



The Oaks Primary School  
Bringing Learning to Life

## Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of The Oaks Primary School

### **Governance Arrangements**

The Governing Board of The Oaks Primary School is made up of the following governors:

**Parent Governors;**

**Staff Governors;**

**Co-opted Governors; and**

**Local Authority Governor.**

The full Governing Board meets 4 times a year and governors also meet as committees (once a term) to consider various aspects of the school in detail. Governors at The Oaks have the following committees:

- Business and Resources Committee
- Learning, Standards and Community Committee

There are also committees that meet, if required, to consider pupil discipline, staffing appeal issues, performance management and complaints.

### **Governors' Attendance Record**

Attending Governing Board meetings is an essential part of a Governor's role and the attendance record for the Governors of our school is outstanding. This ensures that all Governors receive the necessary information all at the same time and therefore important and informed decisions can then be made as and when necessary on all aspects of the school, staff and pupils.

### **Role of the Governing Board**

The Government's requirement for all Governing Boards states 3 core functions and they are:

**Setting Strategic Direction**

- Clarity of vision and ethos

<b>Creating Robust Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging stakeholders</li> <li>- Meeting statutory duties</li> <li>- Accountability for teaching, achievement Behaviour and safety</li> <li>- Strengthening school leadership</li> <li>- Performance managing the Head Teacher</li> <li>- Contributing to school self-evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring Financial Probity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Solvency and effective financial management</li> <li>- Use of Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning</li> </ul>

**Assessment and Impact of the Governing Board during 2018-2019 School Year**

**Setting Strategic Direction:**

- As a governing board we have been involved in reviewing the school values to ensure they reflect what we hold valuable for The Oaks School now and in the future, and that they are clear to all involved with the school - governors, staff, children, parents and visitors.  
  
The school values are: Kindness, Respect, Honesty, Appreciation, Happiness and Courage
- With the Head Teacher, we are continuing to look at how to improve the lines of communication with parents. A newsletter is sent out weekly containing all information relating to the school diary. There is an open door policy which enables good communication between staff and parents. Surveys are used to gather views from parents, most recently around homework policies, which resulted in positive improvements in how school and parents can work together.
- In liaison with the Head Teacher a decision was made by the governing board to establish breakfast and after school clubs for the pupils of The Oaks Primary School which is proving very popular. This provision is monitored regularly by the governing board, considering numbers, staffing and viability.
- A Strategy Group, involving the whole of the governing board is in operation and meets each term to ensure that we fulfil this core function and make strategic decisions for the school. At the last meeting the School Improvement Partner was invited to attend to provide details on her role, the link with the school, support provided for the Head Teacher and a third-party view of the school's self-evaluation and improvement. This had significant impact on us as a governing board, as we were able to question the School

Improvement Partner directly on what the school does well and the particular areas of focus, which helps us as a board with our monitoring and evaluation.

- A skills audit was carried out during the year on the governing body, to identify gaps that could be covered off with training. This identified a number of areas (which included an understanding of the OFSTED framework, how to assess data and the role of the School Improvement Partner) which have been covered off through the strategy meetings during the year.
- During the year, a proposal was put forward by the Local Authority and considered by the governing board on the proposed expansion of primary schools in the north area of Bolton. An expression of interest was submitted, and the Chair and Head Teacher attended a meeting regarding this. Unfortunately, The Oaks was not one of the schools considered for expansion on this occasion. The governing body continues to consider options to extend the provision within school for the benefit of the local community.
- Vice-Chairs have been appointed for each committee in order to support the Chair and also to provide an effective and robust succession plan for the governing board.

### **Creating Robust Accountability:**

- Governors have a robust system for their monitoring and evaluation of the school; each governor is linked with an area within the school development plan and governor visits are carried out each term with a focus on each particular area. For example, this term there has been numerous governor visits into school with a focus on:
  - Curriculum provision
  - Special Educational Needs and Disability
  - Early Years Foundation Stage
  - Greater Depth
  - Three points progress
  - School Spending Plan
  - Higher Achieving Children
  - ICT
  - School Council
  - Breakfast Club and After School Club review

A report is produced by every governor following each visit and the report contains sections to guide governors and produce a consistent report, the sections are:

- Purpose of the visit
- Activities; what did you actually do on your visit?
- Findings
- Action as a follow up to the visit or possible focus for the next visit
- Impact

- Governors receive substantial information on the data for the school; this allows the board to monitor the school's performance, celebrating the successes and be aware of the areas for the development and monitoring the improvement and actions throughout the year.
- Safeguarding is a standing item on the agendas for both committees of the governing board to ensure that all safeguarding requirements are rigorously met. A member of the governing board has specific responsibility for this area and liaises regularly with the Head Teacher.
- Governor visits to school provide governors with the knowledge base of the operational aspects of the school so that they are able to challenge and support the head teacher will every aspect of school life to ensure that the children within The Oaks Primary School receive the best possible education and reach their full potential during their time at the school.
- Three members of the governing board meet with the Local Authority School Improvement Partner to consider the performance of the Head Teacher and set targets for the school year.

### **Ensuring Financial Probity**

- The financial side of the school is regularly monitored by the governing board. The Chairman of the Business and Resources Committee liaises with the Head Teacher and Office Manager regarding all financial aspects for the school.
- In the spring term of each school year a School Financial Value Standard is completed, which covers all aspects of financial managements, including competency from the governing board. The Chairman of the Business and Resources Committee and the Office Manager complete the assessment which is then approved by the governing board before being submitted to the Local Authority Finance Team.
- The Pupil Premium & Sports funding are monitored on a regular basis by the governing board with considerations on the amount received for that particular year, how this is utilised within school and the impact of the funding on those pupils eligible. Governors also consider whether all pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium funding actually make the claim.

### **Future Plans for Continuous Improvement**

- Appoint a Co-opted Governor with the skills and experience as highlighted on the governing board skills audit.
- Implications for governors on the new Ofsted Framework.