

**Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of St. Nicholas C of E
Primary School West Tanfield
July 2016**

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing boards, the three core strategic functions of St. Nicolas C of E School Governing Board are:

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

Governance arrangements

The governing Board of St. Nicholas C of E Primary School West Tanfield was reconstituted in 2014 and restructured in 2015 and is now made up of 10 Governors including the Executive Head Teacher. Currently we have a vacancy for a second Foundation Governor and are awaiting a decision by the Diocese.

Describe the range of skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school

A well constituted governing body needs a wide range of skills, encompassing financial planning, contract and project management, personnel management and marketing, coupled with effective communication to the stakeholders and the wider community.

An annual governor skills audit is carried out and any shortfalls remedied by training or co-opting of new governors. Each governor has a responsibility linked to a specific area of the school development plan. Governors are required to understand, monitor and challenge evidence presented and to act as a 'critical friend' in holding the Headteacher to account.

The governing board has a programme of meetings throughout the school year that focuses on specific areas of governance

Following the reconstitution of the governing body in 2014, it was restructured in 2015 and the two established committees, School Improvement and Resources were amalgamated into 9 scheduled meetings of the Full Governing Body within the academic year. The agendas are specifically focused to cover the work of all these committees. One of these meetings is a Joint FGB with our partner school. When required, specific 'Task and Finish' working parties also meet to develop any actions which have been agreed at the FGB.

Attendance record of governors

*A record is kept by the clerk to the governing body, of governors' attendance at meetings, details of attendance can be found on page 4 of this document.
Meetings need to be 'quorate' to ensure that decisions can be made*

The work we have done through the Governing Board meetings and Governor Link Roles

This is an opportunity to share publicly the work of the GB on school improvement, particularly around pupil attainment and progress

Monitoring activity

Financial management

Policy review

Availability of approved minutes of the GB on the school's website

Following Ofsted's report categorising the school as 'Good', the next steps and priorities for further improvement have been identified and these form the basis of the School Development Plan. The governors strive to ensure that the school has the capacity to continually improve and has continued to closely monitor school improvement in particular, pupils' progress and achievement. The school aims to develop the 'whole child' and to motivate each one to develop their full potential, both academically and personally,

We work in partnership with the Headteacher to ensure that the school provides its pupils with an aspirational learning environment, which prepares them for their next steps in education and in the future. We encourage governors to access training opportunities and we regularly attend the Local Authority's Governor School Improvement Network. Governors also take part in 'self-review' activities in order to improve performance, in individual roles and as a team.

Each governor has a special link to a particular aspect of the School Development Plan and reports back to the Full Governing Body.

All governors place the highest emphasis on safeguarding the pupils and complete Basic Safeguarding training. This year, some have also attended specialist Prevent training and Internet Safety training.

The school has a very experienced Special Educational Needs Coordinator, who meets regularly with the link governor and presents detailed reports to the FGB. The Special Educational Needs and Disability [SEND] new code of practice has been successfully implemented this year and details of this can be found on our website.

Managing the finances of the school has never been more challenging, but as a result of class reorganisation and careful financial controls, we are staying within our financial allocation.

The School Financial Value Statement is completed annually demonstrating good fiscal practice. All financial accounts and the SFVS are verified and held by the Local Authority.

School policies are continually reviewed and relevant changes communicated as necessary to all stakeholders.

Approved governing body minutes of our meetings are retained and held in the

Governing Body File in the Executive Head Teacher's office. These are available for viewing by arrangement with the EHT.

Strategic Planning for the future

Make reference to specific governance activity against your SDP priorities

This year has seen increased challenges in the form of new educational requirements. These include changes to the new curriculum and to methods of pupil assessment. Priorities for their implementation have been established. The governing body responds to these changes by rigorous questioning and close monitoring to assess their effect on raising attainment.

In September 2013 Kirkby Malzeard Cof E and St. Nicholas West Tanfield Cof E primary schools formed a collaborative partnership. Both schools are also part of the Ripon village cluster and the HART alliance and both schools work alongside other primary schools to provide the very best learning opportunities for all pupils. Collaboration with Kirby Malzeard school continues to support and enhance learning opportunities through many shared resources and activities. The governors have continued to monitor and support this partnership in delivering enhanced learning through collaborative working.

Joint Strategic Development Committee meetings are held each term with a specific focus. Sustainability is one key focus and governors are aware of the challenges facing small rural schools in North Yorkshire. Our collaboration benefits greatly from this partnership. We are able to share teaching experience across the two schools and are led by a very experienced & capable Executive Head Teacher.

In 'future proofing' our school, we have identified the need for additional marketing requirements to improve its profile. These are being rolled out as a priority.

We also recognise the need to engage all stakeholders in raising awareness of the value of a good primary education to equip children for their future lives and we encourage their participation and involvement.

The formation of 'Allsorts' wrap-around care has provided a useful addition to our extended school provision and a benefit for working parents.

Following the introduction of the recent Government White Paper, governors are aware of the greater changes which Academisation may bring. Governors are making it a priority to investigate all available opportunities for discussion and debate and are attending meetings run by the Local Authority, the Diocese and local schools to gather information. We are keeping a close 'watching brief' on all developments and when the position becomes clear, will be able to respond appropriately to make the correct decision for our school and its pupils.

How to contact your Governing Board

Information about the school's governing body is available on the governors' page of the school's website

The St Nicholas C of E Primary School Governing Body – membership

<u>Governor</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Term of office expiry date</u>
Andrea Peacock	Executive Head Teacher	N/A
Ann Wilson	Elected Staff	1/9/17
Carolyn Brown	Chair of Governors Local Authority	31/8/17
Susie Sanders	Vice Chair Co-opted	16/9/18
Helen Evans	Co-opted	16/9/18
David Parkinson	Foundation	4/3/18
Tim Marley	Co-opted	16/9/18
Ruth Smirthwaite	Parent	21/11/17
Suzanne Gilpin	Parent	1/10/19

Currently we have a vacancy for a second Foundation Governor and are awaiting a decision by the Diocese.

The St. Nicholas C of E Primary School Governors' Attendance record for 2015 – 2016

Governor Name	Number of FGB meetings attended
Andrea Peacock	8/8
Ann Wilson	5/8
Carolyn Brown	8/8
Susie Sanders	4/8
Helen Evans	6/8
David Parkinson	5/8
Tim Marley	6/8
Ruth Smirthwaite	6/8
Suzanne Gilpin	2/7

Three Governors are nominated to attend the Joint Strategic Development Committee meetings along with 3 Governors from the partner school and the Executive Headteacher.

JSDC Members from St. Nicholas, West Tanfield were:-

Carolyn Brown (Chair, L.A. Governor),

Tim Marley (Co-opted Governor)

David Parkinson (Foundation Governor).

