

Governing Body Sub-Committee Terms of Reference and Governor Self Evaluation

Following our previous consultation documents on the terms of reference of the new sub-committees and how we might embed the process of governor self evaluation into the work of these, this paper formalises the sub-committee structure and remit and explains how it is envisaged that we will evaluate our knowledge as governors at every meeting.

The first of the three sub-committees will be the **Business Committee**. The chair is **David Siddall** and the terms of reference of the committee are as follows:

Finance

- Prepare, amend and update budgets
- Monitor financial performance
- React to financial variances
- Strategic financial planning
- Capital expenditure
- Comment on, and react to, funding initiatives from the LEA

Human Resources

- Appointment of staff
- Employment contracts and legal issues
- Monitor staff performance appraisals
- Staff Well-being
- Head Teacher annual appraisal
- Staff disciplinary issues

General

- Report to full Governor meetings
- Maintain good communication with the LEA/SMT/staff/parents/students
- Appointment of governors
- Legal issues in general

Governor Self-Evaluation

- The key areas of responsibility for reporting are **Financial Security and Stability** and **Preparation for life after school**
- Include self-evaluation of role on every agenda
- Use the suggested format (initial trial of one academic year) to report on this

The second sub-committee is the **Teaching, Learning and Student Well-being committee**. The chair is **Dr Anne Herbert** and the terms of reference of the committee are as follows:

Curriculum and learning

- Ensure a full, complete and appropriate curriculum is available for all students
- Monitor individual student performance recording systems and that necessary action has been taken with regard to these
- Ensure that appropriate individual student support is provided
- Received reports from SMT/Department heads/teachers with regard to curriculum and teaching issues
- Ensure best use of all school facilities
- Make representations to the Business Sub-Committee with regard to areas of inadequate or inappropriate facilities
- Monitor links/communication/involvement of parents and carers in performance and additional support

Teaching

- Monitor teaching performance
- Ensure appropriate teacher support is available
- Consider ways in which teaching can be improved
- Consider ways in which teachers can be supported, within budget
- Monitor staff well-being
- Make appropriate representations to the Business Sub-Committee with regard to areas where additional teaching support is necessary

Student Well-being

- Ensure that the safeguarding and well-being of children is well understood by all levels of staff as well as the students themselves
- Ensure that appropriate training is in place for staff and governors with regard to the safeguarding and well-being of students
- Monitor and report on policies for reducing the incidence of bullying, including internet safety
- Monitor and report on the well-being and progress of looked-after children

Governors

- Monitor governor training and performance

General

- Report to full Governor meetings
- Maintain good working relationships with the SMT and all school staff

Governor Self-Evaluation

- The key areas of responsibility for reporting are **Children's Welfare, Quality of Education and Opportunities for Learning**
- Include self-evaluation of role on every agenda
- Use the suggested format (initial trial of one academic year) to report on this

The third Sub-Committee is the **Health, Safety and School Well-being sub-committee**. The Chair is **Fiona Pearman** and the terms of reference of the committee are as follows:

Health and Safety – Premises

- Ensure that the premises are fit for purpose and are well maintained
- Monitor the fabric of the building, its grounds and the farm to ensure that they comply with the appropriate health and safety requirements
- Monitor capital projects which affect the fabric of the building, its grounds and the farm
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out and reviewed on a regular basis with regard to the premises and the grounds

Health and Safety – Farm

- Ensure the farm complies with all health and safety requirements with regard to students/teachers/staff/visitors etc and that this is regularly reviewed
- Ensure compliance with appropriate animal health and well-being regulations
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out and reviewed on a regular basis

Health and safety – People

- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out with regard to students and their activities and visits
- Ensure (in conjunction with members of the Teaching, Learning and Student Well-being Sub-committee) that the safeguarding and well-being of children is well understood by all levels of staff and also the students themselves
- Ensure appropriate training is in place for students and kept up to date with regard to their safeguarding and well-being
- Monitor staff well-being

General

- Ensure that all furniture and equipment is maintained and appropriate
- Confirm that health and safety risk assessments are in place with regard to the equipment available in the school and that appropriate training is, and has been, given
- Report to full Governors' meetings

Governor Self-Evaluation

- The key areas for reporting are: **Safe and secure school environment** and **Staff well-being**.
- Include self-evaluation of role on every agenda
- Use the suggested format (initial trial of one academic year) to report on this

The process of Governor Self-Evaluation for all sub-committees and for the full Governing Body

We want governor self-evaluation to be embedded into the reporting structure of the sub-committees as well as that of the full Governing Body and that is why it will be an agenda item at every meeting – ideally the last item before Any Other Business. Although each sub-committee has key areas for reporting this does not preclude them from considering other issues and there are some areas which may well concern every sub-committee at some time, for example anything that may concern children's welfare, safeguarding, staff well-being or health and safety. There will inevitably be some overlap and that is fine as it is better for several sub-committees to consider something than it is ignored.

We would like it to be as simple as possible but it does need to be meaningful. Our suggestion is that we should begin by considering the **learning points** of the meeting that day, i.e. 'What have we learned today that has added to (a) our knowledge of the school and (b) our understanding of how well this sub-committee is performing. So, for example, if the Teaching, Learning and Student Well-being sub-committee has been given a presentation by one of the teachers on the use of, say, some new software to help less able students with maths, at the end of that presentation governors will know what it is, what it aims to do, how well it is working so far, which age groups it is being used for and can decide at what point it will ask for an update on progress. This can then be reported in the self-evaluation section of the minutes.

Another, slightly different example might be if the Headteacher identifies a potential learning experience for, say, year eleven students – perhaps a short break away from the school at an Outdoor Centre. He believes that this would be of significant benefit and would like the Business Committee to agree to helping with some of the costs of this. He talks

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about the likely benefits to the students of this course and the committee would consider and agree (or otherwise) to helping with the costs. This would then be reported on in the 'Preparation for life after school' aspect of self-evaluation and be recorded in the minutes.

Essentially, learning points concern: 'What do we know now that we did not know before this meeting?' 'Is that knowledge positive?' 'Is it a cause for concern?' 'Do training needs/security issues/financial issues arise from this?'

We will pull together an annual report on governor self-evaluation using those areas that have been reported in the minutes. This does not preclude governors from doing short reports from visits to school as these are always very worthwhile and useful additions to the governor self-evaluation portfolio of evidence that demonstrate that we are considering and evaluating our knowledge of the school.

We hope that this makes sense to all governors. Our plan is to evaluate it at the end of the Spring term of 2016 as it will have then been in place for three full terms.

Robert Dunning and Chérie Miles

20th April 2015