

Falcon Junior School

Annual governance statement – 19 January 2023

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 second governance statement and covers the 2022 calendar year.

For years 3, 4 and 5, spring and summer terms of 2022 were based in the temporary modular building as the main school was being extensively remodelled and refurbished following closure in January 2020 due to flooding. Year 6 continued to be based in the separate modern classroom block adjacent to the main school building that has remained open through the works.

The building work completed in summer 2022 and the main school building reopened for the Autumn term for years 3, 4 and 5.

While the temporary modular building certainly served its purpose and enabled the school to operate from the Falcon Road site, it was very noisy and not ideal. The new school building provides brilliant, modern spaces for children to learn and staff to work.

We have summarised below key initiatives at Falcon over the last year, many of which are continuing.

Following an Ofsted inspection in November 2022, we are pleased to report that Falcon was again judged a Good school in all areas.

Key initiatives

Covid recovery

Covid has had a significant impact on children's development, wellbeing and education. Not all children have been affected equally.

The school has developed an effective remote learning provision in the event of school closure and has been recognised by the Secretary of State for this work. The school featured in a DfE national webinar regarding outstanding practice.

The school continues to work hard to identify gaps in children's learning that may be contributed to learning lost through Covid. Staff are proactive in supporting children both academically and emotionally.

Embedding governance and a return to in-person meetings and in-school monitoring

Our committee structure and governance arrangements have been in place for two years and were reviewed and continued in summer 2022.

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

Each governor is expected to attend the half-termly meetings of the full governing board as well as being a member of and attending termly meetings of one of the two established committees:

- Personnel and Resources
- Curriculum and Community

Most governors have additional individual roles and responsibilities such as for safeguarding, finance, attendance and behaviour, and other areas of compliance. These individual roles and responsibilities are set out in separate role descriptions based on Norfolk Governor Services templates.

Link governors

Link governors have been assigned to each of the core and foundation subjects of the national curriculum. Link governors are responsible for developing an understanding of their curriculum area and meeting termly with the relevant curriculum leader (teacher) to stay up to date on how action plans are progressing, on developments and to offer governor support.

Assessment of effectiveness and impact of governance arrangements

With the return to the main school building in September 2022 governors can more easily spend time in school, meeting with staff and children. This had suffered through Covid, and the disruption caused by building works.

Our continued focus for the coming academic year is for governors with dedicated roles to fulfil these and for link governors to continue to develop their understanding of curriculum areas and their relationships with curriculum leaders.

We undertake termly in school governor monitoring.

The school welcomes feedback from parents and children and undertakes regular surveys. In a survey of parents in July 2022 (115 responses):

- 91% agreed that their child was happy at Falcon
- 92% reported that their child feels safe at school
- 87% reported that their child does well at school
- 84% of parents would recommend Falcon to another parent

The Ofsted Parentview website was used during inspection (November 2022) to survey parents. Of 93 responses:

- 96% agreed that their child was happy at Falcon
- 86% reported that their child feels safe at school
- 88% reported that their child does well at school
- 86% of parents would recommend Falcon to another parent

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 instrument of government 2015 (reviewed July 2022)
- Governance protocol and terms of reference for our full governing board (reviewed September 2022)
- Comprehensive terms of reference for our two committees (reviewed September 2022)
- Governor roles and committee membership (reviewed September 2022)
- Governor role description (NGA model) (reviewed September 2022)
- Governor code of conduct (NGA model) (reviewed September 2022)

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

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

School improvement and development plan (SIDP)

Governors approved our School Improvement and Development Plan in March 2022. The plan sets out key areas for school improvement over the financial year (April 2022 to March 2023) and informs decisions on the school budget.

Selected current priorities and investment include:

- Continuing to embed Talk for Writing as a whole school approach to raise the standard of writing in English and across the curriculum.
- Developing our curriculum and teaching focused on children 'knowing more and remembering more'.
- Providing reading and phonics support for children who need it.

- Implementing Alex Bedford's Pupil Book Study approach to monitoring teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Developing our outdoor areas to ensure there is lots to keep children occupied and engaged and to improve behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Developing a nurture approach across school following the impact of Covid on social and emotional wellbeing.
- Supporting staff wellbeing.

Progress against this plan is regularly reported to governors by the headteacher.

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.

We have five trained safeguarding leads who meet regularly to ensure safeguarding at Falcon remains effective and a top 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.

At our request, in March 2022 Norfolk County Council's safeguarding team audited our safeguarding practice to help us to ensure we are doing all we can to keep children safe.

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.

Premises

As mentioned, we have returned to the main school building in September 2022, nearly three school years since it closed (January 2020) due to extensive flooding. We are very grateful to Norfolk County Council for funding and supporting the refurbishment, to NPS for managing the project and to Munnings as the main contractor. Thanks to the support and hard work of numerous council staff, building specialists and tradespeople we now have a main building with a clean, modern layout that will serve Falcon children well for many years to come. We have joined the local authority's building maintenance partnership to ensure we do everything we can to look after the school's renewed premises.

Alex McAnulty

Chair of Governors

Edward Savage

Headteacher