



Walter Halls Primary School Governors' Impact Statement

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 6 core strategic functions of Walter Halls Primary School Governing Body are:

1. help the school to set high standards by planning for the school's future and setting targets for school improvement;
2. help to continue to drive school improvement plan;
3. be a critical friend to the school, offering support and advice;
4. help the school respond to the needs of parents and our local community;
5. work with the school on planning and developing policies;
6. to exercise its responsibilities and powers in partnership with the headteacher and staff, not intervene in the day-to-day management of the school.

The main focus of the Walter Halls Governing Body is ensuring that our pupils make good progress in their education, and we appreciate that for this to happen, the school must be well-led by a professionally competent leadership team with motivated staff who all work together within a safe, caring, supportive yet professionally challenging environment.

Our schools motto is:

'Be you Best' is key - we want personal development to be at the heart of what we achieve for every child. Being the best possible versions of themselves.

In this statement we aim to outline some of the impact we have on the school through our role of challenge and support during the academic year 2023-24

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Governing Body of Walter Halls Primary School is made up as follows:

Co-Opted Member	Parent Governors	Staff Governors	LA Governor
James Sullivan (Chair)	Katrina Benjamin	Andrea Cox	Leslie Ayoola
Caroline Brookes	Lucy Robinson		
Alex Epton	Shani Melbourne		
Julie Miles			

Context of our school:

Walter Halls is proud to serve an urban city school with an **extremely diverse catchment area** that includes an area amongst the 10% most deprived in England in the St Ann's Ward. In contrast we have some families from the more prosperous owner-occupied area of Mapperley Ward. Factors such as: parental engagement, attendance, in-work poverty, unemployment and relative aspiration vary substantially. These factors have compounded further since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. **45.0% of Walter Halls Primary School pupils reside in LSOA which are ranked in the most deprived 10% of LSOA nationally, compared to 43.7% of Nottingham city pupils.** 83.0% of Walter Halls Primary School pupils reside in LSOA which are ranked in the most deprived 30% of LSOA nationally, compared to 81.8% of Nottingham city pupils. Nottingham ranks 6th out of the 317 districts in England of Income Deprivation Affecting Children (2023 data).

The school has seen a continued rise in the number of pupils identified with **Emotional, Behavioural and Mental Health Needs (ESMH)** and school has a high level of weekly Child Protection referrals and active cases. Domestic violence, children witnessing violent crime, parental mental health concerns and parental drug or substance abuse are some of our most frequent referrals. An increasing number of our families are accessing the foodbank. School has a full-time dedicated family support worker as well as a trained Play Therapist and Child Welfare Officer. **Persistent absences** are almost entirely attributed to those children who are currently supported within the Children and Families welfare system or are experiencing homelessness or other significant homelife barriers to their education.

Pupil premium and Pupil Premium plus currently sits at around 40% compared to 24% nationally with 33% of children having **EAL** compared to 20% nationally with the school having 16 out of the possible 17 different **ethnic groups**. Just over 13% of children at Walter Halls are classed as having **SEND** including those on an EHC Plan. The school currently has **mobility** above the national average.

Walter Halls is a two-form entry school with a sprawling site comprising of 4 different buildings for our Nursery through to Year 6 children. The Nursery element offers provision to 3-year olds for morning, afternoon or 30-hour places on staggered entry points.

During the academic year 2023-24, Walter Halls experienced significant instability in staffing, with multiple maternity leaves and long-term absences. Stability in staffing will not return to 'normal' until Summer term of next academic year. During this academic year we have also seen a rise in admissions of children with **significant special needs**, matched to the national and local picture as well as **in-year admissions** from families who have arrived from other countries or from difficult backgrounds.

Walter Halls set a deficit budget for the academic year 2024-25 and is in the process of planning its recovery, with possible redundancies on the horizon. Walter Halls is large site with many areas of the site now in disrepair and in need of investment from the local authority.

The reputation of the school within the local community is exceptionally strong with social media platforms and parental feedback sharing that both current and previous families highly recommend our school to others. **Pupil numbers** continue to grow with the surplus of 31 places in September 2023 (compared to a surplus of 52 in September 2022) reducing to a surplus of only 8 by July 2024. Our F2 classes are full for the start of 2024 academic year and our nursery has a waiting list of two years.

Committees and Meetings

Full Governors meetings are held 6 times a year (2 each term), along with an extra ordinary meeting which is held in April to agree and set the financial budget for the school.

We generally split our meetings into "Strategy and performance" which is held at the start of the term, and "Financial & operational (including personnel) in our second meeting.

At all full governing body meetings Governors receive a report from the Headteacher on all aspects of the running of the school, including quality of teaching and learning, attendance, behaviour and safety. Governors discuss this report and ask questions of the Headteacher thereby improving their knowledge and understanding of the school. It is also an opportunity to challenge the Headteacher and to question aspects of the schools performance. At these meetings we also review the School Improvement Plan, School Financial Value Standards, Self-Evaluation Form and review/set policies with the schools leadership team.

Strategy & Performance

In this meeting we are tasked with ensuring that we fully review the School Improvement plan and scrutinise the current performance of the school against this with the Head Teacher and senior leaders. We also ensure that the school is compliant with policies.

We evaluate the school's current data, identifying trends, and use this as a base to ensure to check that we are meeting the targets on the school improvement plan. We have particularly focussed on changing the way data is presented to us (e.g. attendance) to give us a more strategic view.

Pupil Premium is reported on in governor meetings, and an annual monitoring visit is held, which is led by our Pupil Premium Governor, along with the Head Teacher.

Examples of extra work conducted during this academic year;

- Staff wellbeing policy implemented - following a review with Staff via a survey
- Working closely with the pupil leadership
- OPAL Project - continue to work with leaders to embed this
- RE policy
- Financial and Procurement work - helping the school to think creatively with a tight budget
- Working with the school and Nottingham LA to ensure the school hall roof was repaired as quickly as possible

Financial & Operational

In this meeting we are tasked with ensuring that all monies allocated to all areas are accounted for and spent accordingly.

The key elements of termly business are discussed and governors hold the Headteacher and school business manager to account for the financial performance of the school as well as approval of the draft and final school budgets.

Governors receive a Pupil Premium Grant Allocation/Provision and Impact report which helps us to assess whether this funding is being spent correctly supporting the highest possible outcomes for these children.

The governing body is competent in financial management.

The governors have worked with school staff to achieve The Schools Financial Value Standard accreditation which is reviewed annually, as well as keeping a safe stewardship of the school finances during a cost of living crisis.

The governors bring a wide range of expertise to the school, and this helps to ensure that budgets are monitored effectively and improvements are effective and continuous. The impact of the governors' role in the school ensures that the budget is managed effectively, and the school is continually moving forward. We have worked very closely with the business manager and the Nottingham schools trust on the procurement procedures and contracts we have in place. We continue to use the experience of a governor who has procurement experience in the public sector to deliver efficiencies for the school.

In this meeting, we also look at building maintenance, building improvement and the health and safety audit - this can be challenging with a sprawling site such as Walter Halls.

As governors we strive to ensure that our pupils and staff reside in an environment conducive with learning while also providing a feeling of security and wellbeing.

This committee also monitors staff absence, staff well-being and the school staffing structure. We recognise that as governors we need to be the critical friend to the school, but also keeping the well being of staff at the forefront of our mind.

Additional committees linked to resources and finance are:

- SFVS Panel
- Additional meeting regarding 3 year financial planning
- Pay Committee
- Headteacher's Performance Management Committee.

Governor Attendance

Our governors' meetings are well attended ensuring that governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and where the school is focussing its energy on improvement. We consider ourselves to be a proactive not a re-active governing body with well committed members who genuinely care about the school and wanting to fulfil their role.

Outside of meetings, we aim to be proactive in school, by supporting the school at events such as the summer fair, meetings with the head students, and working with the Friends of Walter Halls on events such as the OPAL big dig.

Attendance at meetings for the 2023-2024 Academic Year												
Governor Name	Autumn 2023				Spring 2024				Summer 2024			
	FG B1 10.1 0	FG B2 5.1 2			FG B3 6.2	FG B4 19. 3			Fin 23. 4	FG B5 14. 5	FG B6 16. 7	
James Sullivan	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	
Susie Roome	A	A			A	A			A	Res		
Leslie Ayoola	A	A			Y	Y			Y	Y	A	
Katrina Benjamin	Y	Y			A	A			Y	A	Y	
Caroline Brookes	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	A	A	
Andrea Cox	Y	Y			Y	A			A	A	Y	
Alex Epton	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	
Shani Melbourne	Y	A			Y	Y			Y	A	Y	
Lucy Midgley - Robinson	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	
James Stephenson	A	A			A	A			A	A	Lef t	
Emma Beardah	Y	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	

Individual Governor Responsibilities

As well as attendance at full governing body meetings, Governors have a number of individual responsibilities. Wherever possible linked to our own skills and expertise. We refer to these as "link governors".

Whenever possible due to work commitments governors will try to visit school to discuss relevant areas. If this is not possible, virtual meetings are held with members of staff to ensure that the relevant governors are still carrying out their role. The presence of Link Governors provides an additional source of evidence upon which governing body decisions can be made. This additional evidence should enable the Governing Body to better challenge information presented by the school and also better support the school to meet its strategic objectives. The role of the 'Link Governor' is not to supervise or manage school staff, more to offer guidance, support, and a critical friendship.

The governors are made up with people from different backgrounds, and we use these variety of skills to fit people into the correct area.

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies, during the relevant full governing body meeting on a programmed basis to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements, and that all guidance is relevant and up to date. Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list and the Local Authority recommended list.

Training

As a Governing Body we buy into the Nottingham City council training programme, which is offered termly to all governors across Nottingham city schools. This is comprehensive, and wide ranging. New Governors are expected to attend LA training for new Governors.

Governors are encouraged to attend any training that is relevant to their role. Governors may also attend any training that is of particular interest to them.

Sometimes school staff will offer additional support or training if relevant to a governor.