



Governor annual statement and impact report Brookfields School 2022-23

Introduction

The Full Governing Board (FGB) at Brookfields School has an important role to play in the work of the school. Every year the board completes a self-evaluation of its performance and how it has fulfilled its duties. The review covers the following:

1. Performance against the 3 core functions of the governing board
2. Performance against the 4 governing board objectives for the year 2022-23
3. Self assessment of the governing board of its performance against the National Governance Association (NGA) governance effectiveness criteria
4. Governing board objectives for 2023-24

Appendices

1. Summary of attendance
2. Summary of policies approved
3. Training completed by governors in 22/23
4. NGA governing board self-assessment questionnaire and evaluation

1) Performance against the 3 core functions of the governing board

Function	How was this achieved?
Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review and scrutiny of the School Development Plan by the governing board and link governor • Regular review of the School Improvement Plan and feedback from the School Improvement Partner • Joint work with the school senior team on key strategic initiatives such as joining a Multi Academy Trust • Regular governing board meetings with appropriate challenge • Approval of statutory policies which support the strategic and operational direction of the school • Improved governing board succession planning to ensure continuity of support for the school • Terms of reference and standing orders that reflect the work of the governing board
Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and for the internal organisation, management and control of the school including performance management of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly headteacher report presented to the governing board for review and challenge • Standards Committees meet termly to discuss Teaching and Learning, Leadership and Management and Wellbeing – Chaired by a non-staff governor to ensure independent scrutiny • Pupil premium performance reviewed at full governing board meetings to ensure that it is meeting its objectives • Key pupil data such as safeguarding, attendance and behaviour is monitored regularly via the headteacher report and governor visits • Link governors meet regularly with key members of staff to ensure effective monitoring e.g. Health and Safety

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff assessment and performance are monitored by governors with approval of salary increase levels for teaching staff • Regular one to one meetings between the Chair of Governors and headteacher • Regular review of the staff training programme at Standards Committee meetings • Effective performance management of the headteacher with an annual review in association with the School Improvement Partner
<p>Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure money is well spent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Finance Standards Committee meetings (4 per academic year) – Chaired by a non-staff governor to ensure independent scrutiny • School budget reviewed in committee and full governing board meetings with challenge and scrutiny • Governors complete the SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) on an annual basis to ensure the school's finances are being managed correctly • Regular review of the staffing cost and structure to ensure that it meets the needs of the school and is financially robust • Approval of the school's financial management policy and register of authorising officers • Scrutiny and approval of the school's budget

2) Performance against the 4 governing board objectives for the year 2022-23

Objectives for 22-23	Performance against objectives
Improve governors' knowledge of pupil progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil progress is discussed at both committee and full governing board meetings and governors have improved their knowledge of how pupil progress is recorded and measured • School staff gave governors a briefing on the school's Earwig system which provides evidence of how pupils are meeting their objectives • Rating: Green
Improve governors' understanding of the legal and financial position of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors have access to NGA Learning Link modules which provide training on these subjects • Budgets are reviewed regularly at full governing board and finance committee meetings which allow governors the opportunity to ask questions to improve their knowledge • Rating: Green
Ensure measures are in place to enhance the sustainability of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reviews of the school's financial performance to ensure the school is financially sustainable • New staff allowance system was approved by governors to improve recruitment and retention of support staff • Capital expenditure such as heat reflecting window coverings was agreed to support the environmental sustainability of the school • Rating: Amber
Support the new headteacher in their post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular one to one meetings with the chair of governors, safeguarding link governor and clerk • New training options explored to support the on-going development of the headteacher • Rating: Amber

3) Self-assessment of the governing board of its performance against the NGA effectiveness criteria

The members of the governing board undertook self-assessment of their understanding of the effectiveness of the governing board and rated the board either red, amber or green (Appendix 4).

The key findings were as follows:

Green

Governance professional
Delegation
Strategy
Employer responsibilities
Accountability – quality of education
Accountability – financial oversight
Compliance – statutory requirements
Compliance – reducing risk
Evaluation of impact

Green/Amber

Values, ethics and culture

Amber

Governance culture
Leadership
Skills and diversity
Induction and ongoing development
Board size
Collaboration
Accountability – stakeholders
Evaluation of individual contributions

Amber/Red

Evaluation of board practice

Red

Vision

4) Governing board objectives for 2023-24

The governing board has identified the following objectives:

- To work with the school to ensure the effective transition of the school from a maintained school to an academy as part of the Ascendancy Academy Trust
- To monitor recruitment and retention of staff to ensure greater continuity for the pupils and staff team
- To work closely with the school to ensure it remains financially stable for the academic year and as part of the academy trust
- To develop a training and development plan based on the outcome of the NGA effectiveness review (see above)

Conclusion

It has been a busy and productive year for the governing board including a strong focus on finance, staffing and quality of education. There has also been a significant amount of time and work dedicated to the potential conversion of Brookfields from a maintained school to an academy as part of the Ascendancy Academy Trust. This work will be a key focus in 2023/24.

The board recognises that further work is needed on the vision of the governing board for the school and the ongoing evaluation of board practice. This will be addressed as the school continues its path towards academy conversion.

The governing board would like to thank the entire school team for its hard work during a very challenging year for the school.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Summary of attendance

Governor	Meetings attended
Sam Jacob	7/7
Anne Murdoch	6/7
Catherine Bernie	6/7
Tom McAuslin	4/5 (Joined January 2023)
Lucy Manners	1/2 (Left December 2022)
Megan Brown	7/7
Shaun Polley	1/2 (Left October 2022)
Dawn Spencer	3/7
Christine McLean	6/7
Anne Linder	2/2 (Left December 2022)
Maddie Burr	1/2 (Joined May 2023)

Appendix 2

Summary of policies approved in 2022/23

Child protection & safeguarding	Accessibility	Health and safety
Whistleblowing	Admission arrangements	Early career teachers
Teacher's pay	Careers guidance	Premises management
Capability of staff	Charging and remissions	Sex and relationships education
Behaviour	Looked after children	Governors' allowances
Complaints	EYFS	Early career teachers
SEND	First aid	Staff discipline, conduct and grievance
Supporting pupils with medical conditions		

Appendix 3

Governor training in 2022/23

Governor	Training attended
Sam Jacob	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer recruitment
Anne Murdoch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer recruitment• Fire safety• SEND• AI• Inspection• Working for employers• Funding for schools and colleges• Regular attendance at Governorhub and SWALLS (South and West Association of Leaders in Special Schools) seminars
Catherine Bernie	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Tom McAuslin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer recruitment• New to Governance 1 & 2
Megan Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Dawn Spencer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• N/A
Christine McLean	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer recruitment
Maddie Burr	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New to Governance 1 & 2• NGA Young Governors Network
Charlotte Wilshire (Clerk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governor recruitment• SWALLS conference• West Berkshire clerking seminars• Governorhub annual conference

All governors completed Safeguarding and Prevent training as part of their statutory duties

Appendix 4

Governing board self-evaluation questions

RAG rating guidance

This guidance is designed to help governing boards respond to NGA's 20 self-evaluation questions.

- We recommend that boards use a red, amber or green (RAG) rating system to respond to the questions.
- Each member of the board should provide individual responses.
- Select the most appropriate RAG rating using the descriptors given below.

Board culture and practice

Self-evaluation questions	Descriptors	
1. Governance culture The governing board is a committed team that works well with senior leaders and the governance professional (clerk to the board).	<i>Tick the red, amber or green descriptor that best fits your board.</i> Our board is a team which collaborates with senior leaders and the governance professional; we have the time required to carry out the role, our meetings are well attended, we undertake training and development and visit our school.	✓
	Our board is developing as a team and mostly manages to give the time required to carry out the role with most meetings being quorate; some of us undertake training and development and are able to visit the school.	■
	Our board is not yet a team and can struggle to find the time to carry out the role with some meetings not being quorate, and few of us manage to undertake training and development or visit our school.	■
2. Leadership The chair is elected annually, leads with integrity, is supported by a vice chair and ensures the board stays strategic and does not shy away from making the right decisions for the school.	We elect our chair and vice chair annually following a nomination and election process which allows the board to consider if the nominee(s) have the right qualities to lead our board.	■
	We elect our chair and vice chair annually but there are not usually other candidates.	■
	We are grateful for anyone willing to take on the roles.	■

<p>3. Governance professional</p> <p>The school employs a dedicated governance professional with an up-to-date job description who supports the board with independent advice and guidance.</p>	<p>Our governance professional is qualified, is up to date with current legislation and practice, administers and advises the board with skill – we couldn't do without this.</p>	
	<p>Our governance professional schedules and minutes meetings with skill but does not advise our board.</p>	
	<p>Our governance professional has other roles within the school and would benefit from training and development.</p>	
<p>4. Skills and diversity</p> <p>Succession is planned, the recruitment process is designed to ensure new board members are recruited to fill skills gaps and ensure diversity of knowledge, experience, perspectives and approaches.</p>	<p>We undertake a skills audit regularly and use the outcome to inform our succession planning, recruitment strategy and training and development; recently we have focused on diversifying our board.</p>	
	<p>We undertake a skills audit when we need to recruit but have yet to use it to inform succession planning, training and development; we struggle to find people to commit to the role but are thinking more about diversity.</p>	
	<p>We have not carried out a skills audit recently; our board is long-standing and stable and appointing more diverse people is not a priority.</p>	
<p>5. Induction and ongoing development</p> <p>There is a quality induction programme in place for new board members and a culture of ongoing governance training and development.</p>	<p>All new board members get a comprehensive induction and can access quality training and development for areas where the board needs to learn and develop.</p>	
	<p>New board members are given information and meet the chair and headteacher; board members generally identify where they need training and development.</p>	
	<p>New board members learn on the job; our board knows what it is doing and doesn't need training and development.</p>	
<p>6. Collaboration</p> <p>Those governing are committed to collaboration and the sharing of best practice.</p>	<p>Our board is well informed, attends network meetings and other relevant events so it is aware of new developments; we have learned from others and shared our practice.</p>	
	<p>Our board does its best to keep up with best practice and tries to get to meetings and events that would enable collaboration.</p>	
	<p>Our board is experienced and has decided to focus solely on our school.</p>	

Board structure

7. Size The governing board is the right size with a proportionate committee structure.	We have the right number of people around the table for the board to undertake its strategic functions and to enable delegation to the committees we need.	
	We have not yet got the right number of people around the table: there are not enough people to delegate responsibilities effectively OR there are too many people and so some are not making a meaningful contribution.	
	We have not yet made time to review the size of our board and evaluate our committee structure.	
8. Delegation Committee terms of reference are up to date, are comprehensive and the work undertaken is not duplicated.	We review and revise our committee terms of reference annually to ensure that we are working as efficiently as we can.	
	There is some duplication of our work and we have yet to ensure our terms of reference are constructed in a way that means this does not happen.	
	We have not reviewed our terms of reference properly for some time and they do not reflect the work we undertake at committee level.	

Core functions

9. Values, ethics and culture The governing board and headteacher have agreed the school's values which are evident in policies and practice, ensure ethical behaviours and underpin a healthy culture across the school.	We have worked with the headteacher to review our values and regularly test that they drive ethical behaviour and a healthy culture.	
	Our values are long-established and we believe that they drive ethical behaviour and a healthy culture.	
	Our headteacher sets the values and we trust that they drive ethical behaviour and a healthy culture.	
10. Vision The governing board and headteacher have established a clear and ambitious vision which describes what the school should look like in three to five years and what pupils will achieve.	Our board has worked with the headteacher and has consulted with stakeholders in establishing our ambitious vision for the next three to five years.	
	Our headteacher has a clear vision and we agree with it.	
	Our board has yet to look forward three to five years and think about what we would like our school to look like then.	

<p>11.Strategy Those governing have agreed with the headteacher a limited number of measurable strategic aims which need to be met in order for the school to achieve its vision; these aims drive the board's business.</p>	<p>Our board has agreed a limited number of measurable strategic aims and progress with meeting these is reported to our board termly meetings.</p>	Green
	<p>Our aims are known but do not align with the school improvement plan and so it is not straightforward for the board to track progress being made.</p>	Yellow
	<p>Our board focuses on the school improvement plan; there is too much uncertainty to look further ahead than this.</p>	Red
<p>12.Employer responsibilities The governing board acknowledges its employer responsibilities and ensures the development and wellbeing of the headteacher.</p>	<p>Staff wellbeing and development is a priority for our board; we engage with staff and use surveys and other data to monitor the effectiveness of our policies.</p>	Green
	<p>We are introducing staff surveys and other mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of our policies.</p>	Yellow
	<p>Our board relies on the headteacher to keep us informed about staff wellbeing and development; we trust them to inform us of any issues.</p>	Red
<p>13.Accountability – quality of education Those governing hold the headteacher to account for the quality of education, ensuring school leaders develop, implement and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which is taught effectively.</p>	<p>We have had training on curriculum matters and have a good understanding of the principles that underpin our curriculum, its implementation and impact.</p>	Green
	<p>Our board is beginning to understand the principles that underpin our curriculum, its implementation and impact.</p>	Yellow
	<p>Our board has yet to build an understanding of the principles that underpin our curriculum, its implementation and impact.</p>	Red
<p>14.Accountability – financial oversight Those governing have sufficient understanding of how the school's funds are managed to hold the headteacher to account for the efficiency, sustainability and impact of the school's financial planning and management.</p>	<p>Our board has a good understanding of how schools are funded and how our school manages its budget; several of our board members have detailed knowledge of budget planning and monitoring.</p>	Green
	<p>Our board has just enough people with an understanding of school funding, budget planning and monitoring.</p>	Yellow
	<p>Our board focuses on pupil outcomes and believes that financial sustainability should be of secondary concern.</p>	Red

<p>15.Accountability – stakeholders Those governing know their school, engage with its stakeholders and take into account their views when making key decisions and report on their work each year.</p>	Our board knows the school well, actively engages with stakeholders and takes into account their views when making key decisions; we report on our work each year.	
	Some of our board members know the school and like going to events but systematic engagement with stakeholders is largely via the school’s leaders.	
	Our board finds it hard to find time to get to know the school well and relies on the headteacher to report what stakeholders think.	

Compliance

<p>16.Statutory requirements Those governing are confident that the school meets all legal requirements and takes into account statutory guidance.</p>	We are aware of our statutory responsibilities, take into account statutory guidance and are compliant with policies and procedures.	
	We think we meet most statutory requirements, aim to take into account statutory guidance and think we comply with policies and procedures.	
	There are so many requirements that it is hard to know if we are compliant or not.	
<p>17.Managing risk Those governing are involved in the identification and assessment of key strategic risks.</p>	We identify and review annually risks which may prevent us from achieving our strategic aims or of non-compliance.	
	We are in the process of understanding our role in managing risk.	
	Our school leaders manage operational risks; we have not made any assessment of strategic risks.	

Evaluation and impact

<p>18.Evaluation of individual contributions A 360° appraisal process is used to evaluate the chair’s effectiveness, and the chair or vice chair reviews board members’ individual contributions and effectiveness each year.</p>	The chair undertakes a 360° appraisal, and the vice chair speaks to all board members individually about how they have contributed to the work of the board each year.	
	The chair is going to undertake a 360° appraisal this year and it has been agreed that they will speak to all board members individually about how they have contributed to the work of the board.	
	Our chair and vice chair don’t perceive a need to undertake appraisal or are too busy.	

<p>19. Evaluation of board practice The governing board undertakes annual self-evaluation and commissions an external evaluation every three years.</p>	<p>We self-evaluate annually and commission an external review every three years.</p> <p>We self-evaluate most years and have discussed commissioning an external review of governance.</p> <p>This is the first time we have self-evaluated, and we have not yet commissioned an external review of governance.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Amber</p> <p>Red</p>
<p>20. Evaluation of impact Those governing are confident that the decisions the governing board makes have led to both improved outcomes for pupils and ongoing financial stability for the school.</p>	<p>Our pupils' outcomes continue to improve and meet the highest expectations and our school's budget is balanced with a reasonable contingency.</p> <p>Our pupils' outcomes are generally improving, and our school's budget is tight with minimal contingency.</p> <p>Our pupils' outcomes are not improving as much as we would like, and our school's current budget position needs to be more secure.</p>	<p>Green</p> <p>Amber</p> <p>Red</p>
<p>Summary Governance culture – Amber Leadership – Amber Governance professional – Green Skills and diversity – Amber Induction and ongoing development – Amber Collaboration – Amber Board size – Amber Delegation – Green Values, ethics and culture – Green/Amber Vision – Red Strategy – Green Employer responsibilities – Green Accountability – quality of education – Green Accountability – financial oversight – Green Accountability – stakeholders – Amber Compliance – statutory requirements – Green</p>	<p>Summary Green Governance professional Delegation Strategy Employer responsibilities Accountability – quality of education Accountability – financial oversight Compliance – statutory requirements Compliance – reducing risk Evaluation of impact</p> <p>Amber Governance culture Leadership Skills and diversity Induction and ongoing development</p>	<p>Red</p>

Compliance – reducing risk – Green
Evaluation of individual contributions – Amber
Evaluation of board practice – Amber/Red
Evaluation of impact - Green

Board size
Collaboration
Accountability – stakeholders
Evaluation of individual contributions

Green/Amber

Vision, ethics and culture

Red

Vision

Amber/Red

Evaluation of board practice

