

Annual Governance Statement

Summer 2021

1 THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS SEPTEMBER 2020 – AUGUST 2021

Name	Type of Governor	Current Term of office appointed	Current term of office expires
Mr Deena Chetty	Headteacher	1 September 2016	Ongoing
Martin Doré	Chair of Governors	1 April 2020	31 March 2024
Dave Leaker	Co-opted Governor	17 July 2017	16 Jul 2021
Kerry Munden	Co-opted Governor	24 Feb 2020	23 Feb 2024
Robert Morini	Co-opted Governor	10 Oct 2017	9 Oct 2021
Sumy Choudhury	Parent Governor	9 Oct 2017	8 Oct 2021
Kirsty Sultanti-Jones	Parent Governor	9 Oct 2017	8 Oct 2021
Maryam Osman	Staff Governor	20 Dec 2017	19 Dec 2021

2 CLERK TO GOVERNORS

Waltham Forest Clerk to Governors at Downsell Primary School: Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant

3 LINK GOVERNORS SEPT 2020 – SEPT 2021

Governor	Link Governor role
Dave Leaker	Safeguarding and Looked After Children
Robert Morini	Pupil/Sports Premium and Culture Champion
Martin Doré	SEND
Kerry Munden, Kirsty Sultanti-Jones, Sumy Choudhury	Curriculum, including Teaching and Learning
Kirsty Sultanti-Jones	Behaviour, attendance and exclusion
Maryam Osman	Parent and Staff voice

4 COMMITTEES SEPT 2020 – SEPT 2021

Finance Committee	Ofsted Action Group
Deena Chetty	David Backhouse
Sumy Choudhury	Deena Chetty
Martin Dore	Martin Dore
Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant	Beverley Hall
Marina Kaloki	Jeff Hart
Kerry Munden	Gerry Kemble
Kirsty Sultanti-Jones	David Kilgallon
	Donna Miller
	Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant

5 ATTENDANCE SEPT 2019 – SEPT 2020

Governor	Number of board meetings attended this year (6 per year unless there are exceptional circumstances))	Number of visits to school this year – including training events, Joint PCC meetings, school events, trips, assemblies and class visits
Mr Deena Chetty	9 of 9 (100%)	
Martin Doré	9 of 9 (100%)	
Dave Leaker	7 of 9	
Kerry Munden	4 of 5	
Robert Morini	7 of 9	
Sumy Choudhury	6 of 9	
Kirsty Sultanti-Jones	8 of 9	
Maryam Osman	6 of 8	

6 TRAINING UNDERTAKEN BY GOVERNORS SEPT 2019 – SEPT 2020

During the academic year Governors have attended training sessions run by Waltham Forest, training sessions held from school online and e-learning modules. When considering the skills and training Governors require, particular attention is given to three core strategic functions of the Board of Governors:

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

The following training has been undertaken:

- Safeguarding Overview for Governors - LBWF LADO

- GDPR
- Introduction to the new inspection framework
- Governors' briefing on SEND
- Ofsted Governor Training
- Governor Visits to Schools and the role of Linked/Named Governors
- Chairs' Networking Meeting
- Getting the most out of the Governor Hub

7 CHAIR'S STATEMENT - MARTIN DORÉ

It has been another busy year for the Board of Governors, but this time, I have to say there has never been a year like it.

The pandemic has touched many of our lives in such drastic ways and given us all so many challenges, but I am proud to say that the whole school community has risen to these challenges.

As a board, we have held all our board meetings virtually for around 16 months but are planning to return to some face-to-face meetings from July 2021. It is likely that FGB meetings will be face-to-face whilst Finance Committee meetings are likely to continue in the virtual format.

Mr Chetty and our staff have worked tirelessly to complete risk assessments and put procedures in place to minimize the risks for all in school. Our wonderful children and their families have also played their part, whether they were children of key workers and in school or having to stay home during the first part of lockdown.

We strive to continue to support the work of the school. We have worked together in our strategic role:

- To oversee the provision of home schooling for many pupils and in-school provision for children of key workers
- to ensure pupils still enjoy school, feel valued and part of the school community
- to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- to ensure pupil attainment is monitored and maximised
- to oversee and approve the school's budget
- to ensure the staff are supported as needed
- to approve policies and procedures

By carrying out our strategic monitoring role, the Board are enabling the senior leadership team to focus on the day to day running of the school. We are delighted that we have recruited a superb new Deputy Headteacher, Ms Rachael Alexander-Gordon and a very experienced SENDCO, Mrs Ailsa Betts. This

strengthening of the Senior Leadership Team and the reallocation of roles within it has enabled Mr Chetty to enhance his capacity to think and act strategically. This reflected particularly in the area of curriculum development.

In line with this, we regularly review our roles and the experience, knowledge and skills we individually bring to the Board, ensuring there are no gaps that could affect our efficient governance of the school. We continue to identify suitable training opportunities and the ones undertaken this academic year are listed earlier in this statement.

We have access to the Gold level of LBWF Governor Services and this includes clerking/governance services which provide expertise and advice if needed. They also provide training and meetings to help us to remain well informed. For example I attended Waltham Forest School Recovery Conference 2021 held over three days in May 2021. I also regularly attend the WF Chairs Group.

We have recruited a new member to the board to replace one of our valued governors who has now completed his term of office. Our succession planning has also enabled us to have a clear timetable for the replacement of other governors due to complete their period of service in the coming months.

In order to ensure all governors can enhance their governance and leadership skills and to ensure effective governance, we have increased the size of our governing body with the addition of an experienced former headteacher. We have also introduced a Finance Committee into the structure so that full meetings do not dwell on minor details but enable the Finance Committee to bring a laser like focus on all financial and budgetary matters.

Ensuring that there adequate provision for keeping children safe online is an important responsibility and we have ensured that regular reporting of new training and any significant developments are reported regularly to the Board.

We continue to review policies and procedures to ensure that these are fit for purpose and meet not only our legal responsibilities but also our vision and aims for the school and our pupils. We have used The Key Compliance Tracker to ensure that our website is up to date. The uploading of policies is thus under constant review. The children and staff remain at the forefront of our decisions as we endeavour to provide the best educational environment for them.

We continue to closely monitor the school budget to ensure the school can cope with reduced funding and rising costs. This has been a constant challenge and the pandemic has given even more challenges in relation to managing the budget. We have had to take the painful decision to restructure some sections of the staffing model. This meant that we had to lose 9 teaching posts, one admin role and 4 midday assistants. Due to the agreed reduction in the PAN, which meant that we are now in effect a two form entry school, we will employ 20 teachers in 2021/22 rather than 29. Fortunately this has been achieved by voluntary redundancy, retirement and redeployment. This has ensured we did not have to resort to compulsory redundancies. We have, despite some short term cash flow issues, been able to approve a budget which maintains the school's financial viability and robust supervision of expenditure.

Link Governor visits have started again with most of the governors undertaking learning walks and having discussions with school leaders in school during recent weeks. The visits have largely focussed on the new curriculum and how it is being consistently implemented across all year groups and Key Stages. Governors have noted that differentiation awareness and curricular progress is much more apparent than in previous visits. Link Governors produce reports for FGB meetings so that issues can be examined in detail.

This means that the children's learning and development will continue to be of the highest standard.

7 MEETINGS

The Full Board of Governors meets twice termly. The Finance Committee meets at least termly

8 OTHER DOCUMENTS

Other document available from the Governor's section of the school website:

[DfE: Competency framework for School Governance](#)

[DfE Governance handbook](#)

[Downsell Primary School, Governors Code of Conduct](#)