



Governing Board impact statement 2023/24

The composition of the governing board

It's been a successful year of recruitment to the governing board with a new Staff governor, two Parent governors and two Co-opted governors joining the board. These governors have strengthened and extended our breadth of skills and knowledge in areas such as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), financial expertise, personnel management, premises and marketing.

In September 2024 we will have one Co-opted and one Parent governor vacancy.

We are a committed and hard-working board of governors, who are proud to work alongside the Executive Headteacher to ensure students at Linwood School receive high quality SEND provision at each of our campuses.

Meetings of the governing board and attendance.

The Full Governing Board (FGB) meet five times a year. All meetings have been remote or hybrid and are supported by an efficient governance professional. Our three sub-committees meet three times a year. Governors are volunteers, meeting attendance has been excellent despite having busy working and personal lives. All apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis; governors work to the national governors' code of conduct.

Governor's work by the FGB and committees this academic year

Our Vision and Values are fully embedded and clearly seen in all areas of school life, evidenced through the ethos, atmosphere and interactions between staff and students during our termly Link governor monitoring visits and subject learning walks.

Governors have detailed termly Executive Head Teacher (EHT) reports on the implementation and impact of the priority objectives and key performance indicators (KPI) within the School Development and Improvement (Action) Plan (SDIP) at the **FGB meetings**. Governors bring questions and challenge on the reported progress at these meetings. Further significant development has been made in the depth and breadth of the Lumos curriculum and the Linwood Post 16 offers, through strong Post 16 leadership and effective collaboration, which has strengthened the curriculum content and student ownership of their progress and learning.

The Golden Threads of SEND teaching, sequential planning and dynamic assessment have been a staff training focus within the quality of education this year. Across Linwood's curriculum pathways, improved consistency of quality of teaching has been evidenced through leadership monitoring reports to the **FGB**.



The Finance and Asset Management (FAM) committee have carefully scrutinised and monitored the school finances on a regularly basis with the School Business Manager, advising **the FGB** on budget setting along with the reporting of comparison benchmarking. However, the National SEND funding shortfalls are deepening. The governing board have highlighted these pressures to the BCP Children's Services leadership, advocating for adequate and appropriate funding for our students' needs. The governing board have strenuously strived to work with the LA regarding the significant pressures on the school budget.

The Personal and Wellbeing committee have monitored teacher performance management and seen improvements to staff induction and targeted Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The annual staff wellbeing survey showed further positive responses than previously and when compared to data available from other schools. Linwood staff showed their commitment to our students' mental health and wellbeing by identifying their need for, and then receiving additional training to support their role in this. The teacher workload group have presented to the committee demonstrating the impact of their 'listening/we did' exercise and their aims to support teacher work/life balance. An agreed panel from this committee undertake the EHT's annual performance management with the support of an expert external professional.

The Safeguarding Governor has termly meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and HR Manager, ensuring the Single Central Record is recorded appropriately and up to date. This governor reports to FGB the progress in the school's Safeguarding action plan and campus audits. **The FGB** receive an annual review report by an external expert, which has confirmed the high quality of Safeguarding at Linwood.

Safeguarding has high priority **within the FGB**, all governors are required to complete the same Child Protection & Safeguarding training as all Linwood staff members. A comprehensive report by the Lead DSL is submitted to each **FGB meeting** for scrutiny. Governors are curious about the effectiveness of work done for student online safety by the enrichment of curriculum content and the use of external services, as well as bringing challenge on how school have improved accessibility of training and support to parent/carers within this potential high-risk area to our students.

The FGB approved the introduction of the Medical Lead role in September 2023 which has ensured the consistency of best practice, safe storage and administration of medication and medical procedures undertaken by school staff in all campuses. The medical lead is raising the profile and awareness of the requirements of students with medical needs within school and at these student's annual review of their EHCP. Which should lead to increased therapeutic and health needs being met through improved working partnerships with medical professionals and services.

The Regulation and Engagement (R&E) Governor met termly with R&E leaders to discuss and monitor the progress of SDIP objectives which were reported **to the FGB**. KPI's in R&E have been carefully monitored. The continued development of the Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (PACE) team role is having a positive impact on student well-being and regulation.



The quality of teaching and learning is monitored by the **Learning and Achievement Committee**. This committee has received presentations this year from subject leaders for PSHE/RSE, IT and Science, which were followed up by governor learning walks covering all the campuses to see for themselves these subjects across a variety of curriculum pathways. Governors were encouraged by the creativeness of lessons and the student engagement they witnessed on these visits. Maths, English and Literacy is a standing item for reporting and review by this committee. The effectiveness of specific learning interventions is scrutinised in this committee. Termly **Curriculum Pathway Link Governors** monitoring visits, have been carried out across all campuses. Good practice and excellent learning experiences were evident and shared with stakeholders with a statement on the website.

Statutory policy review is undertaken by **the FGB** and by each **committee** depending on the delegation of responsibility. Governors question and give input on policies to ensure they are effective, achieving their objectives and aligned with our vision and values.

Governors attended the **22/23 Progress and Attainment Reviews** from each Curriculum Pathways leader and noted the basket approach of appropriate assessment processes to ensure increments of progress by our students are captured and celebrated.

The **Careers Link Governor** has met with the IAG lead for careers and future pathways and was impressed with the team's personalised, quality support offered and further evidenced by the consistent top marks in all areas of the mandatory Gatsby benchmarking reporting (tool to mark quality of careers and future pathway advice and work experience provision by all schools).

Equality and Diversity is at the forefront of discussions and decision making by Governors on the implementation of equality, inclusion and diversity in the workplace and within the school community taking account of any lessons to be learnt.

Attendance is monitored by the **Link Governor for attendance**. The schools lead DSL provides termly detailed comparison data and KPI reporting within their report to FGB, which were challenged by governors, around the impact of the school's approaches. Some encouraging results have been noted, with recognition that further work is required in the next academic year. Governors join EHT's clear commitment to support and improve attendance especially within some of the Post 16 provisions.

Detailed reporting of our Pupil Premium students' progress is considered by **the Learning and Achievement sub - committee** which compares favourably with their peers at Linwood.

Governors ensure student voice is regularly reported to **FGB** and the recent addition of a former student to advocate and ensure this process is inclusive and an effective way of the FGB hearing a wide range of student views.

Governors access training from the National College and NGA, including KCSIE,



Child Protection & Safeguarding level 2 and The Responsibilities of Governing Boards for Children in Care and Risk management. Several governors attend termly Southwest Alliance of Leaders in Special School's Governors' Networking Meetings and the SWALSS Annual Governors' Conference, which offer valuable development for special school governors.

The **FGB** supported the implementation of the new website, to enhance stakeholder ease of use and improved communication and information sharing. The FAM committee will be monitoring this for effectiveness and compliance.

Governors have worked tirelessly to improve outcomes for our students and to realise our ambitious vision for the school and we will continue to challenge in all areas to ensure this happens.