

Falcon Junior School

Annual governance statement – April 2025

An annual governance statement is not required for maintained schools but is good practice¹. The purpose of the statement is to explain how our governing board has fulfilled its responsibilities, particularly in relation to its core functions.

This is our school's fourth governance statement and covers the period from January 2024 to March 2025. We have summarised below key governance initiatives at Falcon over the last fifteen months, many ongoing.

Strategy

In May 2023 governors agreed five longer-term, strategic priorities² in response to the following question: *What can we do or create at Falcon to best serve local children over the long term?*

The agreed priorities are:

1. Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion
2. Becoming a centre of excellence for nurture
3. Working collaboratively with local schools
4. Improving our governance
5. Community engagement

We have identified shorter-term objectives under each of these priorities that inform school improvement and development plans. We review our strategy regularly and will update it as necessary.

School improvement and development plan (SIDP)

Governors approved our School Improvement and Development Plan in May 2024. The plan sets out key areas for school improvement and informs decisions on the school budget.

Current priorities and investment include:

- Improving sentence structure and punctuation
- Improving the percentage of children who achieve expected standards in reading, writing and maths combined
- Improving fluency in times tables
- Monitoring the impact of the curriculum
- Further developing outdoor play and learning
- Establishing our Specialist Hub of Inclusive Practice (SHIP)

Progress against established priorities is regularly reported to governors by our headteacher.

¹ GOV.UK (2014) [The School Governance Regulations 2013](#)

² FJS strategic priorities and objectives 2023-28: <https://www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk/web/governors/>

Specialist Hub of Inclusive Practice (SHIP)

We are delighted to report that we welcomed our first children to our 'SHIP' in September 2024³. The old caretaker's bungalow has been fully repurposed as a teaching and learning space for up to eight children who need additional support to access the mainstream curriculum. Staff and school leaders work closely with Norfolk County Council and other schools to ensure this specialist provision is as good as possible.

Outdoor space and outdoor play and learning (OPAL)

We have continued to develop play opportunities and resources for children during breaks and lunch, guided by the OPAL⁴ programme. We have also taken steps to make the outdoor area more attractive.

Governance

There are eight regular meetings each school year (every five school weeks) with additional meetings as needed. Governors who are not also members of staff typically have additional individual roles and responsibilities such as for safeguarding, finance, inclusion, and other areas of compliance. These individual roles and responsibilities are set out in separate role descriptions based on Norfolk Governor Services templates.

At the time of writing (March 2025), our board has vacancies for a parent governor and two co-opted governors, and we welcome expressions of interest – please enquire via the school office.

Link governors and curriculum leaders

Link governors are assigned to each year group team and are responsible for developing an understanding of the priorities and work of the year group and to develop relations between governors and staff.

Governors also receive regular written updates from curriculum leaders (teachers) in relation to the subject they lead. These include updates on how the curriculum is being developed and monitored, and how action plans are progressing.

Governance documents

We have several key governance documents that set how we do business, all available on our website (<https://www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk/web/governors/>).

These include:

- Our strategic priorities and objectives (2023-28)
- Our instrument of government
- Governance protocol and terms of reference for our full governing board

³ Falcon website, SHIP: <https://www.falcon.norfolk.sch.uk/web/ship/692184>

⁴ OPAL: <https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/>

- Governor roles and committee membership
- Governor role description (NGA model)
- Governor code of conduct (NGA model)

The attendance record of governors for the last year is also available on our website.

Assessment of effectiveness and impact of governance arrangements

As well as receiving reports at governing board meetings, governors regularly visit school to meet with school leaders, staff and children. Our school welcomes feedback from parents and children and undertakes regular surveys. Governors discuss the results of these surveys and what improvements might be made. In a survey of parents in July 2024 (101 responses):

- 94% agreed that their child was happy at school
- 97% reported that their child feels safe at school
- 90% reported that their child does well at school
- 81% agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved
- 87% of parents would recommend Falcon to another parent

In a survey of children in March 2025 (347 responses):

- 80% of children agreed that they liked being at school
- 32% of children reported that bullying does not happen and a further 53% reported that bullying does happen but that teachers are good at resolving it
- 93% reported knowing what to do if they are being bullied
- 96% reported knowing what to do if they get nasty messages online or on their devices
- 92% reported knowing what to do when they get stuck with their work
- 96% reported that the school encourages them to respect people and treat everyone equally

Vision, mission and values

Following consultation with staff, parents and children, in May 2021, governors approved an updated vision, mission and new shared values for the school.

Our vision is:

Happy, safe and fulfilling lives for all.

Our mission is:

At Falcon Junior School, we provide a safe, encouraging and engaging learning environment that enables all children to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes to make the most of their lives, now and in the future.

We achieve this through excellent teaching, a nurturing ethos that builds relationships skills, and a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion that ensures fair treatment and opportunity for all.

Our shared Falcon values are:

Aspiration, Kindness, Resilience, Positivity, Creativity and Respect

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding information is held using the CPOMs online system which has proved robust and easy to use, enabling staff to identify and address possible concerns at an earlier stage.

Our trained safeguarding leads meet regularly to ensure safeguarding at Falcon remains effective and the highest priority. This includes termly meetings with our named safeguarding governor and our chair of governors. Governors receive regular reports on safeguarding including compliance checklists and audits, and a list of improvement actions that is updated regularly.

Nurture and wellbeing

Wellbeing remains a priority at Falcon and governors have approved funding to comprehensively support pupil and staff wellbeing in our school improvement plan. Our nurture team provides personalised support to children who are finding aspects of school or their wider lives difficult.

Leadership changes

Easter 2025 saw the departure of our headteacher for the past six years, Mr Savage. Mr Savage has led the school through a really challenging period, including flooding, Covid and major building works and leaves the school in a much stronger position than when he joined. Mr Savage is leaving to become Executive Headteacher of two other local schools and governors wish him the very best for the future.

From the summer term of 2025, Ms Sharon Hunter is Falcon's Acting Headteacher and Mrs Michelle Margree and Mrs Sharon Wagstaff are Acting Deputy Headteachers. Governors expect this leadership team to be in place until the end of the 2025/26 school year and are greatly reassured that the school has such dedicated and capable leaders to take over and provide continuity and stability.

Alex McNulty

Chair of Governors

Sharon Hunter

Acting Headteacher