

Byron Wood Primary Academy Local Governance Committee **Annual Impact Statement 2023-2024**

Role of the Local Governance Committee at Byron Wood

Local Committee Members are volunteers, chosen for their skills, experience and insights, to whom certain responsibilities are delegated for oversight of individual schools. Local committees are not legally responsible for the schools, so committee members are able to focus on school improvement by supporting and challenging the Principal and the wider school leadership team. Since committee members are drawn from the local community and will usually include parents and staff members, their input serves an essential part in informing Trustees' understanding of the local context and individual school performance. The committee is also a supportive forum in which the Principal can have access to the insights of people with professional and voluntary experience outside the education sector.

Accountabilities of the Local Governance Committee (LGC) at Byron Wood:

We act on behalf of the Astrea Board of Trustees and have five main accountabilities:

1. To ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of Astrea is maintained at Byron Wood.
2. To hold school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school, the inclusion of all pupils and the offer of a knowledge-rich and broadly-based curriculum.
3. To work with Byron Wood's leadership and central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained.
4. To promote positive parent, community and stakeholder engagement and to drive school-to-school partnerships for improvement within the Trust.
5. To identify, understand and report to Trustees any strategic risks facing the school.

During the 2023 – 2024 school year, the LGC has met at the school on five occasions and members have visited the school separately on seven occasions to provide support and challenge on aspects of the school's work. These visits have centred on: SEND; Safeguarding; English as an Additional Language; Reading on two occasions; Digital Leadership and Pupil Premium. In addition, members of the Governing Body attended a parent coffee morning and the opportunity to talk informally to parents from the school community.

To ensure the vision, ethos and strategic direction of Astrea is maintained at Byron Wood

At every meeting the Principal presents a thorough report about the work of the school, containing a wide range of data about pupil performance relating to learning and other important measures such as behavioural incidents and attendance rates. In addition, there is full commentary in the report relating to risks, implementation of policy and other aspects of school such as staffing and premises

issues. At these meetings the Governors have an opportunity to provide challenge to leaders to ask them to fully explain areas presented and ensure the emphasis is on positive academic attainment for all children. The Governors focus on how the school uses their resources to successfully address any barriers for pupils in accessing their education.

As well as the Principal's report, Governors have had the opportunity to review the Academy Improvement Plan and the Self Evaluation work that leaders undertake. School leaders undertake presentations at each meeting this year they have linked to: Safeguarding, Reading, PE, Pupil Mobility, Actions from the Trust School Review and Academic Outcomes. These activities allow Governors not only to keep a sharp eye on academic outcomes but to ensure that the work of the school aligns with the vision and strategic direction of Astrea.

In addition to the five meetings that have been held at the school throughout the year, the Chair of Governors has attended termly sessions with sessions with members of the Executive board responsible for Governance to ensure that all Chairs of Committees hear shared messages about the strategic direction and that we are fully informed and prepared to lead the Local Governing Committee. There is work undertaken between meetings to ensure that agendas are drawn up that reflect the statutory obligations of the LGC but are also responsive to challenges or issues facing the school or wider Trust. This allows Governors to consider fully the information provided prior to meetings to effectively provide support and challenge in meetings.

1) To hold school leaders to account for educational performance of the schools, the inclusion of all pupils and the offer of a knowledge-rich and broadly-based curriculum.

All presentations to the LGC this year have related to educational performance, or the wider curriculum offer at Byron Wood. Furthermore, questions from Governors during the meeting have related educational outcomes and how the school aligns itself with the Astrea approach to the curriculum and improvements to teaching.

The content of every Principal's report contains data relating the most recent assessments undertaken in school and the overarching academic targets that the school is trying to achieve. Governors have an overview of this information to effectively provide challenge and support for leaders. Through the detailed minutes taken at every meeting Governors can revisit areas where it has been identified that educational performance may not be on track. Governors are particularly focused on the outcomes at the end of Reception, the phonics outcomes at Y1 and the combined measures of Reading, Writing and Maths at the end of Y6. The extent to which children are likely to meet the challenging targets set at the start of the academic year has been an ongoing theme at every meeting. Governors are also keen to understand whether pupils at Byron Wood are secondary

school ready at the end of their primary schooling. Each Governor has a link role with the school such as safeguarding or special educational needs and visits school to speak with members of staff, look at the school in action and then report back to the Governing Committee.

The data provided in the Principal's report includes the achievements of those pupils who are disadvantaged or have SEND needs. Governors pay particular attention to these groups of children.

Good attendance at school is something that everyone is working hard to achieve, and Governors take a close interest in the data relating to this and ensuring they are assured that the school is doing all it can to ensure every child is in school every day so that they can benefit from the high-quality curriculum and teaching on offer.

2) To work with the Byron Wood's leadership and central team to ensure that high standards of safeguarding are maintained.

All members of the Governing Committee have completed the required safeguarding training, and this is done so on an annual basis. This includes reading the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools on safeguarding children: Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 and Annexe A) and completing online training modules. The committee at Byron Wood recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding data is presented at every meeting and Governors take the opportunity to question and seek clarification around any spikes in the data, or specific trends rising and falling to gain a good understanding of the issues facing leaders at Byron Wood and the actions that they take. In addition to this the Trust carries out regular audits of safeguarding at the school and these reports are available to Governors to ensure that any actions are addressed, and elements of good practice celebrated.

Mr Hopkins is Byron Wood's link member for safeguarding and has spent time in the school looking at some of the safeguarding processes and Governors have signed off the annual safeguarding audit.

3) To promote positive parent, community and stakeholder engagement and to drive school-to-school partnerships for improvement within the Trust.

The committee has had a stable membership this year but hopes to recruit a parent Governor in the Autumn Term. We recognise the value of having parent Governors on the committee and hope to redress this gap next academic year. If you are interested in joining our committee, please contact the Principal for more information about what this rewarding role involves. The Governors have wide ranging expertise in Safeguarding, Education, IT, and Finance.

4) To identify, understand and report to Trustees any strategic risks facing the school.

A section in every Principal report relates to strategic risks facing the school. Governors have heard about risks due to the long-term absence of some staff, the challenges around pupil mobility, the costs associated with updating the caretakers house for community use and actions relating to warm classrooms. Governors and the school consider the possible impact of these issues, in particular, on the educational outcomes for pupils at Byron Wood and how the school can best mitigate against this.

An ongoing and serious risk to the school's ability to achieve the necessary academic outcomes for pupils lies in the below national average attendance. The data shows starkly the negative impact of poor attendance on pupils' ability to achieve academically and be ready for secondary school. This is an ongoing concern for Byron Wood, and everyone working with the school and associated with it needs to do all they can to promote good attendance.

The staff continue to show high levels of commitment to the children and the community that they serve. They consistently strive to do all they can to improve the academic outcomes for pupils. They also approach the pastoral care with the same levels of commitment and do all they can to support pupils, parents and staff.

This Impact Statement has attempted to give you a flavour of the work of the Local Governing Committee has undertaken this year to support and challenge the school leadership in achieving the best academic outcomes for pupils. If you would like to be part of our enthusiastic and committed committee and support the school to improve academic outcomes, please look out for the information that the school will be sharing with parents in the Autumn Term with details on how to put yourself forward. We look forward to hearing from you.

Joanne Powell
Chair of Byron Wood LGC
July 2024