



Local Governing Body Annual Report 2022-23

September 2023

We are privileged to be Governors at Culverhill school and to have supported our school leadership team of Mr Walker and Mrs Holt over the past year.

The Governing Body, with the school leadership, strive to meet the needs of our children and provide them with holistic support to achieve their potential. We do this mindful of our aim to:

Inspire – Nurture – Thrive

The work of the Local Governing Body is focused around six key strands and we are pleased to report on the achievements and developments over the last academic year.

1. Assessing the quality of education that the school provides for its pupils:

Governors were aware of the potential for an Ofsted inspection this year and with a new leadership team in place were pro-active in supporting school leaders to refine the School Development Plan and ensure that there was support from the Trust to make the necessary preparations. The inspection came earlier in the year than expected but Governors were delighted to hear first-hand from the inspector of the strong evidence of learning they found: 'Pupils thrive at Culverhill and love to read and learn'.

At the start of the year Governors planned their monitoring for the year ahead and encouraged the school's continued focus on curriculum development including the Nurture and Thrive pathways. Governors received regular reports from the subject leaders and from our School Improvement Partner who regularly visits the school to carry out in depth assessment of the quality of provision and provides clear next steps for our school leaders. At the end of July, we met to scrutinise the final pupil assessment data with the assessment lead, checking on the development plans for the new academic year. Our pupils and students have worked hard over the year and have been rewarded with great progress.

2. Assessing the impact of the staff on outcomes for pupils:

Our highly experienced staff are our greatest resource and we are proud of the expertise that has been built up over time. The Governors had oversight of the mitigation put in place against staff absence and development of a pro-active recruitment campaign as well as

tightening of policies. The staff wellbeing team continued to work with the Trust's Clinical Psychologist to make available proactive wellbeing activities and support, and the school have developed a greater role for our Social and Emotional Mental Health lead. The school has adopted the Trust's new Well School strategy and Governors supported the continued investment in staff training and professional development and look forward to the development of a fully integrated approach to staff development, including succession planning in the year ahead.

3. Assessing the quality of engagement with our parents and carers:

The survey of parental opinions at the end of last year drew positive comments and Governors are proud that the school is held in high esteem in the local community. Over the year, Governors met with many parents and families at the school coffee mornings and have passed on ideas and suggestions, particularly over the accessibility of the school website. Governors aim to be more visible in the coming year with attendance at as many parental events as possible to develop these relationships further as the support of parents and families is central to our school.

4. Holding the school leaders to account for standards in the school

This year, Governors have supported the continued development of the school Behaviour system which, as Ofsted noted, has the 'emotional well-being and mental health of pupils at its heart'. Our pupils and students love coming to school and attendance is strong but we always strive for improvement and Governors approved updates to the attendance policy early in the year.

The Health and Safety (H&S) of pupils, staff and visitors is paramount and our H&S Governor meets regularly with the school to provide oversight of all aspects. Every term Governors consider aspects of the Risk Register to ensure that appropriate mitigation is in place for the key risks to our school.

At the start of the year, Governors adopted the new Trust wide Safeguarding and Online Safety Policies and have continued their own training in the key areas of safeguarding and cyber security. Our dedicated safeguarding team continue to have a high workload and our Safeguarding Governor supported the annual safeguarding audit and further Trust wide audits were commissioned to enable us to streamline processes across the Trust to better serve our vulnerable young people and support staff wellbeing.

5. Holding the Headteacher to account for delivering the agreed budget outcomes

The past year has been financially challenging for all schools. The impact of the cost of living increases, particularly utility bills, coupled with unfunded staff pay awards has reduced our ability to make savings for larger projects but the Trust released funds to help with premises projects and we were delighted to be able to replace the outside play equipment and see the children having fun and honing their physical skills. As a new Head, Mr Walker has been

supported by Governors and the Trust in the financial management of the school and Governors have developed their own skills with training from the Trust's Director of Finance. We have officially increased the number of pupils our school can accommodate to protect funding in the longer term and Governors supported the school in working with the Local Authority to access the funding needed to support individual children.

6. Ensuring that the school contributes to shared learning across the Trust:

This year the Trust has developed a Trust Safeguarding Group including staff, Governors and Trustees and, as we look forward to growing in the next year, this sharing of knowledge and cross Trust learning will be developed further. The Trust Assessment Group continues to meet after every data drop and Trustees and Governors have been welcomed to a meeting to increase our understanding of the processes, including internal and external moderation. The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors meet termly with their counterparts at New Siblands and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Trust to ensure a positive information flow and to share ideas and learning.

Conclusion and looking ahead

In July we said goodbye to our Chair of Governors, Gill Edginton, who has served the Culverhill school community for over 30 years, but it was wonderful to be able to present her with an expression of our thanks at Culverfest and share some time with our pupils and staff at the end of another very busy school year. We said goodbye to some staff also retiring and our older students have all left with secure next placements, we wish them all well as they continue their journey in life.

In the coming year we expect another visit from Ofsted and as a Governing Body we will be supporting Mr Walker and Mrs Holt in all the preparations while never losing sight of our holistic approach to special education.

The school self-evaluation at the end of 2022/23 identified many areas where we need to work hard to develop, improve and embed and there is a plan in place for 2023/24 which Governors will monitor and evaluate to ensure that these improvements are realised. There are many challenges to overcome, including finance, staff recruitment and the continuing presence of the Covid virus.

We are looking to strengthen the Governor team and welcome interest from parents, carers and extended family who could give their time and talents for the benefit of our wonderful pupils.

On behalf of the Governing Body, I thank the whole school community for the support you have shown over the last year and look forward to working with you in the year ahead.



Neta Roylance-Smith,
Chair of Governors,

September 2023

Breakdown of the Local Governing Body, at the end of 2022/23:

Neta Roylance-Smith, (Chair, Local Governor),
Margrielle Blake (Vice-Chair, Parent Governor)
Nikki Naish (Parent Governor)
Jackie Powney (Staff Governor)
Claire Evans (Staff Governor)
Bolaji Olaniru (Local Governor)
Santie Human (Local Governor)
Chris Walker (Head Teacher)

We currently have 2 Governor vacancies. If you are interested in learning more about how you can make a difference to our school, please contact our Clerk, Frances McMillan by email: frances.mcmillan@enabletrust.org.uk