



Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of

Richard Lander School

July 2021

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 3 core strategic functions of the Governing Body of Richard Lander School are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

About our school

Richard Lander School is located on the west side of Truro with 1454 pupils split into 5 years and 4 vertical communities of tutor groups, although year 11 are in their own tutor groups to help support their concentration on their GCSE exams. There are 95 teaching staff, 65 support staff including 20 TAs and 12 in administration.

Our aims are threefold - to enable all our young people to become:

- 1. Successful learners, who strive to reach their potential in all they do**
- 2. Confident learners, who develop a fine sense of identity and self-worth**
- 3. Responsible citizens, well prepared for life and work and keen to make a positive difference to the world they live in**

Our Ethos - The school has much to celebrate and be proud of. The achievements of students, both within and beyond the classroom, are part of the rich tradition of this school. Our inclusivity and nurture have been built upon by successive generations of students and staff. We must continue to build upon this.

The school was graded as Good at the inspection in March 2018.

Constitution

The Governing Body was re-constituted on the 1st September 2014 and is made up of 2 staff governors (including the Headteacher), 4 elected parent governors, 1 local authority governor and 11 co-opted governors. The Head Boy and Head Girl and their deputies are invited as associate members for the students & curriculum committee each year.

Co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body and are people who in the opinion of the governing body have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school:

On our governing body, 1 of the co-opted governors is a parent, 1 is staff and 5 are members of the local community.

Attendance

Governors' attendance at meetings this year has been good. All governors are provided with the meeting dates for the academic year in advance and advise the clerk prior to each meeting if they cannot attend to ensure the meetings are "quorate" (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). Since the shut down for Covid 19, the governing body meetings have utilised the school's on-line video conference facilities via the Big Blue Button. This has enabled the governing body to carry out its duties effectively whilst learning new skills.

You can get a full list of governors and their attendance at the meetings from the Clerk to the Governors.

Governing body structure

The full governing body meets at least once per term, and we also have four committees that each meet at least once per term. Each committee has fully delegated powers to make decisions according to their terms of reference.

The Policy committee consists of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the other committees.

The Personnel committee is restricted to no more than 7 people (currently 5) including the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

The Students & Curriculum committee has 7 governors including the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The Head Boy and Head Girl and their deputies are also invited as associate members of this committee.

The Finance and General Purposes committee has 5 governors including the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. A separate working party is sometimes convened to look in detail with the Headteacher and the SLT at the issues on creating a balanced budget, although this year

retractions have prevented any meetings, this has resulted in the committee chair keeping close to the budget setting process.

All of our meetings are clerked by our experienced clerk and minutes are available by applying to the clerk.

Effectiveness and impact of the governing body

The Headteacher led the school into a successful set of GCSE results which were the result of consultation with each teacher and department before a final scrutinising by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The governing body challenged these outcomes for effectiveness and where best to target resources for the year when class room teaching has been limited and GCSEs will again be based on teacher assessments. This has resulted in continued high staffing levels for English and Maths alongside support programs available to all but specifically aimed at Pupil Premium students and those with identified additional needs. The governors continue to keep a watchful eye over the core subjects particularly English and Maths whose progress is important to both students and the school.

Pupil Premium students remain a constant focus for the SLT and governing body to ensure that the correct level and types of support is provided.

The responsibility of the governing body includes the scrutiny of performance management of all staff, where governors are able to consider the recommendations of the Headteacher and this is done by a small delegated pay committee comprising of three governors. The governors have challenged the Headteacher to ensure that standards are maintained within the limitations of remote teaching and other measures in place for a Covid safe environment.

The issues of budget are an on-going challenge for the Finance and General Purposes committee with the finance working party, where value for money and best quality are often in tension. The new financial year has seen a number of challenges with reduced incomes relative to the outgoings for Covid safe environments. This has been well steered and supported by the School Business Manager by restricting spending in some budget headings and clarifying management control along with supporting the governors' scrutiny for effectiveness and ensuring the best outcomes for all the students whilst looking to the future security of the school.

The challenges of the curriculum with the limited in school time and the late decision by the government to not have public exams and rely on teacher led grades are an ongoing focus for the Students and Curriculum committee to ensure that all students are provided with the appropriate challenge and support with the opportunity for all to succeed. Success is now viewed not just by attainment but also by progress as this is a clear measure on how well each student has performed from their arrival at RLS and their final GCSE results. The ongoing Covid 19 pandemic has impacted the plans for this and next academic year groups. The 2021 exam grades are now being assessed by the various exam boards before the confirmed results are issued. The governing

body is for the second year grateful for all the hard work by the staff to ensure the correct and fair outcomes for all students.

Whilst we encourage all governors to visit the school on a regular basis to review activities in the school, this has been limited by the closure of all schools. We have encouraged all governors to make visits as appropriate whether in person or virtually as they are a method of gathering information to help the governing body form a fuller picture of operation in the school so that the appropriate support and challenge can be provided.

A number of new staff have been recruited with support from the governing body where this has been appropriate and possible under the current restrictions.

Students at risk of Exclusion have been a focus this year for the governing body where it has supported the school's leadership team in the range of sanctions and alternative provisions for those who find main stream education presents significant difficulties. Due to the reduced time in school the number of permanent exclusions has been reduced although this has been a potential option for a few.

Governance objectives for the future

The OFSTED inspection in 2018 is still a focus for the governing body, to oversee marking consistency and ensuring the best range of curriculum / subject choices are timetabled to support the desire to ensure that all students make good progress. This is an ongoing challenge particularly in these difficult times where teaching has had a mixture of being both in school (with and without masks) and on line, which for some has been more of a challenge because of learning styles and their environments including the infrastructure limitations.

The governing body are aware of potential ongoing issues towards the government's desire for all schools to become part of an academy trust group, but more recently the challenges of space and the future of a north coast school will require careful planning to ensure the focus is kept on providing a good education for all.

Contact us

The governing body are always open to suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents and the community. You can contact the Chair of Governors (currently Rob Loosemore) via the Clerk to the Governors (Mrs Victoria Sleeman) via the school office.