher even though the grade distribution nationally was tougher than in 2021. This cohort of students had experienced disruption in their learning in 2020 and 2021, so both they and the school did well despite the challenges encountered.</p> <p>Governor link visits to all faculties took place during the autumn term 2022 and further link governor visits took place in school during Governors' Day in June 2023. These are reported at full governing body meetings.</p> <p>Pupil Premium outcomes against objectives from last year were reviewed and actions for 2022-23 were scrutinised. These form part of the three-year strategy for 2022-25.</p> <p>Curriculum development continued to be monitored with the expectation that our new learning journeys, would be fully implemented by September 2023.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the end of financial year out-turn, including the surplus carried forward and earmarked funding for ring-fenced expenditures. They also ratified the proposed balanced budget for the financial year 2023-24 and the three-year budget projections were reviewed and noted. The financial risks register was reviewed and updated as needed during the year. The asset register and disposals were also reviewed. Similarly, the actions from the Schools' Financial Value Standard were reviewed and actions for 2023-24 agreed.</p> <p>Governors and school leaders continued to review and update a range of school policies throughout the year, as required. Governors approved a proposal to introduce 'Lead Practitioners' to the school's staffing structure, to provide an additional progression route for teachers. Governors scrutinised the financial impact on the school's budget before approving the proposal.</p>
<b>Teaching School Hub</b>	<p>WSfG is the only state-maintained secondary school to lead one of the 87 Teaching School Hubs in England. These are centres of excellence for teacher training and professional development across primary and secondary schools. The NE London Teaching School Hub (TSH) covers the boroughs of Haringey, Redbridge and Waltham Forest comprising 239 schools and works in partnership with the Institute of Education, University College London. Its main areas of provision are the Early Career Framework (first two years of teaching); National Professional Qualifications (middle and senior leaders) and Continuing Professional Development (all teachers). WSfG's TSH designation lasts for three years from September 2021. For more information, go to: <a href="https://www.neltsh.com">https://www.neltsh.com</a></p> <p>During 2023, the TSH began planning to take on Appropriate Body services, working closely with our partner local authorities to ensure a smooth transition. (Appropriate bodies are the organisations that quality-assure statutory teacher induction.) The Governing Body of WSfG is responsible for governance oversight of the NE London Teaching School Hub. Our role is set out in the Hub's governance handbook. The Governing Body receives a termly report from the Hub Director. In addition, in 2022-23, a panel of three governors, along with the Hub Director, conducted an annual review of the Hub's finances and operations</p>

	which was reported back to the Governing Body. Governors received strong assurance from the detailed information provided to them. It should be noted that the school is also required to report to the TS Hub Partnership Board and directly to the Department for Education.
<b>How to contact the Governing Body</b>	The Governing Body would be pleased to receive comments/questions from parents/carers of WSfG students or interested members of the public. 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>