

## **Blenheim High School – Full Governing Body**

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

#### ***Purpose of the Full Governing Body (FGB)***

The purpose of Governance is to provide confident strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance of Blenheim High School.

The Full Governing Body (FGB) has three core functions;

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders (HT and LT) to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the operational and financial performance of the organisation, making sure that it meets its statutory and legal obligations with a particular focus on Safeguarding and Health and Safety, and that its money is well spent.

The FGB must be ambitious for all children and young people regardless of background or circumstance and infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes for all students.

Governance must be grounded in reality as defined by both high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of students, staff, parents, carers and local communities/stakeholders.

Effective Governance is based on six key features

- Strategic Leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy
- Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance
- People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity
- Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements
- Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of Governance

#### **The vision for BHS is;**

To be recognised by all as an outstanding school at the heart of the community, a place where great Leaders and outstanding Teachers work together to ensure that all of our students achieve their full potential

We have an open and positive culture where we give the best of ourselves and expect the best of each other. Everything we do is driven by a growth mind-set and an absolute belief that we can always be better. This means we:

- Have a strong work ethic
- Are resilient
- Are prepared to take measured and appropriate risks to secure and sustain progress

As a school community we are

- Honest and respectful
- Kind and compassionate
- Inclusive and open minded
- Positive and challenging
- Curious and adventurous
- Independent and accountable
- Proud of our work and school community

The vision and values drive the School Development Plan which is the mechanism by which the school sets out its operating model and the FGB monitors performance against the agreed objectives through a series of KPI measures.

## **FGB Accountabilities**

The FGB should focus on the key strategic issues, recognising that the operational management of the school is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and Leadership Team.

The FGB is accountable for;

- Ensuring effective management of the business of the BHS Academy Trust and in addition to the core functions of Governance set out above ensuring compliance with the Trust's charitable objects and with statutory and company law.
- Setting, in collaboration with the HT and LT, a clear and explicit vision for the future of BHS which has pupil progress and achievement at its heart and which is communicated to the whole organisation.
- Defining and communicating to all stakeholders strong and clear values and ethos which are modelled by the FGB, embedded across the organisation and adhered to by all that work in, or on behalf of, it.
- Defining medium to long term strategic goals and improvement and development priorities which are understood and bought into by the whole organisation
- Establishing processes to monitor and review progress against agreed strategic goals, monitor school improvement and provide constructive challenge to the HT and LT
- Refreshing the vision and goals periodically and as necessary including at key growth or change stages or if the performance of the organisation drops.
- Establishing mechanisms for enabling the FGB to listen, understand and respond to the views of parents/carers, students, staff and the local community
- Initiating and leading strategic change when this is in the best interests of students and the organisation, championing the reasons for and benefits of change to all stakeholders
- Establishing and monitoring plans to ensure that key duties are undertaken effectively across the organisation.
- Establishing procedures to set and manage risk appetite and tolerance, ensuring that these are aligned with strategic priorities, business plans and the school development plan and that appropriate intervention strategies are in place, embedding risk management at every level of Governance
- Coming to an informed decision on whether to form or join a group of schools, this decision to be underpinned by robust due diligence and an awareness of

the opportunities and risks associated with the decision particularly around pupil progress and attainment.

- Signing off the annual report and accounts and ensuring adherence to the Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State.
- Ensuring understanding of and to adherence to responsibilities under relevant legislation.
- Monitoring and improving the quality and impact of Governance through
  - Regular skills audits, aligned to the strategic plan, to identify skills and knowledge gaps, define recruitment needs and inform a planned cycle of CPD for Governors (including induction)
  - Processes for regular internal evaluation and review of the operation and effectiveness of the FGB as well as individuals contributions to the FGB through 1x1 reviews and 360 feedback for the Chair.
  - Commissioning periodic external reviews of board effectiveness as appropriate, particularly at key growth or transition points, to gain an independent expert assessment of strengths and areas for development
  - Maintaining documentation which accurately captures evidence of the FGBs discussion, challenge and decisions as well as the evaluation of it's impact

**Membership** A minimum of 15 governors, to include the Head Teacher or his/her delegate, to be appointed at the first Governing Body meeting of the academic year. The FGB may make recommendations for the co-option of non-governor members.

**Chairman** Chairman of Governors. To be appointed by the members at the first meeting following the appointment of members for the academic year. In the absence of the Chairman the quorate membership will appoint a Chairman for that meeting.

**Clerk** Clerk to the Governors. In his/her absence, one of the members present.

**Quorum** Eight governors, including the Head Teacher or his delegate.

**Meetings**

Frequency:	Minimum of one per term, prior to the termly Governing Body meeting. Additionally one AGM per annum.
Notice:	One week, in writing, with agenda.
Agenda items:	Items from members to be included in the meeting agenda to be sent to the Clerk at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
Any other business:	In order to improve the efficiency of the meeting all items for discussion must be included in the agenda and will not be discussed under any other business unless urgent and then at the discretion of the Chair.
Minutes:	To be circulated within two weeks of meeting.

The FGB will delegate appropriate activities to the three committees Achievement and Learning, Finance Audit Facilities and Staffing (FAFS) and Community, to Link Governors and on occasion to others and will maintain an accurate and up-to-date delegation of authorities document and will annually agree the terms of reference for each committee,

### **The Principal delegations to the Committees are as follows;**

#### **Achievement and Learning**

- Rigorous analysis of pupil progress and attainment information with comparison against local and national benchmarks and over time
- Identifying how all groups of pupils are performing against targets, understanding why, ensuring that school leaders have credible plans for addressing underperformance or less than expected progress and ensuring that the FGB understand whether things are improving and have plans to address where they are not.
- Agreeing how the school is going to raise standards for all children, including the most and least able, those receiving FSM and those who are more broadly disadvantaged, those with special educational needs, Boys, Girls, those of a particular ethnicity and any who are currently underachieving
- Analysing which year groups or subjects get the best and worst results and why, understanding how this relates to the quality of teaching across the school and understanding the strategies for improving the areas of weakest performance
- Ensuring that the school delivers a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all students.
- Monitors investment decisions to ensure that the school is using it's assets to improve pupil outcomes
- Use attendance and exclusion data to identify impact on pupil outcomes and monitor actions to address
- Use staff absence and performance data to identify the impact on quality of teaching and the impact on pupil outcomes and monitor actions to address

#### **FAFS**

- Ensuring the school has effective controls in place for managing within available resources and ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money
- Ensuring the school has procedures in place to identify and manage risks, ensure that risks are aligned with strategic priorities and improvement plans and that appropriate intervention plans are in place to manage risks.
- Ensuring the school has a fit-for-purpose organisational structure to deliver the strategic objectives and resources are allocated in line with the organisations strategic priorities
- Holding a regular cycle of meetings and appropriate processes to support business and financial planning, scrutinising the annual budget and 3 year plan and making recommendations to the FGB
- Developing a long-term financial strategy to ensure that the school has the resources it needs to deliver its strategic objectives over the long term, and reviewing and updating the plan annually.
- Ensuring the school is making the best use of it's budget including in relation to planning and delivery of the curriculum and staffing
- Ensuring the school, is complying with procurement rules and gets the best value when buying goods and services

- Develop an effective reserves policy to provide long-term resource stability and ensure effective governance.
- Overseeing a transparent system for performance management of the HT linked to defined strategic priorities
- Effective oversight of the pay, contractual arrangements and performance of all other employees and the framework for their pay and conditions of service
- Supporting the school in the development of a long-term asset management strategy for the up-keep and enhancement of the premises.
- Establishing an effective system of audit and control under separate chairmanship
- Ensuring the accuracy and completeness of all the schools financial reporting
- Challenge and assist the school in identifying and securing additional revenue streams

## **Community**

- Ensuring the school has effective procedures in place to maintain high standards of behaviour;
- Overseeing school policies and marketing strategies to maximise the admission of pupils to achieve a full PAN to the school in accordance with the Funding Agreement, ensuring that the criteria meet legal and DfE requirements;
- Monitoring attendance, behaviour and exclusion data for students and ensuring appropriate processes and systems exist to improve attendance particularly for pupils making less than expected progress;
- Ensuring the school has policies and procedures in place to promote an inclusive environment and supports a variety of enrichment activities for all students whatever their backgrounds;
- Monitoring wellbeing of students and staff to ensure a healthy environment is maintained for all students and staff;
- Monitoring attendance data for staff and ensuring the school has appropriate processes and systems to address staff absence positively and effectively;
- Supporting the school to maximise its position at the heart of the community and ensuring there are mechanisms in place, including the optimum use of the school's website, for building and maintaining strong and sustainable links with parents and carers, the community and leading community figures and businesses;
- Ensuring learnings are taken from feedback from a range of stakeholders to listen, understand and respond to the voices and views of parents/carers, students, staff, local communities and other stakeholders;
- Ensuring the school maintains public records in accordance with statutory requirements;
- Ensuring effective oversight to demonstrate the school meets its statutory PREVENT duty.

## **Current Policies:** (subject to review)

- Admissions Policy(including Sixth Form and Appeals) \*
- Child Protection & Safeguarding\*
- Health & Safety Policy\*
- Governor Visit Policy
- Governor Expenses Policy
- Governor Induction Policy
- Home/School Agreements (no longer statutory)
- Pay Policy\* recommended through FAF \* *Statutory*

**The committee refer to and take regard of the following guidance:**

- Working together to Safeguard children March 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 16
- A Competency Framework for Governors. January 2017