

Northern Education Trust

2016- 2017 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF GOVERNANCE Kirk Balk Academy

DATE September 2017

Position Statement

The Academy converted to join Northern Education Trust on March 1st 2015. On conversion the Transition Board took on the full responsibility for the governance of the academy at local level. A full governing body was re-established in November 2015 supported by an Achievement & Climate and a Finance, Resources, Audit & Risk Committee.

At the time, the then Director of Governance at the Trust, John Collings, was Chair of Governors at Kirk Balk Academy. In March 2016 John left to become the Director of Children's Services in Northern Ireland. In the interim period Ian Lane (Director of Secondary Academies) stepped in as Acting Chair until a permanent appointment was made.

In August 2016, Michele Sutton was appointed as the Chair of Governors of Kirk Balk Academy. Michele became Principal and Chief Executive of Bradford College in 2004. She was also the founder member and Chief Executive of the Bradford College Education Trust who have invested over £100m in the regeneration of its educational estate over the last eight years. She became Chief Executive of the Bradford College Group in August 2013 and retired from her post in July 2014. Currently a non-executive director of a careers company and an education consultant, Michele has represented the sector on many national boards, including YPLA, EFA, QAA and UCAS. She was the President of the Association of Colleges in 2014. Michele was awarded an OBE for Services to Further Education and Community Cohesion in 2009.

However, in December 2016 Michele stepped down from the role of Chair due to work commitments.

In February 2017, Jon Vincent was appointed as the new Chair of Governors of Kirk Balk Academy. Jon also holds the position of Executive Governance Officer at North Education Trust. Jon is a qualified teacher and education professional who has over twenty years' experience in the education sector. During this time, he has undertaken numerous substantive roles exclusively in post-16 phase which includes a period of seven years as Principal and Chief Executive of Tyne Metropolitan College. Jon has extensive experience of serving on school governing bodies, substantial involvement as a non-executive director/trustee in the charity sector and is widely recognised for his work in regional economic development.

At the end of the previous academic year and just prior to Michele's appointment the Principal, Jo Nolan, was promoted to that of an Executive Principal working across two academies within the Trust. In addition, the Vice Principal, Dean Buckley, was promoted to Head of Academy at Kirk Balk.

Local Governing Board Constitution

There are currently 10 governors at Kirk Balk Academy. All governors have given a written undertaking to the Trustees on their appointment confirmed via an acceptance letter. Two new governors with skills and experience which will enhance the capacity of the Board will join in September 2017.

The breakdown of the governors in keeping with the Scheme of Delegation includes: Chair (JPV), Vice Chair (vacancy), Principal as ex officio (JNO), 2 Parent governors (SKJ, KST), 2 Staff governors (BGI and JFR). Others include Non-executive governor (ILA), Sponsor governors (PHA and JFO) and School Improvement Partner as Non-Executive Governor (CMI)

At the time of Jon Vincent commencing as Chair meetings of the Board and its two committees had stalled. With the agreement of Northern Education Trust and members of the Board of Kirk Balk Academy, it was agreed that the committee structure would be flattened for the remainder of the academic year and replaced with more regular and comprehensive meetings of the Board. At the conclusion of the academic year governors agreed to reinstate the Achievement and Climate Committee.

The governance arrangements have been incrementally changing following conversion and indeed since the appointment of a new Chair of Governors in August 2016. The Academy has partly implemented the Northern Education Trust Portfolio and Constituency Representation Model. The Governors are currently identifying six Portfolio Holders whom will be assigned according to the Ofsted framework descriptors;

Portfolio Holders	Names assigned to
Achievement & Standards	Paul Haynes
Teaching & Learning	To be confirmed
Leadership & Governance	Jon Vincent
Behaviour & Attendance (inc Safeguarding)	Sally Kilshaw
Community	Julie Fox
Finance & Resources	Jon Vincent

The Portfolio Holders will report into the full local governing board.

The full local governing board has formally met 4 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the full local governing board was as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>MEETINGS ATTENDED</u>	<u>OUT OF POSSIBLE</u>
Michele Sutton (Chair)	1	1
Jon Vincent (Chair)	3	3
Jo Nolan	3	4
Ian Lane	3	4
Julie Fox	3	4
Paul Haynes	1	4
Sally Kitshaw	3	4
Kathryn Stott (resigned June 2017)	2	3
Jacqueline French	4	4
Ben Gilder	3	4
Carlton Midgley	1	4

Continuing Professional Development

To support the local governing board with continuing professional development last year 2016/17 no amount was spent.

The continuing professional development undertaken for individual governors included:

<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
Jon Vincent	The role of the safeguarding governor	North Tyneside Council
Jon Vincent	NET Governors Conference	Northern Education Trust

Whilst the full local governing board undertook continuing professional development in:

<u>LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
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No training undertaken

The local governing board have appointed a clerk to the board on secondment and the position is currently under review pending the appointment of a permanent clerk. As part of her continuing professional development in the last year the following has been undertaken:

<u>CLERK TO THE BOARD</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
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No individual training

For 2016/17 the budget allocation was £5,000.00 which is 0.083% of the total academy budget. The continuing professional development anticipated for individual governors and audited against the collated annual skills audit exercise includes:

<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
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Under review

Whilst continuing professional development for the full governing board it is anticipated to include:

<u>GOVERNING BOARD</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
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All - Governing body safeguarding update
All - Induction to Portfolio Model
Portfolio Holders - Targeted training based on needs
Ofsted Framework (Preparing for Inspection training)

Whilst continuing professional development for the clerk is anticipated to include:

<u>CLERK TO THE BOARD</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE & DURATION</u>	<u>PROVIDER</u>
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Under review

Annual Skills Audit

The local governing board has undertaken an **annual skills audit**. As part of the annual skills audit we have undertaken a review of the membership of the local governing body and terms of office. We understand that in the year ahead we need to seek recruitment in the following areas to strengthen the local governor boards' skill set and also be responsive to our context locally, nationally and internationally.

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD SKILL SET REQUIRED

TO BE MET BY TRAINING

TO BE MET WITH RECRUITMENT

Finance & Audit
Business & Commercial

✓
✓

We also understand that the term of office of the following governors will end this year.

BOARD MEMBER

TERM OF OFFICE EXPIRES

SUCCESSION PLAN AGREED

Carlton Midgley
(Achievement Partner)

September 2017

Re-appoint

Ian Lane
(NET Director of Secondary Academies)

September 2017

Re-appoint

Ofsted

The predecessor school's last full inspection (Section 5 of the Education Act 2005) was October 2013 when it was judged as Requires Improvement by Ofsted. Subsequent Section 8 monitoring visits judged the Academy to be taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection and the Principal has had a striking impact on the improvement of the school. The last monitoring visit was 17 January 2014.

Academy Impact on Outcomes

The Academy remains on an upward trend with regard to external Key Stage 4 test results and GCSE examinations.

The governors have written an **impact statement** attached. [Appendix 1.] This exemplifies one of the core functions of the local governing board- and is a key priority in the Academy Improvement Plan and the Local Governing Boards' action plan. It shows how the governors on the local governing board operationalised their core functions and make an impact on the raising standards agenda and student outcomes in the academy.

Regularity, Propriety and Compliance.

We the local governing board members have signed the National Governors Association Code of Practice for governors which includes the Seven Principles of Public Life established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life [the Nolan Committee] which guide our work. In addition, we have signed the Pecuniary Interest Statement making declarations of any conflict of interest or perceived conflicts of interest. Declarations within this include:

<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>PECUNIARY INTEREST DECLARED</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Michele Sutton	Yes	Sept 16
Jon Vincent	Yes	May 17
Jo Nolan	None	Sept 16
Ian Lane	None	Sept 16
Julie Fox	Yes	Sept 16
Kathryn Stott	None	Sept 16
Paul Haynes	None	Sept 16
Sally Kilshaw	None	Sept 16
Ben Gilder	None	Sept 16
Jacqueline French	None	Sept 16
Carlton Midgley	Yes	Sept 16

The Kirk Balk Academy website includes a page on 'Governance' which lists who the academy governors are. The website has been refreshed using the Department for Education (DfE) Governors' Handbook published in January 2017, intended for maintained schools and academies and

- outlines the core role and functions of school local governing boards
- summarises all of the specific legal duties on local governing boards
- signposts more detailed information on legal duties and supporting guidance and resources

It also sets out what the academy sees as the purpose of the local governing board and what the role of a governor is.

Effective Governance

There are three core strategic functions of local governing boards:

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

As governors we understand that evidence suggests that governors that carry out their role well do so by:

- understanding their strategic role – building a productive and supportive relationship with the principal while holding them to account for school performance and taking hard decisions in the light of objective data;
- ensuring governors have the necessary skills and commitment, including to challenge the school to bring about improvement and hold leaders to account for performance;
- appointing an effective chair to lead and manage the governing board
- appointing a high quality clerk to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and who ensures that that governing board operates efficiently and effectively;
- evaluating their performance regularly in the light of expectations and other good practice and making changes as necessary to improve their effectiveness; and
- governing more than one school to develop a more strategic perspective and create a more robust accountability through the ability to compare and contrast across schools.

As governors we acknowledge we have responsibility for ensuring that Kirk Balk Academy within Northern Education Trust has an effective and appropriate system of control, financial and otherwise.

Approved by order of the members of the Local Governing Board of Kirk Balk Academy on and signed on its behalf by:

Signed  Chair of Local Governing Board

Signed _____ Vice Chair of Local Governing Board

Signed  Head of Academy

Date 19th September 2017

Appendix 1

Impact Statement

The governing body have already had a particularly busy year so far including being involved in the NET Review in November and again in March.

Before the start of the school year, we saw the appointment of a new chair of governors, Michele Sutton and we thank Ian Lane (Director of Secondary Academies) for his services as interim chair.

The academy leaders led the school to gain an improving set of GCSE results which, through our highly effective achievement and climate committee, predictions and projections were scrutinised by governors for effectiveness and they helped ascertain where resources need to be targeted. This in particular resulted in a rise in Maths attainment from 53% to 68%.

Key Data is made available to Governors through regular meetings of the Governing Body with verbal and written presentations followed by question and answer sessions with the Head of Academy and members of the Senior Leadership Team. Data is analysed in more detail by Governors and school leaders during Achievement and Climate meetings; in this way, Governors are able to benchmark their data against similar schools, the Local Authority and schools nationally (with a real focus on national rates of progress) to ensure the Academy standards and expectations are high and are able to be closely scrutinized. It is this level of data analysis, particularly from this committee, that informs and leads academy improvement planning.

Alongside this, the intervention and support given to pupil premium students and those with identified additional needs, were also heavily challenged throughout the year.

Pupil premium students are a constant focus for the SLT and governing body to ensure that the correct level of support is provided. The impact of this recent scrutiny saw a significant improvement in the outcomes for Pupil Premium students in 2016, compared with previous years (43% of Pupil Premium students achieved a good pass in English and Maths in 2016 compared to 30% in 2015)

The responsibilities of the governing body increased this year with a greater focus on performance management of all staff where they have to challenge the recommendations of the Headteacher and this is done by a small delegated committee of governors.

The issues of budget are a constant challenge where value for money and best quality are often in tension. The committee works hard with the Senior Leadership Team and school business manager to present a budget that achieves the best outcomes for all the students whilst ensuring the future security of the school. The academy boasts an impressive position in this regards with currently over one million pounds in reserve.

In addition to achievement related items, the Achievement and Climate committee offers curriculum challenges and this year we saw a change in our offer to ensure the curriculum is both fit for purpose for students and indeed meets the criteria regarding accountability reforms set about by the government. This has also resulted in a new assessment strategy with the academy now tracking performance on a spiraled curriculum on the new one to nine grading structure, essentially eradicating old style grades and national curriculum levels.

Since September a representative from the governing body attends the majority of interviews (where appropriate) to appoint new teachers and other senior staff. For example, the appointment of our substantive Vice Principal and our new Director of Modern Foreign Languages.

Governors work co-operatively with the Head of Academy to monitor the Academy Improvement Plan. The Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) sets aims for the forthcoming year. The current plan is based on priorities identified from data, school self- evaluation and OFSTED priorities. The AIP is set out with clear aims, the key tasks which will be completed in order to achieve these aims and the success criteria in order to measure outcomes. The AIP is monitored and review regularly, normally via the Achievement and Climate committee, with an evaluation overview being completed presented to the full governing body alongside the Head of Academies report.

Governors are starting to visit the academy as part of their monitoring of the AIP and of specific issues such as aspirations and careers (CEIAG). The Chair of Governors has regular meetings with the Head of Academy and Executive Principal.

Governors review all relevant policies throughout the academic year to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list.

School Improvement

Examples and templates can be found on the National Governors Award website, www.glmpartnership.org

The National Governor Mark

This is a national quality assurance kite mark available free to download and undertake as a self- assessment. Payment would only need to be made for an assessment to gain the accreditation.

Queries related to The Annual Statement of Governance should be addressed to: Diane Greaves
Northern Education Trust Governor Support Adviser Tel: 01889545238 Email: diane.greaves@northerneducationtrust.org

The End