



ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22

Forward from the Chair of Governors

Being part of a Governing Board for a large secondary school such as Heathcote School and Science College is both challenging and rewarding in equal measure.

The Government has moved much responsibility on to Governing Boards in recent years. Governors make up the UK's largest volunteering workforce, but regardless of being volunteers, Governors take their responsibility very seriously.

This Annual Governance Statement sets out the achievements made by the Governing Board during the Academic year 2021-2022. This statement celebrates the level of commitment that teachers, leaders, staff, Governors and pupils have shown to the school. The Governing Board have a very close working relationship with the Headteacher and works in partnership to bring continual improvements to the school and deliver the best life chances for our young people, within our financial budgets.

The Governing Board has continued to work at pace in very demanding conditions and is testimony to the passion and commitment of our volunteers to ensure life at the school can continue for pupils and staff.

I am immensely proud to be Chair of Governors and I will continue to drive improvement in our Governance and strategic oversight to deliver the best outcomes for pupils and staff.

I hope that you find our Annual Governance Statement insightful.

Stay safe and well.

Mike Ashwell

Chair of Governors

Heathcote School & Science College

May 2023



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Introduction

Welcome to the Annual Governance Statement for Heathcote School and Science College Governing Board for the 2021-22 academic year. The statement includes the main organisational, academic and financial challenges the Governing Board has been involved with this year.

The Role of the Governing Board

The Governing Board has a strategic role with three core functions. These are to:

- Ensure public financial resources are effectively, efficiently and appropriately spent; and
- Hold the Headteacher and senior leadership team to account for its educational performance; and
- Set the vision, ethos and strategic direction of School.

Governing Board membership

The Governing Board is comprised as follows:

- Six Parent Governors elected by parents
- Nine co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Board
- One Local Authority Governor
- One Staff Governor appointed by a ballot of staff
- The Headteacher

This year we refreshed our Governing Board with the introduction of **three** new Governors who each bring their own skills and experiences to the team.

Attendance

Overall **71%** of Governors attended Full Governing Board meetings and **86%** of Governors attended Committee meetings. In addition, Governors made a significant contribution through participation in working groups, Governor training, Governor Disciplinary Committees and LINK visits to the school.

Our committees

The Governing Board had three main Committees this year, with the following purpose:

- **Resources:** To provide overall scrutiny and put forward recommendations to the Governing Board and Headteacher on all matters relating to personnel, premises, security, finance and H&S. The latter as outlined in the School's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
- **Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development (BAPD):** To advise the Headteacher and Governing Board on matters concerning pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, in particular to ensure that the requirements of pupils with special needs are met and ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve their potential.



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- **Quality of Education (QoE):** To advise the Headteacher and Governing Board on matters concerning curriculum for teaching staff and non-teaching staff.
- **Pay Committee and Headteacher Performance Management Committee:** Meet annually to review performance and set pay for all teaching staff across the school including the Headteacher.

Governors visits ([LINK](#))

Governors are assigned to a specific area in the school that are either statutory or the Governing Board wishes to monitor more closely. Governors normally a minimum of one visit per year to monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan. The focus areas for this year included:

- Safeguarding and Looked After Children
- SEND
- Data, Progress and Attainment
- English, Literacy, Maths & Numeracy
- Science
- More able and Higher Attaining Pupils
- Pupil Premium
- Behaviour & Attendance
- Sixth Form
- Health and Safety
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Outward Facing and Community Engagement
- Careers
- Parent Engagement

Working Groups

Committees or the Governing Board occasionally supplemented by the establishment of Working Groups who look at specific areas in much more detail. This year Governors were involved in the following Working Groups:

- IT improvement programme
- Monitoring of the Alternative Provision at Heathcote School

Governor Training

This year > **50%** of Governors attended training provided by LBWF, amounting to > **130** hours of training undertaken. Governors are required to attend training on regular basis to ensure a healthy balance of skills across the Governing Board.



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Key achievements

The following highlights the positive impact Governors have made to the school:

- Governors were instrumental in setting the School Improvement Plan and agreeing targets and objectives with the Headteacher.
- Active involvement in the Annual Department Reviews with the Heads of Department and the Headteacher to review and assess progress and provide challenge and support.
- Governors were fully involved in the recruitment of a new Headteacher, with the current Headteacher leaving the school in August 2022.
- Governors took part in the lesson observation process which was a quality assurance exercise to see how teachers are being assessed, trained and supported with their professional development.
- Governors ensured that all the required policies were developed, reviewed and adopted in-line with DfE guidelines, to ensure the school is compliant with its statutory obligations.
- Governors have ensured that information displayed on the school's website meets statutory requirements.
- Governors have sought to ensure that the school's financial resources are used diligently and Governors worked extremely hard to ensure public money was managed sensibly and that the school financial obligations were achieved.
- Governors took part in numerous LINK visits to the school, providing written feedback.
- Governors continued to be involved in improvement to the schools IT infrastructure which included an upgrade to the Internet connectivity and better Wi-Fi coverage in the Sixth Form.
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- Governors held their Annual Training Day on 25 June 22 at the school and looked at areas including: Improving Governance, Financial Awareness and preparing for OFSTED.
- Governors continue to support the Headteacher on all matters relating to the PFI maintained building and challenging Kier to ensure they meet their contractual obligations.
- Governors took part in training to ensure their skills are updated and relevant. Training included topics such as: Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Disciplinary and Grievance Management, Finance, HR, Gangs, Exclusions, Complaints, Headteacher Performance Management and Governor Accreditation.



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Finance

The financial position of the school continues to be challenging. Whilst the school finished with a positive outcome with a carry forward of **£297,629**, there is a forecasted in-year deficit for 2022/23 of **(£611,123)**, which mean that the Governing Board was unable to set a balanced budget, due to a forecasted deficit of **(£313,494)** in 2022/23.

Governors approved a Capital budget of **£27,517** to carry forward into 2022/23.

Governors continue to closely monitor the schools financial position and moving into 22/23 and the focus will continue on accurate budget forecasting, cash flow and ways to save money. Governors will provide ongoing support to ensure the school continues to take steps to build robust Financial Systems and Governance.

Governors will continue to take part in external audits to ensure good practice is built into our processes and any corrective action can be put into place. There are challenges ahead for the school which is not uncommon for Local Maintained Schools.

Behaviour, exclusions and complaints

Where pupils are excluded through either a fixed or a permanent exclusion, the Governor Discipline Committee (GDC) is established to support the appeal process. There were five cases that required Governors to meet, and they dealt with four fixed term exclusions and one permanent exclusions. Governors continue to monitor the number of exclusions and continue to work in collaboration with the school and Local Authority to develop strategies to reduce exclusions, whilst reviewing the Behaviour Policy to ensure Heathcote School is a safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

Staffing

Performance, recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a challenge. Governors continue to work with the Headteacher and staff to constructively challenge and assess each subject department at annual reviews. These have allowed the Governing Board to understand the strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching and environment at Heathcote School and provide opportunities to improve.

Recruitment

Governors successfully recruited a new Headteacher to replace the outgoing Headteacher (Ms Hillman) who was due to leave in August 22. The Governing Body are delighted to welcome Sonia Close, who is the current Deputy Headteacher to the role and we wish her the very best in her new role which becomes effective from the 1 September 2022.

Conclusion

The Governing Board wish to thank our Headteacher, Ms Hillman and her entire staff for their hard work and dedication this year. The Governing Body would like to place on record the contribution from our Headteacher, Emma Hillman and wish her the very best in her new role as Headteacher of Wansted High School.

Governors would finally like to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to all the pupils that have worked their hard in very challenging circumstances. Also to the parents and carers for providing encouragement to enable pupils to keep learning during these troubled times.