



Board of Governors

Annual statement August 2017

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing boards, the three core strategic functions of Bedale High School Board of Governors are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Governors are volunteers who fulfil their role in their spare time and without any payment. Current members of the Board are:

Name	Type	Term of office expires	Register of business interests	Attendance
Gerry Price Chair of Governors	Local Authority	29 Sep 2018	Family member is a senior sales manager Mellors Catering Ltd.	10 out of 11 meetings
Steve Ingram Co-Vice Chair of Governors	Co-opted	18 Apr 2020	None	8 out of 11 meetings
Jan Reed Co-Vice Chair of Governors	Co-opted	16 Dec 2018	Wild Garlic Training – delivery of HLF project at Bedale High School.	10 out of 11 meetings
Stuart Bentley	Co-opted	7 Mar 2021	None	8 out of 11 meetings
Andrew Childe	Staff	7 Feb 2021	None	3 out of 5 meetings
Katherine Davies	Parent	4 Mar 2021	None	5 out of 5 meetings
Linda Donaghy	Parent	5 Nov 2020	None	9 out of 9 meetings
Mark Hughes	Co-opted	6 July 2019	Bedale Badminton Club Treasurer	10 out of 11 meetings
Vacancy	Parent	TBA		
Estella Prince	Parent	14 Feb 2019	None	10 out of 11 meetings
Anthony Rawdin	Head teacher	n/a	None	3 out of 4 meetings
Mark Temple	Co-opted	16 Dec 2018	None	5 out of 11 meetings

The Board of Governors is supported by a part-time professional clerk, Beverly Smeeton, and may be contacted through the school. To contact the board on a confidential matter, please write to The Chair of Governors, c/o Bedale High School and mark your letter 'Private and Confidential'.

Previous governors				
Patrick Barber	Staff	31 Dec 2016	None	3 out of 4 meetings
Mike Formby	Co-opted	6 Mar 2017	None	2 out of 6 meetings
Julie Newey	Parent	10 July 2017	None	2 out of 4 meetings
Angela Hatton	Parent	4 Mar 2017	None	4 out of 6 meetings

Following the recent resignation of Mrs Julie Newey from the Board of Governors it is intended to invite, early in the autumn term, nominations for the vacancy on the Board for a parent governor.

Governance arrangements

The full Board of Governors meets at approximately monthly intervals to fulfil its responsibilities. The approved minutes of our meetings can be seen on the school website. Unlike some schools the board does not have sub-committees and all its main work is done in the full board. This ensures that all can contribute to school policy and cuts down on the number of separate meetings.

The board has four statutory committees. These cover staff discipline, staff discipline appeals, student discipline and complaints. The Student Discipline Committee has met on five occasions. Concerns about the quality of information available have led to some changes in record keeping. There has been no need to convene the other statutory committees.

The Board also established a temporary committee to oversee a major staffing restructure. From September, the senior team will consist of head teacher, two deputy heads and the school business manager. Students' learning will be overseen by six faculty heads who will report to a deputy head, two of whom will undertake some wider leadership duties. The pastoral system has also been restructured with the house system being replaced by a system of year-based tutor groups overseen by two senior staff as heads of each key stage and supported by a small specialist support staff team.

Following the November inspection the Board established four task-focused working groups to monitor progress in tackling the areas of weakness. Pairs of governors work together to gather detailed information about how the school is improving its performance in Leadership and Management, Behaviour and Safety, Teaching and Learning in Mathematics and Internal and External Communication. They report on progress to the full Board regularly and ensure that the steps needed to secure good quality in each area are clearly identified.

Our main areas of work this year

The last school year has been one of the most challenging we have experienced for many years.

Although the year got off to a good start last September, this was not sustained. An Ofsted inspection, while identifying strengths, judged that there was room for further improvement in many aspects of the schools work, notably in respect of behaviour, attitudes to learning and quality of teaching. Despite an action plan to address these issues, governors saw little signs of improvement in the weeks leading up to Christmas. During the spring term behaviour became increasingly problematic and the quality of communication between school and home was poor.

The Board of Governors discussed their concerns with North Yorkshire County Council and it was clear that fundamental change was needed to arrest the decline. Mr Rawdin joined the school as our new head teacher at the start of the summer term and by the end of this term he will have completely reorganised the management of the school, having made a number of new, high quality appointments. Feedback from students, parents, staff and NYCC officers confirms our view that the school has now turned a corner. Although we recognise that there is still some way to go before everything is as good as it should be, we believe that Mr Rawdin has galvanised the staff team and put in place all the right ingredients to ensure that next year Bedale High School will be back to its best very soon. We are confident that our smart new school uniform, being introduced from September, will signal change for the better to the wider community.

Recently the school had a visit from Her Majesty's Inspector to monitor progress since last November's inspection. Senior leaders have had confidential verbal feedback and we will share HMI Barrow's letter with parents as soon as it is published. We are confident that she will confirm the recent rapid progress the school has made. The school's next full inspection will be no later than April 2019 and probably in late autumn of next year. We believe we now have the right team in place to ensure that the school is judged to be good in every respect by then.

Despite the amount of new building around Bedale, the number of secondary age children in our area is continuing to fall. This means that we have less money to spend. Currently our annual expenses are a lot higher than our income. This cannot continue! The Board is determined to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum for students but we also need to reduce spending. The slimmed down management team and revised pastoral structure should help but the simple truth of the matter is that North Yorkshire schools are penalised by the government's funding formula, especially small secondary schools like ours. With the election out of the way, let's hope the government fulfils its promise to tackle this issue.

Priorities for the coming year

The over-riding priority is that every one of our students has a really good secondary education. Central to that is having the right team leading the school. Mr Rawdin's appointment to the school was originally until autumn 2018 but governors are delighted to confirm that his contract is being extended.

We intend to start the detailed planning for the future of the school early in the 2017/18 school year. Following the general election, the impact of government policy on school organisation is not clear and we will need to look at all the options before deciding how best to appoint a new permanent head of Bedale High School. The last twelve months has seen a growing number of schools leaving the local authority and becoming academy trusts. The government intends to increase the number of 'free schools' across the country but establishing more grammar schools seems to have disappeared from the agenda.

The support that Bedale High School has had from North Yorkshire County Council during the last year has been outstanding. The Board will need to be convinced that any of the alternatives offer significant advantages before making any changes. We will certainly welcome parents' views on the way forward and share our thinking with staff, students and parents as we consider what to do for the best.

More immediately our priority is to support and challenge Mr Rawdin and his team to ensure that every student at Bedale High School enjoys school and has the opportunity to achieve well. We will monitor closely the work being done to improve behaviour, increase attendance and ensure that every student has the benefit of well planned lessons, backed up with purposeful homework, regularly set and marked. We will do this by visiting school to see for ourselves, talking to students and staff and by commissioning independent external reports. We are confident that the school is now on an upward trajectory and are very mindful of our responsibility to ensure it stays that way.

We also intend to improve two-way communication between Board members and parents by:

- sending a termly summary of work undertaken by governors,
- improving information about our work on the school website, and
- ensuring a visible governor presence at all parents' evenings.

As a Board we are acutely aware that the last twelve months have not been as good an experience for many of our students as they should have been. Next year will, we are sure, be much better. Nonetheless the Board wants to pay tribute to the many successes that Bedale students have enjoyed and the hard work of staff who give above and beyond the call of duty. Our sports teams have had another year of enviable success. For a small school we punch well above our weight. This year we also won a regional science trophy and several students had success in the national mathematics competition. There have also been high quality music and drama productions that have given pleasure to many. The school's coast-to-coast cycle ride was once again an enormous success and is an excellent example of what we can achieve when students staff and parents work together. There are other examples too numerous to mention.

Now we look forward to the new school year with renewed optimism and determination that all our students will enjoy their time at Bedale High School and achieve well.

Gerry Price

Chair of Governors

July 2017