

## Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of Leytonstone School 2020-21

In accordance with the Government's requirements the Leytonstone Governing Board's three core strategic functions are:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction**
- 2. Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and students**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

In addition, the board plays an important role in ensuring that the school is compliant with educational and other legislation such as Safeguarding, Equality and Health and Safety.

The board helps ensure that there is:

**Accountability** – justification for the decisions that are being taken

**Oversight** – scrutinising and investigation of key decision making and performance

**Assurance** – confidence that the school is operating effectively and compliantly on a day to day basis.

### Governance Arrangements

The Governing Board of Leytonstone School consists of a total of 10 governors as follows:

- 5 Co-opted governors**
- 2 Parent governors**
- 1 Local Authority governor**
- 1 Staff governor**
- The Head Teacher**

The Governing Board also has **1 associate member** with a special remit for the Arts

The Governing Board was once again supported this year by a National Leader of Governance (Gillian Barker) and our thanks go to her for another year of sound counsel and support.

The Board started the 20/21 academic year with two co-opted vacancies but quickly recruited and welcomed two new members to the board in November. Alistair Strathern and the Rev Matthew Herel. They took on the link responsibilities of Health and Safety and Training respectively throughout the course of the year.

One parent governor Ade Oragbade came to the end of his term of office in March 2021. We thank him for his contribution over his years on the board, as a member of the finance committee and as link governor for Health and Safety.

	<p>Parent elections were duly held and Elizabeth Lay was voted as a replacement parent governor. This appointment was ratified and Elizabeth welcomed in our March Governing Board Meeting.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The full Governing Board at Leytonstone meets twice per term and there are two committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Finance Committee</b> (at least once per term)</li> <li>• <b>Pay Committee</b> – (at least once per year)</li> </ul> <p>Its role is to satisfy the Governing Board 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 purpose of committees is to 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>For the 2021/22 Academic year it was decided that the Finance Committee be expanded to include Premises, Health and Safety and Personnel and be renamed the ‘Resources Committee’ and that a ‘Curriculum Committee’ be established. Terms of Reference and membership were agreed at our final meeting of the year in July. All governors are required to be on at least one of the committees.</p>
<p><b>Attendance Record of Governors</b></p>	<p>All Governing Board and committee meetings must be attended by a specified minimum number of governors for decisions to be binding. Governors at Leytonstone have an excellent record of attendance, details of which are published on the school website annually.</p>
<p><b>Governing Board Activity</b></p>	<p>2020/21 was once again an extremely challenging year dominated by the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic. Being available to support the school in responding to the ever changing and often last minute requirements has been a very important aspect of the year. This was particularly true towards the end of the Autumn term when the governing board met in an emergency meeting to support the school in keeping children learning at home for the last few days of term, despite pressure from the DfE. This decision was vindicated by the return to lockdown conditions very shortly afterwards.</p> <p>Online learning arrangements and Risk assessments for staff and student safety were considered and Governors met extraordinarily to review the re-opening plan, testing arrangements and managing pupil and staff in and out of lockdown two.</p>

The Chair of Governors was in regular contact with the Head throughout all periods of lockdown passing on information to other governors when necessary. The Schedule of GB meetings continued throughout. Staff and Student wellbeing/mental health and arrangements and oversight of vulnerable students remained of paramount concern to the school and the governing board throughout and were always considered at GB meetings.

A tight overview of Safeguarding arrangements and concerns was kept. Link visits (some virtual) continued throughout the year despite the lockdown and a new, comprehensive termly report template was devised by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Link Governor to make sure the Governing Board had regular updates on all they needed to know.

**Despite the restrictions brought about by the pandemic. Governors supported with some big pieces of work outside of the normal yearly schedule of work:**

- A review, consultation and eventual closure of the loss making community sports centre.
- A complete Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) review with associated consultation, decision making and appeal consideration
- Considered and gave advice on the first draft of a Business Admin Staff review.
- Authorised and then considered the recommendations of, an external review of the School's counselling services and mental health provision for Students.
- Approved the permanent adoption of some Covid related changes to school workings in consultation with parents. These included the continued use of Google classroom for homeworking, wearing PE kit to school on PE days, staggering breaks and lunch and the use of different entry and exit points for different years.
- Scrutinised and provided feedback on the School's new data and assessment model.

**Summary of other work:**

- Reviewed and asked questions on HT reports provided at each meeting
- Attending School Strategy Planning Day
- Preparation for Ofsted, including looking at recommendations from the 2019 audit report, scrutinising the IDSR and evaluating the progress made by the school on the highlighted issues.
- Attended a Governor Away Day which was held virtually and was on the topic of Ofsted.
- Reviewed the new school website and monitored compliance
- Analysed 2020 Y11 results including progress and attainment of key groups such as SEND and PP.
- Looked at pupil premium report, scrutinised spending and approved the 2019/20 report for publication on the school website. Agreed broad strategy for 20/21.

- Reviewed the SEF and SIP
- Reviewed and scrutinised Exclusion Data and Pupil movement.
- Received a Health and Safety audit report by the LA
- Received a Finance audit report by the LA
- Undertook link governor visits and reports – areas of safeguarding, Pupil Premium, Health and Safety, Careers, Finance, Curriculum and SEND.
- Agreed new RSE policy and curriculum
- Agreed new committee structure for 2021/22 year and wrote and agreed ToRs
- Heard about new staff wellbeing initiatives

**Policies reviewed and ratified:**

Appraisal

Complaints

Governors Allowances (agreed not to have any)

Safeguarding (with KCSiE 2020 updates)

Safeguarding Covid 19 Closure Policy Addendum

Staff code of conduct (and addendum)

Governors Code of Conduct

Staff Mental Health

Exclusion

Whistleblowing

Pay policy

Anti-bullying

Attendance and Admissions

Grievance

Leave of Absence

Recruitment

Format of Business Continuity Plan

Financial Regulations

**Finance Committee**

Having a Finance committee in place for our first full academic year meant that governors were able to look in much more detail at school financial matters and then present an overview and recommendations back to FGB meetings. In addition the Chair of the Finance committee and Chair of Governors were both in regular contact with the SBM to offer support and advice or to answer questions.

**Summary of Core Finance work:**

- Scrutinising and ratifying the budget and the 5 year forecast
- Ongoing Budget monitoring
- Agreeing and ratifying a scheme of delegation
- Ratifying financial regulations
- Preparation and ratification of the school SVFS return
- Virement approval
- Looking at SLAs and contracts for best value

	<p><b>In addition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors are pleased to have received the rating of <b>Reasonable Assurance</b> in the LA finance audit the resources committee will now this year monitor arrangements for addressing any concerns raised in the report. There were no critical or high risk findings.</li> <li>• Agreed new Terms of Reference and committee structure for 2021/22 Academic Year</li> <li>• A formal loan application was approved and a repayment plan agreed with the LA</li> <li>• Agreed change of School Photocopier contract</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of Governors and Chair of Finance Committee also represented the governing board in the <b>School's Facing Financial Challenge (SFFC)</b> meetings with the Local Authority and have supported the school and the School Business Manager (SBM) in working to the Action Plan arising from these meetings. This was then fed back to the FGB for scrutiny and discussion.</p> <p>Despite the pandemic expenses, governors were very pleased to see a significant in year reduction to the school's deficit position.</p> <p>Towards the end of the Year the Finance committee realised that its ToR did not cover some of the work that was naturally falling to the committee so it was agreed that for the 2021/22 academic year it would expand to be a full resources committee.</p>
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How to contact the Governing Board	<p>The Governing Board would be pleased to receive comments/questions from parents/carers. Please contact the Chair of Governors via the school office.  <a href="mailto:school@leytonstone.waltham.sch.uk">school@leytonstone.waltham.sch.uk</a></p>
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