



Link Governors - What do they do ?

All governors are linked to a specific aspect of the school's work. They have a monitoring role; to develop a deeper understanding (compared to other governors) of their named link area and report back to the appropriate committee. Link governors arrange governor visits as required during the year. Whenever a governor visit takes place, a brief report is presented to, and discussed by, the appropriate committee.

The link governor reports were an important source of evidence for Ofsted inspectors in their recent visit this term.

Here are some extracts from their reports:-

Governor Alice Hiley met with the Careers team in November, looking at **The Careers action plan and Gatsby Benchmarks**

A particular strength of the careers team is in identifying and targeting students who, for a variety of reasons, lack access to or do not engage with information and opportunities regarding future careers and education. This work complements and supports attendance, engagement, and behaviour. The team believe it is effective due to its bespoke nature, and the same added value would not be delivered by external provider generic career solutions.

The following Gatsby benchmarks were discussed:-

3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance.

Our Safeguarding Governor is Joanne Thorns.

She meets with the Designated Safeguarding Lead regularly. Her reports were important to Ofsted.

Here is an extract from her November report:-

All newly appointed staff have had an induction and training. All staff had attended a training session about the updates in KCSIE. Governors had been sent a training video about the latest updates in KCSIE and all have signed to say they had completed this.

We discussed how school has responding to a couple of complex cases; ensuring the appropriate records are in place, working with key agencies, attending multi disciplinary meetings, ensuring families were involved, putting things in place in school as needed.

In the summer term school had used social media and letters to parents to highlight the possible dangers of social media - alerting parents to signs of abuse and danger and where to find help. Alternative Provision places are monitored regularly by the DSL.

Governor Louise Quinn is a senior member of staff in the Shotton Hall Research School. She met with Helen Machin (DHT) in October to discuss **Staff Professional Development and how this is Quality Assured.**

There was a discussion about the distinct types of knowledge teachers need: subject knowledge enhancement, pedagogical content knowledge and disciplinary knowledge. The emphasis currently is on the first two strands. Teachers need both. Some strong examples of English CPD were discussed, including a focus on disciplinary reading strategies and effective feedback.

There was a focus on how departments are using different evidence sources to construct a coherent and meaningful programme of professional development for teachers: looking at some examples of departmental plans, their actions, and subsequent follow-ups from CPD. At the next meeting there will be a focus on disadvantage students, in line with the publication of validated results.

Governor Helen O'Brien met with the Attendance team in November.

As this was Helen's first meeting, her priority was to meet the team. Improving attendance continues to be a top priority for school. The Attendance Officer is the main person responsible for logging absence calls and this starts as early as 7:30am. Absences can be logged by telephone (message left on voicemail) and through the Class Charts app, whichever parents find most convenient. The Family Liaison Manager is frequently out of school making home visits. She understands the backgrounds of the families she is visiting, and her role allows her to engage with families and students who need additional support.

Governor Training – Autumn term 2024

Pupil Exclusions & Behaviour - the Role of the Governing Board - September 2024.

Two governors attended this training which covered all the responsibilities of governors both leading up to and during the exclusion process. The paperwork for exclusion meetings will be discussed in a follow up session in December.

Children Looked After and Children with a social worker - Update for Governors – November 2024

The Head of the Virtual School led this training. Her team are responsible for supporting 1221 Children in Care in County Durham. Our designated governors are Tracy Bell and Joanne Thorns.