



# DERWENT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

# GOVERNOR INDUCTION PACK





## Vision

### 'Achieving together'

We aim for all our children to:

*Achieve their full potential*

*Achieve high academic standards*

*Respect themselves, others and the environment*

*Work independently and collaboratively*

*Make positive contributions as citizens*

*Stay healthy and safe*

*Acquire the skills they need for adult life*



# Welcome to Derwent Vale Primary School & Nursery

Dear Governor,

We are delighted to welcome you to our Governing body and to our school.

At Derwent Vale Primary School & Nursery we are very fortunate to have a small dedicated team of governors who are skilled in their role as supporters and critical friends of the school. We believe that effective school governance is at the centre of a good school and we do all we can to pro-mote and develop our governors through our work across the school.

Our governing body consists of 11 governors and they serve a term of office for four years although this can be shorter if they wish.

Despite the constraints of a difficult financial climate Derwent Vale Primary & Nursery School has continued to thrive and prosper. We now have in excess of 120 pupils on roll! The whole school community has worked to build on our previous 'Good' OFSTED rating. Staff and governors recognise the value of working with and alongside our wider community and know that in doing so, we can only enrich our children's learning experience.

A major focus of our joint community efforts was the renovation and development of the school grounds and playground. Whilst we cannot yet claim to be self-sufficient we now grow plants and vegetables and are even raising chickens! The children really enjoyed working with parents, community members and friends to enhance our environment and we are in the process of planning further developments.

As the number on roll grows so is our school required to adapt and change in order to best meet the needs of our children. We now have three separate units and our Early Years Foundation Stage Unit incorporating Nursery and Reception. New staff have joined the team and continue to make a positive impact.

Today's world is very competitive and staff and the Governing Body of Derwent Vale Primary & Nursery School are committed to continue to raise our already high standards and in a creative, stimulating environment help our children gain the necessary skills to become happy and fulfilled adults.

We continue to be proud of our school and wider community.

*J Holliday*

**Mr Joe Holliday**  
**Chair of Governors**



## The role of the Governing body

School governors are volunteers who help to run the school and make a positive contribution in making a difference to education in their communities.

The main aim of the governing body is to maintain and improve the school's standards of education. Its work can be divided into four key areas:

1. Setting the school's vision and strategic aims, agreeing plans and policies, and making creative use of resources.
2. Monitoring and evaluating performance, be a source of challenge and support to the Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team to support and challenge them in managing the school.
3. Ensuring that the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, to those who fund and maintain it, as well as to the staff it employs.
4. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent.

## Governing Body Powers

The Governing Body is recognised in law as a corporate body, which means it has a legal identity separate from that of its Governors.

It also means that individual Governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the Governing Body except where the whole Governing Body has delegated a specific duty to that individual. The Governing Body can also decide to delegate certain responsibilities to Committees that it has established.

Governors will, therefore, take collective responsibility for the decisions reached by the Governing Body to publicly support decisions.

## Testimonial

I became a governor because I wanted to be more involved with the school and to 'give a bit more'. I enjoy it very much. It gives me the perfect opportunity to be part of the decision making process for the school and allows me to offer my opinion – Mrs K Black, Parent Governor



# Committees

There are two main committees which meet four or five times each year:

1. Finance & Buildings
2. Staffing and Curriculum Committee.

The quorum for each sub- committee is three governors, plus the Headteacher. The agenda and minutes are drawn up by the clerk to the governors.

## Finance & Buildings Committee

Terms of Reference:

- To make recommendations on the maintenance of the buildings, fabric and fittings
- To monitor and update the Health & Safety Policy and to carry out risk assessment and update where necessary
- In consultation with the Headteacher confirm school budget for the year looking at priorities for expenditure - purchase of equipment, resources, routine maintenance etc for approval by governing body
- Plan any capital builds and soliciting for tenders etc
- Work within best value
- Monitor budget expenditure

## Staffing & Curriculum Committee

Terms of Reference:

- To work with the Headteacher in the appointment of new staff, making sure that the legislation on discrimination and equal opportunities is observed
- To review annually, levels of pay for Headteacher and staff
- To decide on staffing levels in consultation with the Headteacher
- To ensure that procedures relating to teacher misconduct are followed
- To update and organise the induction process for new governors
- To take a particular involvement in the drawing up of school, curriculum, development and management plans
- To monitor and evaluate curriculum provision in the school
- To prepare in co-operation with the Headteacher, targets for school improvement to be approved by the full governing body
- To review the curricular aspects of the school prospectus annually and have it approved by the full governing body
- To make recommendations to the governing body on the provision of sex education, drugs, SEN and to consider complaints relating to the curriculum referred to it by the governing body
- To provide a Pupil Discipline Committee
- To review relevant staffing and curriculum policies



## Training

The Governing Body encourages all Governors to undertake training. Although it is not compulsory, all Governors, however experienced, need training to improve their effectiveness in the role and to keep abreast of developments that may affect their school and their role as a School Governor.

There is a wide range of training and support for Governors that is provided by the Local Authority and external providers.

Governors are encouraged to discuss their training need with the Chair and Headteacher.

## Meetings

The guide timetable for Governing Body and Committee meetings is compiled every September and the date of subsequent meetings are agreed at the time of meetings.

Agendas for Governing Body meetings are despatched at least 7 days in advance of the meeting. If you would like to ask for an item to be included on the agendas of either the Governing Body or a Committee, please contact the Chair or the Clerk prior to the meeting.

## Top Tips for new governors:

1. Read the agenda and papers before the meeting.
2. Make notes or highlight points you wish clarified.
3. Don't be afraid to ask questions
4. Talk to your governor buddy to discuss any worries you have
5. Don't feel you have to understand and get involved in everything all at once. Participate in those areas which you are interested in.
6. Check out governor training opportunities.
7. Ask to see the school improvement plan, a recent head teacher's report and a copy of latest Ofsted report.
8. Get to know the school strengths and areas for improvement
9. If you have any personal concerns discuss them outside the meeting



## Confidentiality

All Governing Body papers, including Minutes, must be open to inspection by any member of the public unless it has been determined that an item is confidential. That item will be minuted separately. Governors may, at any point, in the meeting, also request for their discussions to be confidential, which will, of course, be minuted accordingly.

## Dealing with complaints

The school has procedures for dealing with parental complaints that tries to ensure that they are dealt with at the lowest appropriate level e.g. the pupil's teacher. Sometimes that might not be enough and a meeting with the Headteacher may be necessary.

Should a parent wish to take the complaint further it should be put in writing and addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body who will deal with the complaint in accordance with the Governing Body's procedures.

***The best advice is that if you receive a complaint from a parent direct him/her to the school in the first instance!***

## Useful Contacts

1. The school
2. School website: [www.derwentvale.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.derwentvale.cumbria.sch.uk)
3. Governor Support Service : Children`s Services  
Lower East Wing Parkhouse Building,  
Baron Way, Kingmoor Business Park,  
Carlisle, Cumbria, CA6 4SJ  
Email: [GST@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:GST@cumbria.gov.uk)
4. The Clerk to Governors : Judith Morgan [clerk@derwentvale.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@derwentvale.cumbria.sch.uk)

## Useful Documents

1. School's current Prospectus
2. National Governors Associations Code of Practice
3. Headteachers last report to the Governing Body.
4. Learning Improvement Services Governor training programme
5. Policy and Governor visit protocols



## Useful Sources of Information

- [www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lis/governors.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lis/governors.asp) Governor Support Team website.
- [www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lis/trainingprogramme.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lis/trainingprogramme.asp) Governor Support Training Programme.
- [www.DfE.gov.uk](http://www.DfE.gov.uk) Contains a range of information and resources, eg teaching and learning; pupil support; leadership & governance.
- [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection reports for all types of providers.
- [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) The National Governors Association (NGA) represents schools governors from all state funded schools; including those from LA maintained schools and academies in England.
- [www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/cuttingburdens/a00201669/statutory-policies-for-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/cuttingburdens/a00201669/statutory-policies-for-schools) Outlines the policies and other documents governing bodies are legally required to hold.
- [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk) Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) provides free independent advice centre and in-formation for parents and carers on a range of state education and schooling issues.
- [www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/bullying) Provides support for designing school anti-bullying policies and strategies to enforce measures that will encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying.
- [www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00062-2011](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00062-2011) DfE (Department for Education) Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies.
- [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk) Live online support service for every member of the family on a wide range of bullying problems.
- [www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/sen](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/sen) Wide range of advice and materials for those involved with special educational needs and disability.
- [www.education.gov.uk/popularquestions/childrenandfamilies/specialeducationalneeds](http://www.education.gov.uk/popularquestions/childrenandfamilies/specialeducationalneeds) Popular questions about issues affecting parents and carers of children with special educational needs, including guidance about statements.
- [www.governorline.info](http://www.governorline.info) Offers free, confidential advice, information and support to school governors, clerks and individuals directly involved in the governance of maintained schools, academies and free schools in England.
- <http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/> Provides the official database of schools and the list of Sure Start Children’s Centres in England.
- [www.education.gov.uk/schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools) Contains a range of information and resources for the schools work-force.
- [www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk) Times Educational Supplement website provides a daily news service and teaching re-sources.
- [www.guardian.co.uk/education](http://www.guardian.co.uk/education) provides up to the minute coverage of education news and access to professorial networks.
- [www.bbc.co.uk/learning/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/) Provides online learning resources for schools, parents and teachers.
- [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/index.htm) help and support for parents and carers on their child’s schools, learning and development matters.
- [www.schoolsnet.com/uk-schools/schoolHome.jsp](http://www.schoolsnet.com/uk-schools/schoolHome.jsp) School reviews written by parents, for parents.



## Glossary—Useful Acronyms and Abbreviations

AWPU	Age weighted pupil unit. (The sum of money allocated to the school for each pupil according to age. The main source of funding for the school.)
CATS	Cognitive Ability Tests
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
CP	Child Protection
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DFE	Department for Education
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
H&S	Health and Safety
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HODS	Heads of Departments
HSWA	Health and Safety at Work Act
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IEP	Individual Education Plan
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KS1 (2,3,4)	Key Stage 1, 2, 3, or 4
LA	Local Authority
LMS	Local Management of Schools
LSC	Learning Skills Council
NASUWT	National Association of School Masters/Women Teachers
NC	National Curriculum
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
NUT	National Union of Teachers
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
SATs	Standard Assessment Tasks
SD/IP	School Development/Improvement Plan
SEF	Self Evaluation Form
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SIMS	Schools Information Management System
SLA	Service Level Agreement
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibilities Payments
TUPE	Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment)
UPN	Unique Pupil Numbers



## New Governor Induction Checklist

Action	Completed	By Whom:
Governor Induction pack issued		
School prospectus issued		
Contact details of 'Buddy' for new governor (meeting to visit the school for a tour and meet the staff)		
Date of next Governors Meeting		
Terms of Reference for Sub Committees		
Protocol for Governor Visits in to School		
Latest School Newsletter		
Request to complete and return a Declaration of Business Interest		
Request to complete CRB check		