

WHAT DO THE SCHOOL GOVERNORS DO?

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (2021/22)

It is our goal to work with Nova's staff, parents and carers to shape your children's future. We strive to be the best we can by challenging, inspiring and encouraging success.

Governors have an important role to play in running our school and helping to provide the best possible education for our children. The Governing Body works with the Headteacher to provide a vision and a strategic framework for the school. It also ensures that the Headteacher performs her responsibilities in delivering good education based on the School Improvement Plan. It also ensures the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

The Governing Body's roles and responsibilities fall into three key areas:

- strategic direction: setting aims for the school; agreeing policies, plans and targets for improvement to match those aims; monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies
- critical friend: asking relevant but probing questions in a supportive, honest, and trusting manner
- accountability: holding the headteacher and staff to account for the performance of the school; to the parents and others for the work of the Governing Body in deciding the strategic direction of the school; setting the terms of reference for those individuals, committees and working parties to which the Governing Body delegates tasks.

Governance arrangements

The Governing Body has a Code of Conduct which sets out the commitment and behaviours expected of your governors. All governors sign up to this Code on becoming a governor at Nova.

The Governing Body of our school at the date of writing is made up of 1 Local Authority governor who is also the Chair, the Headteacher, 1 elected parent governor, and 5 co-opted governors including the school Business Manager. The Deputy Head is an associate member and attends all board meetings. Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Body, have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and to the success of the school. During the year the Board conducted an audit of its collective skills and established that there were no significant skills gaps.

The past year

Covid 19-related risks were reduced to a level at which all governor meetings could take place face-to-face in school. The Full Governing Body met six times during the year, including a discussion and planning meeting with a minimal agenda. The two main sub-committees, Standards and Finance & Resources, met on three and six occasions respectively. Individual governors sit on at least one committee. Our Pay Panel met once. Our Strategic Working Group, which monitors the change to one-form entry at Nova and its impact on the School's future, also met once.

Our clerk takes the minutes at all meetings. She also advises the Governing Body on procedural matters and ensures that we meet our statutory obligations.

How we train

Governors keep up to date by taking advantage of training courses provided by the Bristol Governors Development Service (GDS) and other accredited bodies. Courses attended included Chairs and Clerks Networks, Chairs' Briefing, Safer Recruitment, Governor Induction, Staff Mental Health & Well-being, SEND, Finance for School Governors and all of the statutory responsibilities of Governors relating to the proper running of Maintained Schools, quality of education, safeguarding and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. The Chair also organised two training activities specially prepared and delivered for the Nova board by the GDS and the Chair's Network. These played an important part in the development of our annual Strategic Statement and plan of work.

The work we have done

As we begin to set Covid-19 behind us, our objectives have been to support the school as it works to catch up the children's learning and classroom performance, and to build on the strengths of the school community and the children's personal development.

With 11 Governors on the board for much of the year 2021-22, we were able to begin a monitoring of all subjects across the curriculum and in all years. We began to meet staff to plan our curriculum monitoring and develop a detailed knowledge of subject intent and implementation. Governors visited the school for learning walks twice during the year and were impressed with the quality of learning they saw, and with the conversations they held with both teachers and pupils. The governors paid particular attention to safeguarding and pupil behaviour during the year, and were pleased to note that at Nova sound and effective frameworks are in place for both.

Following July's OFSTED, the inspectors in their published report noted the inclusive, caring and nurturing ethos of the school, the enjoyment of learning and the importance of relationships between pupils and with the staff, and the quality of teaching in reading and phonics. The governors are pleased that what they have observed throughout the year has been formally recognised.

The Governing Body commends the hard work and commitment of our Headteacher and staff to all the children and their families, throughout these very challenging times.

Our work last year

- i) Maintaining a brief from the Headteacher throughout the year on the impact of COVID-19 on safeguarding, pupil attendance and behaviour, special needs a disabilities provision, the curriculum and pupil progress
- ii) Monitoring the process of implementing remote learning including response of parents and carers and impact on learning
- iii) Discussions with the Director of Education about the future of the school during and after transition to one form entry.

The work we are going to do

The report of the OFSTED inspection in July was published at the start of the year. The governors' plan of work for the coming year will focus on the improvements to pupil learning and behaviour and the Early Years environment identified in the report, and the goals identified for the year in the School Improvement plan. Two learning governors' walks learning will take

place in term 2 and term 4 and 5 and link governors will continue to meet lead teachers and staff in areas of curriculum oversight, subject areas and our areas of statutory responsibility to the staff and children at Nova. We also want to engage increasingly and directly with the school community now it is safe to do so.

How you can contact the Governing Body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback, and ideas from parents and carers. Please contact the Chair via the school office or email chair@novaprimaryschool.co.uk.

Chair of Governors

October 2022