

# **Chapel Allerton Primary School**

## **Annual Governance Statement 2024–2025**

The Governing Body of Chapel Allerton Primary School remains fully committed to supporting and challenging the school to achieve its vision: to provide an exceptional, inclusive education where every child is valued, safeguarded, and supported to thrive.

This statement outlines how the Governing Body has fulfilled its statutory duties and wider responsibilities during the 2024–25 academic year, and it demonstrates the impact of governance on school improvement, pupil outcomes, staff wellbeing, and community engagement.

### **Governance Structure and Membership**

This year has been a period of renewal and strengthening for the Governing Body. We welcomed new governors – Jenny, Marcus, Nicola, Emily, Laura, Stephen, and Leah – who joined our existing team with enthusiasm and expertise. Departing governors Bobbie, Tom, Mary, and Emma were thanked for their dedicated service.

Terms of office for several governors were discussed across the year. Reappointments included Amy Sanderson as Co-opted Governor and Becca Pinder (Deputy Headteacher) as Associate Member, ensuring continuity and retention of skills. Governor recruitment remains a focus, with an emphasis on improving diversity and broadening expertise in finance, estates, and curriculum.

Committees and link responsibilities have been reviewed and remain in place to provide oversight of key areas: safeguarding, curriculum and assessment, SEND, finance, wellbeing, leadership and management. Link governors meet regularly with staff, complete visit reports, and contribute to triangulated evidence for decision making.

### **School Improvement and Monitoring**

Governors worked closely with school leaders to monitor the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). These were updated each term and discussed at full board and committee level.

### **Curriculum, Standards, and Progress**

- Governors observed SATS testing in May 2025 to ensure compliance and support staff. Outcomes were scrutinised: Y6 maths papers were noted as particularly challenging, while phonics results exceeded 90%. Reception GLD rose to 75% (above historic averages), and Y4 times tables assessments saw sharply raised standards during the year.

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- Governors also reviewed the trial of a new writing programme, probing its impact on pupil progress and staff confidence.
- Subject leaders presented updates, governors carried out book looks and pupil voice activities, and specific focus was given to phonics, writing, adaptive teaching, and provision for more able pupils.
- Metacognition emerged as a growing strength, recognised in governor discussions and built into the new “8 for 2028” strategic priorities for 2025–26.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding remained a standing priority.

- Governors reviewed the annual safeguarding self-assessment and completed the Annual Report on Monitoring (ARM), which was submitted to the local authority in July 2025.
- The safeguarding link governor met termly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Welfare Officer, testing knowledge, reviewing training, and ensuring compliance with statutory duties. The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer was new during this year, and was given extra support as well as attending governor meetings.
- The board discussed issues around online safety, parental communication via Dojo, and handling of complaints, ensuring staff wellbeing and safeguarding of pupils and staff were paramount.

### **Inclusion and Equalities**

- Governors supported the school in achieving MindMate Friendly, PSHE Friendly, and progressed work towards the Inclusion Chartermark, following a positive inspection visit.
- Equalities responsibilities were integrated across committees, with SEND provision and Pupil Premium strategy reviewed in detail. The successful appointment of a new SEND HLTA was appointed during the year.
- Parent and pupil feedback, gathered through surveys and focus groups, shaped decisions and informed communication strategies.

### **Staffing and Wellbeing**

The Governing Body supported leaders in staff recruitment, deployment, and wellbeing initiatives.

- A new Office Manager and additional Teaching Assistants were successfully appointed.

- Governors scrutinised the pressures caused by staff absences and commended the resilience shown, including examples where flexibility ensured continuity of provision.
- Wellbeing was monitored through surveys and direct conversations with staff, with governors ensuring that workload, morale, and professional development were kept under review.
- Governors also supported phased returns from absence, maternity reintegration, and the induction of Early Career Teachers.

Staff appreciation remained central to governor ethos; the Governing Body arranged collective thanks for staff, recognising their dedication throughout a demanding year.

## **Finance, Resources, and Premises**

The Governing Body discharged its statutory responsibility to oversee school finances.

- The 2025–26 budget was carefully scrutinised and approved, with governors noting a small in-year surplus and contingency carried forward for 2026–27.
- Staffing costs, SEND funding pressures, and cluster support arrangements were all probed. Governors considered the financial impact of pupils moving to specialist provision.
- The cost-of-living pressures on families were also discussed, ensuring school support strategies aligned with budgetary decisions.
- Major premises projects were monitored, including completion of 1991 build roof replacement (the main Victorian building’s roof will now be completed over the coming years), refurbishment of the school hall floor, decoration of EYFS areas, IT hardware upgrades, and new classroom furniture. Governors also reviewed lettings income and proposed adjustments to charges.

## **Parents, Community, and Wider Engagement**

Governors continued to strengthen school–community links.

- Collaboration with the Parent Support Association (PSA) was vital, particularly for fundraising towards hall refurbishment and events to mark the school’s 150th anniversary. Governors offered practical ideas and strategic oversight for celebrations.
- Surveys of parents were reviewed in detail, with governors asking probing questions about communication systems (e.g., use of Dojo) and supporting improvements to parental messaging clarity.

- Complaints were discussed openly at board level. Governors monitored handling of sensitive issues, including one case requiring a temporary site ban, to ensure safeguarding of staff and pupils.
- Governors also attended school trips, assemblies, and consultation evenings, gaining insight into the daily life of the school.

## **Governance Development and Effectiveness**

In line with best practice, a skills and effectiveness audit was completed in February 2025, with input from serving governors. The audit highlighted strong capacity in safeguarding, strategy, and engagement, while flagging development needs in sports premium, estates, and finance.

Actions taken included:

- Targeted training (induction, safeguarding, SEND, finance, performance data, complaints management, and Ofsted readiness).
- Commitment to improving board diversity to better reflect the school community.
- Encouraging consistent visit reports to share insights board-wide.
- Use of GovernorHub and Governor Support Services (GSS) for training and resource access.

Governors also considered longer-term strategic options, including exploratory discussions about whether joining a local Trust or Academy could strengthen resilience. While no decisions were taken, governors recognised the importance of horizon-scanning for the national education landscape.

## **Looking Ahead**

The Governing Body has agreed the following priorities for 2025–26:

- Supporting delivery of the new “8 for 2028” priorities, which include restorative practice, oracy and literacy, metacognition, creative curriculum, inclusion and adaptation, and social and emotional learning.
- Ensuring robust scrutiny of pupil outcomes, particularly in phonics, writing, and maths reasoning, while continuing to monitor the progress of disadvantaged and SEND pupils.
- Continuing to prioritise safeguarding, including ensuring staff, pupils, and parents understand expectations and systems.
- Strengthening governor visibility at parent and community events, including the 150th anniversary celebrations.

- Supporting financial resilience through careful monitoring of lettings, staffing costs, and national funding changes.
- Building governor expertise in estates, finance, and pupil premium impact, alongside further improving diversity and representation on the board.
- Maintaining focus on staff wellbeing and workload, recognising the commitment and professionalism of our staff team.

Governance is a continuous journey, and we remain committed to representing the interests of the entire school community while ensuring the highest standards for every pupil at Chapel Allerton Primary.

We thank the staff, pupils, families and fellow governors for their continued dedication, energy, and support.

**Jenny Hand**

Chair of Governors

Chapel Allerton Primary School