

Annual Governance Statement for the Local Governing Body of Mount Charles School October 2021

The DfE Governance Handbook states that effective governance is:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction;
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

Mount Charles School is part of Cornwall Education Learning Trust. The Board of Trustees is the legally responsible body, and delegates a range of governance responsibilities to the Local Governing Body (LGB) as set out in the scheme of delegation. The LGB has an important role in challenging and supporting the school to operate effectively.

This allows the LGB to:

- Monitor the quality of education that the school provides and the impact upon all its pupils;
- Monitor the CPD for all staff to ensure it is aligned to the SDP & aligned with the curriculum underpinned by robust performance management processes;
- Ensure accountability of the executive leadership of the school.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the School. Governors are there to support and challenge the School through monitoring how its strategic direction and subsequent school-based initiatives and interventions impact upon the school in providing high-quality education for all pupils. The Governors will act as a critical friend in supporting the high ambitions the school holds for all pupils. Our role is strategic not operational.

Governors are all volunteers. We act as a corporate body, taking decisions as a group, and our overriding concern is the welfare of all children in the school. **Above all, our priority is to ensure that pupils are happy and eager to come to school every day. We work together to ensure that pupils achieve academically and we firmly believe in a rounded education that celebrates all pupils' strengths and achievements.**

About Our School

Mount Charles School has 395 pupils, 25 teaching staff and 24 teaching assistants. There is a dedicated pastoral team to support families. We are proud to have an Area Resource Base for children who have severe and complex learning and/or physical difficulties.

The vision of the school is "Motivate and Celebrate Success".

Mount Charles School received an Ofsted grading of Good in May 2019. You can read the report for this [here](#).

About the Local Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of 1 parent governor, 4 board appointed community governors, 2 staff governors, and the Headteacher. The Assistant Headteachers also regularly input into LGB meetings.

The Governing Body meets once per half-term, in total six meetings per year. At these meetings we review the progress and attainment of pupils in the school. We receive reports from the Headteacher and other senior staff on key items such as the use and impact of Pupil Premium funding, effective use of Sports Premium funding and Attendance. We always look at how effective Safeguarding and Health & Safety is in the School. We approve policies developed at school level, for example behaviour, admissions and SEND. As part of a Trust, many policies are developed centrally and are standard across all Trust schools.

Each Governor has a link area for which they carry out monitoring visits at least once per term. These are closely linked to the School Improvement Plan.

All of our meetings are clerked and minutes are available from the school office on request.

The Chair attends half-termly meetings with the LGB Chairs from the other schools in Cornwall Education Learning Trust, the Trust Lead and member of the Trust Board.

A list of current members of the Governing Body is available [here](#), along with details of their link areas and brief pen portraits.

Activities, Effectiveness and Impact of the Governing Body over the past year

The 2020/21 year was again impacted by the COVID pandemic, with LGB meetings continuing remotely to ensure continued oversight by the LGB. Monitoring visits were paused for parts of the year dependent on the COVID situation. The Chair of the LGB maintained regular contact with the Headteacher throughout the year.

We were delighted to recruit a new community governor with a background in school leadership and special educational needs, to strengthen the LGBs knowledge and skills. This has particularly helped the LGB evaluate the proposal for the ARB at Mount Charles to move to the Special Partnership Trust. The LGB has supported this move as it brings specialist knowledge, skills and staff to the ARB whilst continuing to offer an inclusive education for the ARB children at Mount Charles School. A governor has been present at parent consultation meetings.

The LGB has been able to evaluate the effectiveness of the remote learning offer to children through reviewing the remote learning SEF. We have also monitored the COVID catch-up strategy, informed by evidence from the Education Endowment Fund.

LGB members have attended training to develop knowledge and skills to enable them to hold the school leadership team to account, this included the KTSA governor conference, mental health awareness training, CELT SEN training; CELT H&S briefing;

CELT equality & diversity training; PREVENT training refresher; safeguarding training and KCSIE knowledge checker completed by all.

We have been able to recruit a new clerk to the LGB, with the professional skills and knowledge needed to ensure the LGB is compliant with its responsibilities.

The LGB carried out a self-review in the Summer, along with a refreshed skills audit and 360 review of the Chair, to inform development and training needs.

Governance Action Plan/Key Objectives for the Year

Following such a turbulent period, this year we aim to reconnect fully with the School, with in person visits enabling more regular monitoring visits and dialogue with key staff.

The LGB will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the key priorities in the School Improvement Plan:

- To ensure that pupils are committed to their learning and know how to study effectively. They are highly motivated and resilient to set backs;
- Whole School Policies are followed with fidelity to ensure a positive learning environment and personal development for all;
- Quality provision for SEND in the classroom;
- Planning effective learning cycles to ensure progress for all.

As in previous years we will also monitor how the school is using pupil premium funding, with the addition of COVID catch-up premium funding this year.

We will look to recruit new LGB members to fill vacancies, increase knowledge and skills, and also enable succession planning. We will also raise our profile with staff & parents, ensuring that key stakeholders understand our role at the school.

The LGB will also continue to build understanding of the curriculum available to the children at Mount Charles School to ensure it is a broad, ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.

Contact Us

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents. You can contact the Chair of Governors, Katie Chandler, via chair@mount-charlessch.org.

October 2021