

Sheldon School

Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

The Board of Governors

Sheldon's Board of Governors comprises:

- 7 parent governors elected by parents;
- 3 teacher governors elected by teachers;
- 1 staff governor elected by the non-teaching staff;
- the headteacher, as an ex-officio governor;
- 6 community governors appointed by the Board of Governors;
- 1 community governor appointed by the Local Authority (or by the Board of Governors if the Local Authority fails to make a nomination).

In addition, the two deputy headteachers and School Business Manager attend full Board of Governors meetings and committee meetings. Other members of the senior management team also attend when required and appropriate.

There are five governor committees: Strategy; Staffing, Care and Guidance; Finance & Audit; Premises; and Curriculum. These meet up to six times each year. The full Board of Governors meets six times a year; at each meeting we have reports from the committees and a report from either the headteacher or a deputy headteacher.

Most of the governors' work takes place at committee level; when the full meeting of governors convenes we look at all the work done at committee level. In the last twelve months we have reviewed or had reports from:

- the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Governor
- the Reporting Officer
- the headteacher
- the deputy headteachers
- the Safeguarding Governor
- the Pupil Premium Governor
- the Chair of the Members Group

And reports on:

- Health and Safety
- Child Protection
- Pupil Premium
- the Enrichment Fund
- Admissions
- School budgets
- Exam results
- Student data

- Committee reviews
- Changes to Business Interests Register

Key topic areas discussed have also included:

- The Scheme of Delegation;
- The School Development Plan;
- The Governors' Decision Planner;
- Governors' Code of Practice;
- Change to Sheldon Constitution & Charters (Role of Members);
- Annual Report from the Board of Governors to the Members and the Charters Board;
- Terms of Reference for all committees;
- Link Governor reports from all faculties;
- Governor succession planning;
- Recruitment and selection of new members of the Senior Management Team;
- Governor skills and training;
- Renewal of subscription to The Key;
- School closure due to Covid-19;
- Protocol for virtual meetings due to Covid-19;
- Covid-19 Updates.

The Chair of Governors, appointed (or re-appointed) at the start of each academic year, meets with the headteacher at least once a month and between meetings they discuss any matters that need attention.

The focus areas for the coming academic year will be agreed at the first full Board of Governors meeting in October.

Board of Governors' objectives set in October 2019 were:

- Continue to monitor the impact of the National Funding Formula;
- Monitor investment in school infrastructure, including ICT, and consider future investment priorities;
- Look at all aspects of staff and student wellbeing and mental health initiatives
- Monitor governor capabilities and the effectiveness of the Board of Governors;
- Review of Catering and Cleaning contracts;
- Review School Development Plan in committees and report back to Board of Governors;
- Embed the new Ofsted framework into committees.

Strategy Committee

Role

The Strategy committee meets before each full Board of Governors meeting, six times a year. It consists of the Chair, the Chairs of all the committees, the Vice Chairs of Governors, and the headteacher.

Its role is to:

- Oversee the strategic direction of the Academy, ensuring appropriate planning and monitoring processes are in place;
- Implement reviews of the BOG and act on feedback to ensure continuous improvement;
- Support management and governance through the risk register and regularly review the top risks;
- Review the BOG skills audit and ensure skills gaps and learning needs are being addressed, including through succession planning;
- Discuss how the school will address issues and changes nationally and locally relating to staffing, funding, admissions, etc;
- Act as members of recruitment / interview, disciplinary and other panels, as required.

Achievements in 2019/2020

During the last school year, we have successfully:

- Reviewed the school's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis;
- Reviewed the Scheme of Delegation and Terms of References for all the committees;
- Reviewed Board of Governors and committee reviews and agreed actions required;
- Monitored the school's development plan;
- Reviewed the Risk Register;
- Discussed the requirement for a Risk Management Strategy, including pan-Board of Governors audit and assurance responsibilities;
- Set objectives;
- Agreed to propose Sheldon to the Local Authority as a venue for Governor Training;
- Discussed student Destinations;
- Reviewed admissions (including Sixth form) numbers;
- Discussed succession planning;
- Discussed Data Action Impact Reviews (DAIRS);
- Revised the Skills Audit;
- Implemented a template for committee chair reports to the full Board of Governors;

- Discussed changes to the Sheldon Constitution & Charters (Role of the Members Group);
- Discussed the school's responses to COVID-19, including reviewing and commenting on the Risk Assessment for school reopening.

Staffing, Care and Guidance Committee

Role

The Staffing, Care and Guidance Committee (SCG) supports the Board of Governors and has delegated responsibility for the spending of all staffing budgets to agreed staffing levels, ensuring a spread of curricular expertise through the process of our teaching staff appointments.

During the last school year we have supported the following:

- Helped teachers become more effective through INSET opportunities and personal development;
- Ensured that teachers are appropriately rewarded so far as budget and national teacher's pay structure permit;
- Reviewed staffing policies;
- Reviewed complaints and exclusions;
- Monitoring staff and pupils' morale and well being;
- Monitoring of staff recruitment and retention.

In addition to our routine tasks, the primary objectives for 2020/21 are:

- Ongoing monitoring of staff and pupils' morale and wellbeing with additional emphasis on Years 12 and 13;
- To ensure staffing changes are effectively managed with minimal impact on students;
- Ensure best value and appropriate Governor training;
- Ensure Safeguarding information is updated and disseminated to Governors, staff, parents and pupils in a timely way.

Finance and Audit Committee

Role

The Finance Committee has formally changed its name and terms of reference this year to recognise the work we already do to oversee the audit of Sheldon's annual accounts and our programme of internal assurance work. The Committee has therefore become the Finance & Audit Committee from 2019/20 onwards.

Audit and assurance work is central to our role to ensure that standards of financial control and administration are adhered to. We also ensure that there is a robust system in place for monitoring the progress of expenditure and income during the year which enables the committee to act in good time to prevent any budgetary difficulties. We have an oversight of budget setting, determination of financial priorities and end of year reporting, including receiving accounts prepared by external auditors. We have a strong link to the Premises Committee and maintain oversight of investments in the Sheldon estate as well as our largest contracts including catering and cleaning.

Achievements in 2019/2020

In 2019/20 academic year, the committee's work included:

- managing the formal change to become the Finance & Audit committee including revising our terms of reference for approval by the Board;
- setting and regular monitoring of budgets and actual income and expenditure including cash flow;
- reviewing impact of our 3-year investment strategy to upgrade Sheldon's IT infrastructure and capability - which has been very positive;
- monitoring the financial impact of responding to Covid-19 and the closure and re-opening of the school;
- monitoring the Sheldon trading company which is used for letting income including the impact on the school of lost income for the current year;
- development of a three-year budget forecast;
- managing our reserves to ensure enough funds are deployed towards the education of students this year and to maximise return on any longer-term investments;
- recruiting a new finance manager to strengthen the Sheldon finance team;
- monitoring existing investments in developing the School site and supporting the development of plans for new capital investment.

Objectives for 2020/21

- continue to monitor the financial position of the school in light of the additional challenges of Covid-19. This includes monitoring the trading company and likely shortfalls in income in 20/21;
- continue to review detailed monthly reports comparing actual to budget and to scrutinise any unexpected variances;

- continue to review cash flow and investment requirements with consideration to falling available cash balances;
- appoint high quality, new internal and external audit service providers for the school;
- support the selection of new finance software to streamline financial management and reporting in Sheldon;
- review our approach to governance of risk and internal assurance in collaboration with Board colleagues;
- to prepare new budget for 21/22 and forward 3-year forecasts.

Premises Committee

Role

The Premises Committee ensures that there is a system in place for monitoring plans for the development, maintenance and security of the school's buildings and grounds as well as the delivery of support services by external contractors. In consultation with the Head, it is responsible to the Board of Governors for:

- Reviewing the condition of the premises and developing strategic plans for the development and maintenance of the school's buildings and grounds;
- Forming the policy and recommending the charges to be applied for the letting of the school's premises;
- Reviewing risk management as it concerns the premises, including the oversight of Health and Safety and GDPR policies and issues;
- Establishing and keeping under review the Critical Incident Policy and procedures;
- Overseeing the Security Policy and monitoring reports of security incidents including data.

Achievements in 2019/20

During the last school year we have supported the following:

- Preparations for school reopening following the temporary closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The introduction of new furniture in the refurbished library;
- Monitored Wiltshire Council's Health and Safety review of Art and Performing Arts with satisfactory results;
- Replacement of school lighting with energy efficient LEDs to reduce the impact on the environment and utility costs;
- Successful Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid to replace the New Block roof;
- Re-tender the electricity contract;
- Introduction of Cyber Insurance.

Objectives for 2020/21

In addition to our routine tasks, the primary objectives are:

- Monitor and support the summer works, maintenance programme, and ongoing projects including the replacement of the New Block Roof;
- Secure Condition Improvement Funding to replace the existing Fire Alarm;
- Reduce the energy consumption of the school through a programme of monitoring and improvement, including reducing costs for utilities.

Curriculum

Role

The committee ensures the curriculum offered is broad and balanced, good progress is made by students from all groups and at all stages, monitors emotional wellbeing and student destinations. Each member champions the needs of a specific student group during data analysis and policy review.

Achievements in 2019/20

- This year we have had presentations from English, PSRE and PEA on both teaching and learning and alternative provision. Presentations provide an overview and highlight strengths and weaknesses, strategies to build on or address these, opportunities and threats. Extra-curricular provision and destinations are also covered.
- At an extraordinary meeting in January 2020, it was agreed by governors that Pathways were to be removed from the Year 9 options process entirely. While students for the vocational programme and alternative provision were still targeted as in previous years all other students were required to choose one of the EBacc subjects and then have free choice for their other three subjects. Languages are no longer to be compulsory.
- Across the year we have monitored the performance of all student groups across the whole school, with the exception of KS3 skills (review put on hold due to coronavirus outbreak). Despite the interruption of Covid 19, the monitoring of homework and effort grades remain a significant factor.
- We have also monitored the retake of English and maths GCSEs where necessary in the sixth form. All those taking English achieved at least a level 4 at the first retake.
- Performance data has been compared to national data and the committee has spent some time understanding and analysing Fischer Family Trust (FFT) summary dashboard as well as Analyse School Performance (ASP) and Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR). The Year 7 catch up premium fund has been discontinued (June 2020) and we are waiting to see if alternative funding will be made available and how that should be spent.
- Our whole child reports this year report against the schools' vision and aims as well as on emotional well-being. This has allowed us to monitor all aspects of the school experience and track the acquisition of skills vital to future careers.
- The teaching and learning overview focussed on positive behaviour for learning through managing behaviour effectively in the classroom, the submission and quality of homework across the entire school as well as high quality teaching in year 7 focussing on skills for success.
- We have reviewed policies on Relationships and Sex Education and Literacy.

Objectives for 2020/21

The committee will determine its exact focus at the start of next term. This is likely to initially focus on recovery and split into short-term, medium and long-term objectives. It will be based on catch up within all year groups, but specific focus on Year 11 and Year 13 and also Disadvantaged pupils. Gender split will also be analysed.

SEND Governor

The Board of Governors has legal duties in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). According to the Governance Handbook the functions these duties require can be delegated to a committee, an individual governor or to the Headteacher; although the responsibility is still with the Board of Governors itself to ensure that the functions are carried out. It should decide, with the Headteacher, the school's general policy and approach to meeting pupils' SEND.

At Sheldon, the SEND Governor, as a member of the Curriculum Committee, assists the governors to fulfil their legal duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, School Admissions Code and the Equality Act 2010.

The SEND Governor helps ensure that the Board of Governors has regard to the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years and that information is published on the school's website about the implementation of the Board of Governors' policy for pupils with SEND: SEND Information Report 2019-20

The SEND Governor's principal function is to keep the governors informed about the way the school manages its provision for pupils with SEND and ensure that the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities by:

- Being familiar with relevant documents and legislation, including relevant school policies
- Meeting regularly with the SENDCO to become better informed about the assessment of special needs, the numbers of pupils with SEND, provision made, staffing and funding levels, how pupils access the curriculum and SEND priorities in the School Development Plan
- Making visits to the school to see what pupils need, what resources are available for SEND pupils and how teaching methods work
- Questioning any Board of Governors decisions which have implications for SEND pupils
- Overseeing the implementation of the SEND Policy and Equalities Policy
- Attending INSET days and governor training courses relating to SEND
- Reporting regularly to the Board of Governors.