



# CLARENDON GOVERNING BODY ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – 22



This document provides a brief summary of the work of the Governing Body over the last school year. The governors are a group of volunteers, with a range of skills and experience, who give up their time to get to know the school well and to both support the staff and monitor the quality of its work through a series of meetings, committees and visits. There is parent, teaching staff and support staff representation on the board in addition to a larger group colleagues from the wider local community contributing their own knowledge and perspectives to discussions and decision making. We all undertake training to ensure that we are properly equipped for our roles and also make visits to the different sites to ensure we know the school and its context. As a group we work with the headteacher and school leadership team as well as the trustees and leaders within the wider Auriga Academy Trust and we have overall responsibility for the following areas for Clarendon:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction aligned with those of the wider Trust and taking into account Clarendon's own particular circumstances
- Holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and the progress of its pupils, and for the effective and efficient development and performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of Clarendon and making sure its money is well spent
- Ensuring that the voices of all stakeholders are heard and taken into account

## **Full Board Meetings**

The Covid Pandemic has continued to impact on all areas of school life although hybrid and in-person meetings gradually became possible for governors over the course of the year and governor visits to the school resumed in the summer term all of which us helped us feel less remote and we have all enjoyed being able, once again, to engage more fully with school life.

It has been a year with significant changes in the governing body. Thanks go to Greg Ross-Sampson, Nandita Sinha, Nick Travers and John Collins for all they have contributed to the board and who have all had to stand down because of changed work and family commitments. A particular vote of thanks goes to Prem Kalia who joined the Governing Body back in 2015, has provided his invaluable buildings expertise not least through the various redevelopment programmes and in recent years has stepped up and chaired the Board. Thank you Prem, you will be missed. A warm welcome goes to Michael Sinanan, Kalliope Selioti, Jane Sherlock, Kelly Falkner and Kwan Ku who have all joined over the course of the year. They bring a wide range of expertise and experience to the board and are already making a valuable contribution and asking lots of questions (a vital part of governance).

The full board monitors the progress of the school against its development targets for the year and ensures that pupil wellbeing and progress continue to be prioritised. The board scrutinises the more detailed work that goes on between meetings through the committee meetings, lead governor meetings and governor visits. Many

discussions have inevitably focussed on the ongoing impact of covid on attendance (for both pupils and staff), the monitoring of learning gaps and the strategies and interventions in place to close them, staff wellbeing and morale and the nationwide issue of staff recruitment and retention which is particularly difficult in the case of the support staff who play such a crucial role in special schools like Clarendon. We have continued to act as a sounding board for the headteacher and senior leaders, to ask questions as we have monitored the large amount of work that has continued in school and most importantly, through another extremely difficult year for everyone, we have provided support and encouragement as we have noted the excellent progress that has continued to be made through the commitment of our skilled and professional staff team.

## **Committees**

### **Pay and Personnel**

The ongoing pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on staff and staffing levels with periods of high infection rates impacting on staff absence, however the school has remained open throughout and the commitment of the staff team to the education and wellbeing of the pupils and readiness to cover for and support one another has been impressive and governors have sent termly letters of thanks to staff over the course of the year and staff wellbeing and morale have been major topics of our discussions.

There has been work this year on the Equalities Policy and setting new objectives to ensure that Clarendon continues to monitor and meet its responsibilities in this area. This work had been delayed the previous year by the impact of the pandemic upon time and resources and governors had input into the final editing of the new document through this committee.

Recruitment and retention of support staff has become an increasing and significant issue for Clarendon and all the Trust schools with the nationally set pay scales no longer anywhere near competitive. While the school and Trust have worked hard to provide some progression in the roles of our support staff and to identify ways to affordably broaden the rewards package for all staff a Trust working party is planned to look further at staff recruitment and retention which will have active representation from our governors.

Governors from the committee undertake safer recruitment training to enable them to sit on interview panels when needed. Then this committee reviews the staff performance management and arrangements for teacher progression to ensure that the Pay Policy is rigorously applied and operating well. We also monitor the systems for staff training and development, support systems for staff and the spotting and supporting of leadership potential which is so important for succession planning. Clarendon for a long time has worked hard to grow and develop their staff and we continue to see the success of the systems that have been developed. This year mental health first aid training has been one of the priorities of the school and governors to enable greater support of both staff and pupils through these difficult times.

### **Pupil Achievement and Wellbeing**

This committee monitors the overall impact of the academic and pastoral provision for pupils at the school, the school's core mission. The committee is responsible for detailed scrutiny of pupil targets, outcomes and the programmes of interventions in place to give pupils extra support where it is needed. This includes the monitoring of the effectiveness of government funding such as the Pupil Premium Grant to support disadvantaged pupils. The aim of the committee is to ensure that the school

continues to set and achieve challenging targets and to ensure that all pupils meet their potential. This committee also looks at the broader curriculum to ensure that it is well tailored to the individual needs of the pupils ensuring all pupils make good academic progress and achieve positive outcomes in preparation for adulthood. There is a changing cohort of pupils coming through Clarendon Primary who will start moving up to Secondary in the coming year and the committee have been hearing about the significant work and changes to the curriculum that have been happening to ensure that the needs of all pupils continue to be fully met. The committee is also responsible for overseeing the school's support in meeting pupils' wellbeing and pastoral needs.

The presence of Covid and the pandemic have presented challenges in continuity of staffing and education. The school staff have worked exceptionally hard to ensure the impact on the pupils' educational experience is not overly compromised and that pupils continue to make progress. As a result of the interruption to education due to the ongoing pandemic over the last year many pupils have developed gaps in their learning. However, these gaps have been identified by the school and it is apparent from tracking data that for most of the pupils any gaps in learning are being rapidly met. Due to the cost of living several families are experiencing financial difficulties. The school is having to offer practical and material help to these families. As always governors continue to be impressed by the resilience shown by staff and how staff know the pupils well and can tailor what is offered to each pupil.

All the evidence considered by the committee indicates that pupils' needs are being very well met by the school. The pupils make excellent progress both academically and socially. The school continues to have a very positive impact on the lives of the pupils and their families. The pupils are being well prepared for adulthood from the earliest stage.

### **Finance**

The new Scheme of Delegation introduced by the Trust earlier in the academic year, saw the evolution from the Finance Committee to the identification of two Governors to act as Lead Finance Governors. Their review and scrutiny of the financial performance was primarily achieved through regular review of the Management Accounts, ongoing dialogue with the Director of Finance, and subsequent wider discussions at the Full Governing Body meetings. These reviews while focusing on under and overspend against planned and revised budgets, also seek to ensure sustainability of finances to support the Trust and School objectives. One example being the consultation of governors during the capital expenditure directed towards the furniture and refurb at Clarendon Primary and are pleased to report that three competitive quotes were sourced in the process. In what has been a very disruptive year from Covid and the resulting additional requirements for supply teachers, the governors would like to highlight that the Management team have been effective in managing Staffing expenditure through measures such as re-deployment.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding in education is very important and is a 'golden thread' in everything we do and how we deliver the education to our children. Everyone who comes into contact with our children is responsible for ensuring that our children are kept safe and knowing what to do should they have any concerns. There are two lead governors appointed for safeguarding who work closely with the school's safeguarding leads and the head teacher to ensure that effective systems are in place and everything necessary is accurately documented and monitored. The head teachers report also provides summary information to be discussed at the full governing board meetings and governors are aware that the pupils within the care of Clarendon are particularly vulnerable. There is also an annual audit of the school's safeguarding systems and procedures and there were no significant issues to report or bring to the attention of the governing board this academic year. All staff and governors need to regularly keep updated with changes in legislation and training in this area and in the case of governors this is monitored by our clerk. This year the lead governors of the schools across the trust have come together to share and discuss their knowledge and information which has been a very positive development.

## **Premises Health and Safety**

The new Scheme of Delegation introduced by the Trust earlier in the academic year saw responsibility for this area of monitoring devolved to two lead governors rather than a committee; however due to the workload and a significant number of new governors on the board, one governor with particular skills in this area was appointed. Briefing meetings with the Director of Finance, the Head of estates management, the head teacher and the site manager followed the termly H&S walkabouts of Clarendon Secondary and Primary and Gateway sites. The Gateway Site has had a number of historical premises, health and safety issues and the significant work of recent years has needed ongoing follow-up of the snagging and final remedial works. The issues for this committee raised at the Clarendon Secondary Site, were around some design and maintenance items relating to the new build of the school. These are in hand and being resolved by the site manager and the maintenance contractors. Termly feedback from the lead governor to the full governing board enabled wider discussion of highlighted issues.

## **Conclusion**

Once again the Clarendon commitment to pupils, their learning and wellbeing has been exemplified by the staff whole-hearted response in the face of the ongoing difficulties engendered by the ever present Covid. Their exceptionally hard work has been appreciated by parents and governors alike. Some of us were able to attend the celebration event at the end of term for the year 11 leavers and were so impressed by all they had achieved, the wonderful artwork, their evident self-confidence and readiness for their moves onto college or sixth form and particularly by their very personal contributions to the evening. This evening is always one of the highlights of the school year for governors. On the last day of term the annual achievement assembly provided a similar uplifting celebration of a very wide range of effort and achievements of pupils across the secondary school, a confirmation for governors of the privilege it is to be a part of Clarendon.

Our ongoing commitment as a governing body is to continue to support and challenge our colleagues within school to aspire to the Clarendon aim to be a centre of excellence where all pupils are supported and encouraged to:

- Achieve their full potential in their academic, social, creative, personal, physical and moral development
- Grow in confidence and become as independent as possible
- Make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community, in which they are valued as individuals

## **The Clarendon Governing Body**

Primesh Kalia, Keith Tysoe, Jo Dixon, Lindsay Patience, Bharat Gopalan, Roberta Borsotti, Bharat Gopalan,  
Kalliopi Selioti, Jane Sherlock, Michael Sinanan, Kelly Falkner, Kwan Ku & John Kipps

Below is a summary table of the responsibilities taken on, training undertaken as well as visits (many online) and attendance for all Clarendon governors over the last year.

<b>Governors</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>	<b>Committees (Chairs in Bold)/ Lead Governor Roles</b>	<b>Link Roles</b>	<b>Visits ***</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Main Meeting Attendance **</b>	<b>Committee Attendance</b>
<b>Parent</b>							
Nandita Sinha (Resigned Feb 2022)	27/11/2023	Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing		1		2 out of 3	2 out of 2
Greg Ross Sampson (Resigned Feb 2022)	21/01/2023	Finance Lead Governor	Finance inc. Administration  School Council	1		1 out of 3	N/A
Jane Sherlock (Joined March 2022)	21/03/2026	Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing			Getting it Right as a Parent Governor  New Governors – Understanding you Role	2 out of 2	1 out of 1
Kelly Faulkner (Joined April 2022)	28/04/2026	Personnel			Getting it Right as a Parent Governor  New Governors – Understanding you Role	1 out of 1	1 out of 1
<b>LEA</b>							

Prem Kalia (Chair) (Resigned July 2022)	30/11/2023	Personnel  Premises, Health & Safety Lead Governor  Safeguarding Lead Governor	Premises, Health & Safety  Safeguarding	3	Health & Safety for Management of Premises.	5 out of 5	3 out of 3
<b>Staff</b>							
John Kipps (Headteacher)		Personnel  Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing				5 out of 5	6 out of 6
John Collins (Resigned Sep 2021)	22/09/2024	Personnel				1 out of 1	N/A
Michael Sinanan (Joined March 2022)	21/03/2026	Personnel  Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing				1 out of 2	3 out of 3
Roberta Borsotti	22/09/2024				New Governors – Understanding your Role  EIF Briefing: Introduction for Governors  School Financial Management  Getting it Right as a Staff Governor	5 out of 5	N/A

					School Revenue Funding Workshop Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Conditions - Level 1 Working with Autistic Spectrum Conditions - Level 2		
<b>Co-Opted</b>							
Jo Dixon (Co-Vice Chair)	26/01/2025	<b>Personnel</b>  Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing	Personnel	4	Behaviour & Attitudes Briefing for Governors  EIF Workshop – Implications for Governors  EIF Questions Demonstrating Effective Challenge  London Diocesan Safeguarding (for those working with children or adults at risk of harm)	5 out of 5	6 out of 6
Keith Tysoe (Co-Vice Chair)	31/07/2023	<b>Pupil Attainment, Achievement &amp; Wellbeing</b>	PPG Monitoring  Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing	1	Directors Termly Briefing for Chairs/Vice Chairs	3 out of 5	3 out of 3
Nick Travers  (Resigned Nov 2021)	16/12/2023	Personnel				0 out of 2	0 out of 1

Lindsay Patience	21/01/2023	Finance Lead Governor  Safeguarding Lead Governor	Finance inc administration Gateway  Safeguarding	1		4 out of 5	N/A
Bharat Gopalan	05/07/2025	Finance Lead Governor	Finance inc administration			4 out of 5	N/A
Kalliopi Selioti  (Joined March 2022)	21/03/2026	Pupil Attainment, Achievement & Wellbeing		3	AURORA Leadership Development Programme  British Educational Research Association Annual Conference	2 out of 2	1 out of 1
Kwan Ku  (Joined July 2022)	04/07/2026	Personnel				1 out of 1	1 out of 1
<b>Associate Members</b>							
Jayne Gray (Gateway)	16/10/2025	Pupil Achievement & Wellbeing		N/A		N/A	
Angela Mason	16/10/2025	Finance  Pupil Achievement & Wellbeing		N/A		N/A	
Rosemary Clarke  (Resigned April 2022)	16/10/2025	Pupil Achievement & Wellbeing		N/A		N/A	

\*\*\* Visits Impacted due to Covid



