Annual Governance Statement for the Holmfirth High Governing Board 2024/25

In accordance with the DfE Governance Handbook, the 3 core strategic functions of our governing board are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, values and strategic direction;

2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and for the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and

3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Our instrument of governance is comprised of the following categories:

- 2 parent governors;
- 1 staff governor;
- 1 Local Authority governor;
- 7 co-opted governors;
- The Headteacher.

The Full Governing Board meets at least once each term, we also have 2 committees overseeing:

- Standards and Pupil Welfare
- Resources

In addition, other committees are in place to deal with school matters such as the Pay Committee and the Pupil Discipline and Complaints Panel.

We were pleased to finally get approval for the Artificial Grass Pitch, which is almost complete and will be brought into use at the start of the 2024/25 autumn term. The pitch will be used by School but will also be an asset to the community as the only artificial pitch in the Holme valley. Local junior football teams are already signed up to use the pitch, and we expect high demand for evening and weekend use. It is a great credit to the Head and the team working on the project, that the frustrating obstacles were overcome and the pitch will be a wonderful asset to the School for years to come.

Governors have been impressed that the Senior Leadership team (SLT) at the School have not rested on their laurels since the outstanding OFSTED report in 2023. The team continue to drive improvements in academic and cultural standards, whilst ensuring that support and encouragement is available for ALL pupils including our large SEND cohort. A few members of the SLT left during the year for promotions at other schools, and Governors were involved in the recruitment process for their successors. The new members of the team bring fresh ideas, enthusiasm and expertise, and have settled in well at the school.

Over the last year, Governors have continued to play an important part in the ongoing development and overall improvement of the school. Examples of work that the Board have continued to carry out, monitor and review during the past year in support of this include:

- Continuing external evaluation of the effectiveness of the governing board to ensure that the Board continues to improve and makes useful contributions to School.
- Oversight of the delivery of the school development plan 'Achievement for all', with appropriate challenge of senior leaders to ensure best possible outcomes for all pupils
- Working with the senior team to ensure school performance reporting remains focussed and relevant including new reporting formats. Governors have key performance data at their fingertips.
- Link with a range of departments spending time with school specialists such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, Head of Departments, teaching staff and some of our pupils to better understand and observe day to day activity to enable constructive challenge and to inform the Board's decision making
- Monitoring of pupil and parent feedback
- School budget management
- Evaluation of the impact of addition funding such as pupil premium and SEND
- Scheduled policies and procedures updated and reviewed
- Receiving the Health & Safety Audit and plan of action
- Curriculum development
- Staff deployment and wellbeing
- Attend appropriate Governor training

Our Governing Board delivery plan for 2025/26 aims to achieve the following:

- Continued progress against the school development plan, 'Achievement for all'
- Ensuring that the artificial grass pitch becomes operational and fully effective as both a School and community asset.
- Further capital improvements to improve the school facilities and general refurbishment, including complete renewal of the school's IT infrastructure, and general decorating
- Continued development of the governing body to ensure highly effective governance including the induction of the new members and Vice Chair.
- Continue to improve our feedback mechanisms from parent and pupils to inform the school's ongoing plans for development.

How you can contact the Governing Board

We welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas and are happy to provide more information if you are interested in finding out about becoming a governor. The Chair of Governors, Michael Bell, can be contacted via the school Office. Further

information about governance is also available on the Governors page of the school website.