

## **GRASMERE ACADEMY GOVERNING BODY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023/24**

### **Context**

Grasmere Academy is a company limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 5 July 2012. The Governors (who are Trustees under the Charities Act 2011 and Directors under the Companies Act 2006) annually publish a report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the Charitable Company.

The Governing body operates in accordance with its Memorandum and Articles of Association, as well as within a broader legal and regulatory framework, adhering to, for example, its Funding Agreement with the Department for Education and the Education, Skills and Funding Agency's Academy Trust Handbook.

The Academy has a detailed system of delegation of responsibilities which is agreed annually by the full Governing body. It has an approved Code of Conduct and Standing Orders as well as terms of reference for its committees and all are reviewed annually.

The Governing body has three core strategic functions as follows:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and the effective and efficient performance management of its staff;
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

### **Membership**

A list of Governors and their roles is detailed below:

| <b>Governor</b>          | <b>Category</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Lynn Goossens (Chair)    | Community       |
| Adam Rayner (Vice Chair) | Community       |
| *Richard Ludlow          | Community       |
| *Joanne McKeown          | Co-opted        |
| Matthew Maplesden        | Co-opted        |
| David Baldwin            | Founding        |
| David Hodgson            | Founding        |
| Kerry Lilico             | Headteacher     |
| *Richard Kielty          | Local Authority |
| Hannah Girvan            | Staff           |

\*R Ludlow resigned on 14/06/24

\*J McKeown resigned on 25/10/23

\*R Kielty resigned on 16/10/23

During the year there were 3 Parent Governor vacancies despite recruitment activity taking place.

### **Governance arrangements**

The full Governing body meets twice per term and has three committees which consider different aspects of the school enabling the full Governing Body to adopt a strategic approach as follows:

- Finance and Staffing (meets twice termly)
- Health, Safety and Safeguarding (meets termly)
- Joint Quality (meets termly)

There are also three committees that meet as and when required during the academic year:

- Admissions
- Pupil Discipline
- Performance Management

Committees membership and governor links is as follows:

| <b>Committees</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Finance and Staffing</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)<br>Hannah Girvan (Staff)<br>Matt Maplesden (Co-opted) | <b>Joint Quality with SMPS</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>David Baldwin (Founding)<br>Richard Ludlow (Community)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher) |
| <b>Health, Safety and Safeguarding</b><br>Hannah Girvan (Staff)<br>David Baldwin (Founding)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)                    | <b>Joint Performance Management with SMPS</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community) (GA)<br>John Croft (SMPS)  |
| <b>Pupil Discipline</b><br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>Plus 1 x Governor  | <b>Admissions</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)  |

### Governor Links

| <b>Area</b>                             | <b>Governor(s)</b> |
|---|--------------------|
| Early Years                             | Adam Rayner        |
| Equality                                | Lynn Goossens      |
| Health & Safety                         | David Hodgson      |
| Safeguarding & Child Protection/CIOC/YC | Lynn Goossens      |
| SEND                                    | David Baldwin      |

### Attendance Record

Meetings must be attended by a minimum number of governors to ensure that decisions are legally binding. The Governors' attendance record for 2023/24 is detailed below:

| <b>Governor</b>   | <b>Category</b>      | <b>GB mtgs</b> | <b>F&amp;S Com</b> | <b>H,S&amp;S Com</b> | <b>Joint Quality Com</b> |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Lynn Goossens     | Community            | 7/7            | 7/7                |                      | 2/2                      |
| Adam Rayner       | Community            | 4/7            | 6/7                |                      |                          |
| Richard Ludlow    | Community            | 0/6            |                    |                      | 0/2                      |
| Joanne McKeown    | Co-opted             | 0/1            |                    |                      |                          |
| David Hodgson     | Founding             | 4/7            | 4/7                | 3/3                  |                          |
| David Baldwin     | Founding             | 7/7            |                    | 3/3                  | 2/2                      |
| Kerry Lilico      | Headteacher          | 7/7            | 7/7                | 3/3                  | 2/2                      |
| Richard Kielty    | Local Authority      | N/A            |                    |                      |                          |
| Hannah Girvan     | Staff                | 7/7            | 7/7                | 0/3                  |                          |
| Matthew Maplesden | Associate + Co-opted | 1/2            | 6/7                |                      |                          |

Given the challenges the school faced this year an Extraordinary Governing body meeting was held as well as an additional Finance and Staffing Committee meeting.

### **Review of the year**

Work continued throughout the year to address the actions identified in the Ofsted inspection and to progress the transfer of the Academy to Smart MAT. Governors also completely reviewed and updated the Risk Register in light of newly identified risks to the Academy.

#### Autumn term

Governors adopted the National Governance Association's latest Code of Conduct and reconfirmed its Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Committees membership and Governor link roles.

Stakeholder engagement about the transfer from a standalone academy to Smart MAT was carried out from October to November and staff, families and other stakeholders had the opportunity to ask questions and share their views in a number of ways.

Discussions took place with the LA regarding the funding of the ARP and the Academy potentially having to take the decision to close the ARP from April 2024 due to insufficient funding. This had impacted on the Academy's budget as the school was effectively making up the shortfall in funding and coupled with in-year pupil mobility actions had been taken by the Finance and Staffing Committee to improve the Academy's financial position.

#### Spring term

Structural issues with the building were identified and the school had temporarily closed and pupils moved to remote learning whilst further structural investigations were carried out. Meetings were held regularly throughout the term with the other three schools with the same building issues in North Tyneside, the Local Authority and the DfE. Silverdale relocated from the school site and the building was repurposed for Grasmere's pupils as the affected part of the building was no longer safe to use. Pupils returned to school and adjustments were made to the curriculum given the limitations of the available space. Pupils and staff health and well-being were closely monitored given the challenges the building issues had created.

Given the uncertainty around the building issues the transfer to Smart MAT was put on hold until the position became clearer.

Conversations with the Local Authority and the DfE continued on the funding of the ARP and its future.

A Governor Panel was convened in relation to a parental complaint.

#### Summer term

A voluntary redundancy process had taken place and changes to the staffing structure for the new academic year were agreed to ensure the Academy's financial position was stabilised.

Consultation for the move from an ARP to a SEN Unit was completed and the DfE had approved the application. This meant that appropriate levels of funding for the places in the SEN Unit were now secured.

A Pupil Discipline Committee was convened to consider a permanent exclusion.

The Academy was working with the DfE on securing a Scope of Works to make an Urgent Capital Support bid in relation to the structural building issues. Smart MAT had been kept up to date with developments and further discussions on the Academy transferring to Smart would continue in the new academic year.

### **Effectiveness**

- Supported the Headteacher in ensuring the safety of pupils and staff when the structural building issues were identified.
- Took decisions to financially stabilise the school and secure funding for the SEN Unit.
- Reviewed and monitored statutory policies as well as school policies and ensured safeguarding compliance.
- Benchmarked the school's budget against similar local schools and nationally and ensured the accounts were submitted to the ESFA on time.
- Monitored the Pupil Premium and Catch-up funding spending and strategies to ensure money was well spent and effectively used.
- Reviewed the 3-year Ambition Plan in the joint Quality Committee.

### **Plans for next academic year**

- Ensure work progresses to submit an Urgent Capital Support bid regarding the structural building issues.
- Progress plans to join Smart MAT.
- Monitor the bedding in of the new SEN Unit.

### **How you can contact the Governing body**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas. Please contact the Clerk to the Governing body via email at: [jacqui@schoolclerk.co.uk](mailto:jacqui@schoolclerk.co.uk).