



Annual governance statement for the Governing Body of Drake Primary School and Little Pirates Daycare

2021/22

Governing Body Structure

Louise Rosen
Headteacher

William Bridgeman
Co-opted Governor

Carly Brien
Co-opted Governor
(Chair of Governors)

Mike Brindle
**Local Authority
Governor**

Sam Chapman
Staff Governor

Alex Clements
Parent Governor

Ann Morgan
Co-opted Governor

Ricky O'Connor
Parent Governor

Lee Osborne
Co-opted Governor

Jammar Prince
Co-opted Governor
(Vice Chair)

VACANCY
Parent Governor

Our role as governors is to monitor school and pupil progress & attainment, ensuring resources are used appropriately to give each child the best possible education. We work alongside the Headteacher and school staff, as a 'critical friend', to make strategic decisions and set visions for our school.

As defined by the Department for Education (DfE), the core functions of the governing body include:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

In exercising their functions, the governing body shall

- Act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
- Be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and in particular shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.

Our governing body has a code of conduct, which is reviewed and agreed annually. All governors are obliged to abide by this code.

Meetings

During the 2021/22 Academic Year attendance at meetings has been good and always quorate, which is demonstrated on the Governor pages of the website, with apologies generally given, which are explained and accepted by attending governors.

School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP)

The SIDP is a working document, collaboratively produced by governors and school senior leaders. The SIDP documents the school's priorities for improvement and development and is monitored by governors and senior leaders to ensure standards are maintained and objectives completed.

At Drake we have 2 Key Priorities, with many actions sitting within them:

Key Priority 1 – Outstanding leadership of the curriculum by ensuring leaders

- Understand how to measure their own effectiveness using pupil outcomes in comparison with both local and national benchmarks. As a result, children with English as an additional language do not fall behind.
- Evidence a secure understanding of how their subject 'fits in' to the Drake curriculum, mission, vision and aims.

- Provide effective written guidance for other staff to ensure that the highest expectations are set in all year groups.
- Demonstrate a sense of urgency and understanding of change management in their School Development Plan.
- Demonstrate the highest ambitions for all children and families at Drake and Little Pirates in the planning, delivery, analysis and reporting of their curriculum.

Key Priority 2 – Outstanding learning and assessment by ensuring

- Teachers use questioning effectively in lessons.
- Pupils' questions demonstrate a high level of engagement.
- Teachers use of in lesson feedback ensures pupils do well.
- A high-quality planning of the Drake curriculum is evidenced in writing and engagement in lessons.
- Teachers identify and secure the key learning for each year group. As a result, vulnerable groups keep up with their peers.

Governors at Drake are allocated monitoring responsibilities in relation to the SIDP and monitor accordingly.

Data Analysis

The FGB are regularly presented with progress and attainment data, at meetings, by the headteacher and subject/senior leaders. This academic year has been the first year that governors have been presented with KS2 SATs data due to the COVID pandemic over the previous 2 years.

Governors are pleased to acknowledge the equal to and above average Phonics and end of KS1 data, which is particularly significant as children in this cohort have had their EYFS interrupted by the COVID lockdowns.

Governors pay particular attention to data relating to vulnerable groups and scrutinize the effective use of Pupil Premium funding to ensure appropriate use of resources and funding to ensure pupil progress and attainment is encouraged in this cohort of children. From September, governors are looking forward to working closely with the school to compose a new plan for Pupil Premium funding and will continue to scrutinize how the funding positively impacts on disadvantaged children via the nominated Pupil Premium governor.

Policies

The Headteacher and senior leaders, in collaboration with governors have devised a robust policy renewal cycle, and policies are regularly brought to FGB for ratification. Specific policies, such as Safeguarding and Behaviour for Learning are kept as working documents and may be frequently brought to FGB for ratification to reflect any updates to procedures, updated by the Local Authority (LA) and/or school.

Governors ensure that specific policies outlined by the DfE as mandatory are given specific attention and are detailed on the school's website.

Staff Recruitment

Governors are often invited to participate in the recruitment of high-quality staff, who demonstrate the school's mission, vision and aims. The governors are privy to and agree any changes in staffing structure.

Training & Monitoring

As a reasonably new governing body (new governors to the school and/or role), training is significantly emphasized and encouraged at all FGB meetings. Governors have completed Induction training in addition to Safeguarding and Finance Awareness training modules, delivered online by Educator Solutions. The Chair has outlined a clear direction of key modules to have been completed, by Governors, by September in readiness for monitoring and ensuring statutory responsibilities are met and ensured, including reading and having awareness of any new additions to the Keeping Children Safe in Education document via DfE.

Providing COVID-19 restrictions remain relaxed, Governors will be expected to visit school regularly to ensure monitoring priorities are evidenced, in accordance with the SIDP. Visits are recorded on a monitoring form and presented to FGB meetings for discussion and any action plans to be implemented.

Examples of Monitoring over the last academic year include: Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding, Budget monitoring including School's Financial Value Standards & Budget Revisions, Arts & Diversity, Parent workshops, website monitoring.

Finances

There has been much emphasis on finance training for governors, given finance as a significant core principle of governance.

The FGB has the opportunity to scrutinise and critically question the school's finances by having access to the monthly BCR and work closely with the Headteacher and school's Finance Manager. The governors have taken a greater ownership of the School's Financial Value Standards document, asset register and attended revision meetings with NCC Finance Officer.

Governing body effectiveness

What were the significant challenges for the governing body in 2021/22?

- Finance
- Wellbeing – Staff & Families
- Specialist Resource Base (SRB)
- Changes in FGB constitution

How were the challenges met?

- Reintroduce Resources Committee – constitution of individuals with relevant experience and knowledge. Attendance has been excellent.

- Liaising with LA departments relating to planning and building of the SRB. Forensic budget monitoring of SEND funding and regular updates, from the Headteacher, regarding the phase of the build.
- Extensive online training provision from Educator Solutions, available for all Drake governors. Training held as a monthly agenda item at FGB meetings.

What were the achievements of the governing body for 2021/22?

- Many governor vacancies have been filled and governor training underway.
- Monitoring of the school's budget including attending Revision & Budget setting meetings with NCC Finance officer.
- Governor aligned to Little Pirates.
- Successful interview with Ofsted: ***'Governors know the school well. They are keen to support leaders to improve. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions which hold leaders to account. They perform their statutory duties well.'***

Future and continuous improvement

- Increased and thorough monitoring in 2022/23, aligned with SIDP objectives.
- Continued governor training, specifically relating to designated roles and monitoring/analysing data.
- Continued monthly scrutiny of the school budget and recruitment of parent governor with relevant skills identified as required by FGB skills audit.
- Ensure progress and attainment in core subjects and monitoring of attainment raising strategies in identified cohorts – D&T as an area identified by Ofsted.
- Monitoring of Achievement for all project and in relation to Pupil Premium funding.
- Implement a governance development plan to ensure the FGB remain focused on its strategic direction and continued development.
- At least 1 governor to complete Safer recruitment training.

The governing body continues to welcome open communication with staff, families and the wider community via the school's office.