

Governors' Impact Statement for 2018-19

The Local Governing Body is a sub group of the NAS Academies Trust (NAS-AT) Board. This board delegates some of its functions to our Local Governing Body. All governors have three core strategic functions which are to:

1. **Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
2. **Hold the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school; and**
3. **Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring value for money;**

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;

During the last academic year the Local Governing Body has elected a new parent governor with a strong Health & Safety background. All new governors have completed a comprehensive induction programme, to include online and face to face training courses. More recently governors have attended a workshop on Ofsted's New Inspection Framework which comes into effect from September 2019.

'Governors are forward-thinking and have a wide range of skills. Governors have attended a range of training courses to improve their skills.' Ofsted Report, January 2018.

Governors are kept up to date with the many changes in the School Governance landscape via access to Local Authority termly reports, weekly email updates from the National Governors Association (NGA), termly journals from the NGA and access to governor conferences and forums. In October 2018, both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Local Governing Board attended the Cheshire East Governors' Conference.

Governors regularly review NAS-AT's shared vision for the school, the school's own self-evaluation of its performance and the School Development Plan. Best practice is regularly shared amongst local schools and NAS-AT's other academies.

This year the governors have supported the school on its journey to gain Autistic Accreditation. Autism Accreditation is UK's only autism-specific quality assurance programme of support and development for all those providing services to autistic people. It is a way for organisations to show they offer excellent support to autistic children and adults.

The school is now working towards the Advanced Autistic Accreditation with the full support of the Local Governing Body.

2. Hold the Head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school;

Governors regularly visit the school to enhance their knowledge and to monitor the implementation of policies, procedures and priorities of the School Development Plan. This information is used, together with the information provided by the Senior Leadership of the school, external data and information from NAS-AT via School Improvement Partner reports to provide assurance to governors that their 3 core strategic functions are being exercised appropriately.

'Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They visit the school regularly and remain focused on ensuring the best outcomes for pupils. The minutes of governors' meetings demonstrate that over time governors ask probing questions and hold leaders to account. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for further improvement as the school continues to grow each year.' Ofsted Report, January 2018.

Governors are made aware of and carefully consider proposed works to the school which require their authorisation in view of their impact on children's learning, development and safety. This year these have included the creation of a new Science classroom, the new sensory field and the Early Years entrance.

As a Local Governing Body, our focus is on the effectiveness of Teaching and Learning and pupil outcomes. Governor visits to the school, in addition to reports from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), help inform the way we monitor and challenge the SLT. Parental views are an important element and the results of parental surveys are reviewed by governors.

The Safeguarding of pupils is of paramount importance and the policy is regularly updated in-line with regulations and best practice. Safeguarding audit reviews are conducted regularly by an appropriately qualified governor and reported to the LGB for consideration. Safeguarding in this school is judged to be effective by Ofsted.

'All governors have completed training in safeguarding and the Safeguarding governor visits frequently to check the information that the school holds on keeping pupils safe.' Ofsted Report, January 2018.

3. Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring value for money;

All schools receive public money and as such it is essential that this is managed effectively both at the NAS-AT Board level and at a local level.

Governors receive regular reports on the budget. In addition, financial procedures are checked including the application of best practice, and the appropriateness of Service Level Agreements with NAS-AT and contracts with third parties.

During 2018-19, the school achieved its full pupil capacity of 64 pupils. This resulted in the recruitment of more staff including the additional HR support. The school has also appointed an external Educational Psychologist.

Referrals continue to be received from Cheshire East Council and neighbouring local authorities and governors will be supporting the school to secure capacity to offer additional pupil places in the future.

The work of the governing body, in conjunction with the schools Senior Leadership Team, has had a significant impact on developing the school. Listed below are examples of activities, events, and systems that illustrate the impact the governing body has had on school improvement.

- School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Governors have provided input to and monitored the School Improvement Plan with the Principal. They receive termly reports from the Principal relating to the SIP and challenge progress and outcomes.
- Governor visits – Governors adhere to an agreed plan of visits throughout the academic year as part of their monitoring of the SIP and of specific subjects such as safeguarding, performance data, teaching and learning, attendance, school website, parent forum, book reviews, School Council, Single Central Register, Finance, Health & Safety and much more.
- Data analysis - Governors receive termly anonymised reports on progress and attainment of pupils collectively. They identify any strengths and weaknesses and monitor action plans for improvement with the Senior Leadership Team. Pupil progress data is also shared with parents on a termly basis at 'My Progress' meetings.
- Policies – Governors review policies regularly to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Where appropriate, National Autistic Society policies are implemented locally, and local policies are reviewed and adopted accordingly.

- Financial management – Governors monitor financial processes, budget reports and forecasts. The impact of the governors' role in school helps to ensure that the budget is managed effectively and used to develop the school according to the agreed School Development Plan (SDP).
- Pupil voice – Governors are interested in the views of pupils and this information helps to inform school developments. The pupil surveys, visits by governors to School Council meetings and governor monitoring visits all contribute to understand more about the individuals that make the school what it is today.
- Parental Engagement – the Parent Forum continues to provide feedback to the school and governors on hot topics. The school now has a Family liaison role which is providing additional support for families and parents directly.
- Governor Expertise – the governors bring a wide variety of expertise to the school and this helps to ensure the school continually develops. Governors regularly undertake training to assist them in their roles and clear governor roles and responsibilities help with governor recruitment, retention and succession planning.
- Staff recruitment – Governors are involved in the recruitment and selection of senior staff and use the appointment process to ensure that those that are appointed share the schools vision, strategy and ethos.
- Community – Governors monitor the progress of the school's active engagement with the local community, residents and other schools in the area. The school is actively involved with several local schools and community groups.