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| **Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Body of**  **Howletch Lane Primary School September 2023** | |
| **School Vision/Mission Statement**  Our vision of ‘Creating Futures Together’ is to ensure that each and every child has the opportunity to thrive and achieve their potential at Howletch through a combination of quality first teaching, accurate assessment, a creative curriculum and opportunities to build confidence through participation in sport and creative arts. This is underpinned by our SHINE values ‘**S**upport **H**onesty **I**ndependence **N**urturing **E**njoyment’ where we develop our children socially and morally by instilling a behaviour culture of ‘Be ready, be respectful, be safe’. | |
| The Governing Body of Howletch Lane Primary School has a strong  focus on its core strategic functions:   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, and the performance management of staff; and 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent. 4. Ensure that other key players with a stake in the organisation have their voices heard. | |
| **Governance**  **arrangements** | The Governing Body of Howletch Lane Primary School was re-constituted in November 2020. The Governing Body is composed of 14 governors: the Headteacher, 4 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor, 1 Staff Governor and 7 Co-opted Governors. The school business manager is an associate member to the Governing Body. The full Governing Body meets once each term, and we also have a number of committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. At Howletch we have a Finance and Premises Committee which focuses on finance and the school environment; a Curriculum and Standards Committee which considers the curriculum, pupil achievement and teaching standards; a Pupil Wellbeing Committee which considers safeguarding of pupils and staff plus welfare of pupils including giving our pupils a voice in the school and a Pay Review and Performance Committee which considers staff performance over the year. All of these committees meet regularly. Other committees will meet as required. For a full list of committees see the school website. |
| **Attendance record of governors** | Most governors have excellent attendance at meetings and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not “quorate” (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). |
| **Key Issues faced and addressed by the Governing Body** | In January 2018, Ofsted judged the school as Good, acknowledging the many strengths of the school and the rapid and effective improvements made in all areas since the previous inspection.  After a few difficult years, with many changes within the school community, Ofsted returned in July 2023. Although this was an ungraded inspection, Ofsted did not change the previous grading but they highlighted the areas in which the school needs to make improvements. They also recognised where improvements have been made and the strengths of the school, especially in pupil personal development.  Attendance shows marginal improvement overall and there have been successes in addressing the issue of latecomers. Further improvements are required.  Following a restructure, resignations and retirements there have been significant changes in staffing and staffing levels. A new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are in place and the structure of the Senior Leadership Team has changed.  A new curriculum and phonics scheme were introduced in Autumn 2022 to address the introduction of mixed year group classes and to make improvements in reading.  Provisional statutory data for 2022/2023 was down on the 2021/2022 data but the improvements in curriculum areas which are ongoing give cause for optimism going forward.  An increase in the number of behavioural incidents has posed significant challenge for staff, children, families and governors.  A significant increase in the number of children with special needs and/or emotional issues has also posed challenges for the school community.  Looking ahead to 2023/24, focus, as always, is to make improvements overall and to ensure that children are given opportunities to learn and develop to make the best possible progress that they can. To promote and maintain high aspirations for each child and for the school.  We give additional consideration to our vulnerable children.  Safeguarding of pupils and staff is also a key issue, especially for some vulnerable families. Mrs K Stevens is the governor with a specific safeguarding role. By providing a safe and stimulating environment and by listening to our children we aim to improve attendance in school. Improvements in the school environment are prioritised and expenditure agreed within the context of the whole school budget. Particular expenditure for Pupil Premium and Sports Premium is monitored carefully.  Finances are a constant challenge in school with the main aspect being falling roles for the last few years. Governors monitor the budget regularly.  In early 2017, the Governing Body requested a Healthcheck by the Local Authority. A subsequent review of governance demonstrated that the Governing Body is effective, and Ofsted concurred. The Governing body action plan is reviewed annually. |
| **Assessment of Impact** | Governors continue to focus on improving outcomes for all children and narrowing gaps between pupil premium and non-pupil premium children and between genders in all year groups.  Throughout the year staff maintained close tracking of pupil progress, this was monitored by middle and senior leaders. Staff training, targeted interventions, high aspirations, and quality first teaching contributed to furthering and accelerating pupil progress.  Within the curriculum, there is a responsibility to develop children academically but also to develop them spiritually, morally, socially, and culturally (SMSC). Personal development and wellbeing are strengths of the school which were acknowledged by Ofsted. Pupils have many opportunities to develop in terms of music, sport and teamworking.  Children report that they enjoy school and that they feel safe.  Parents and carers support their children and the school.  Safeguarding in the school is sound with rigorous procedures in place.  Governors evidence this from classroom visits, monitoring books and discussions with children and staff. |
| **Future plans for the Governing Body** | It is essential that the school continues to recover from the past few years and makes progress in all areas. Following the Ofsted report, governors must support and challenge senior leaders to embed the changes.  Governors will   * ensure that all pupils are being engaged, supported and making progress. This will enable children to be motivated and self-motivated to learn and to reflect on their own targets. * ensure that resources are deployed appropriately, and that staff receive the training they need to provide innovation in the classroom and to promote skills, and knowledge progression within the curriculum. * monitor attendance and review strategies including safeguarding of children and staff. * Ensure vulnerable children with those with SEN receive the same opportunities as their peers. * Make well considered decisions regarding expenditure. * To develop the Governing Body’s own self-evaluation skills to enable the GB to have an accurate view of the impact of its work. * Work with the Local Authority to utilise their skills and advice. * Request a review of the effectiveness of the governing body. |
| **Contact Details** | The Governing Body welcomes suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents/carers. Please contact the Chair of Governors, Mrs Karen Stevens c/o the school office.  Details of the full Governing Body are on the school website. |