

Annual Governor Statement for the Governing Body of Sidestrand Hall School

Summer 2026

In accordance with the Government's requirements for all Governing Bodies, the three core strategic functions for the Governing Body of Sidestrand Hall School are:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and the pupils

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure the money is well spent

Governance Arrangements

The Governing Body is made up of twelve members and a Clerk. The membership is as follows:

2 Staff Governors (including the Head Teacher) 3 Parent Governors (elected by parents)

1 Local Authority Governor (elected by local authority) 2 Trust Governors (elected from Governing Body)

4 Co Opted Governors

Our Governing Body began the Academic year well and attendance at meetings has been good, despite one member having long-term health issues. One of the Associate Governors resigned due to moving away, and in the Spring term 2 Parent Governors resigned also. The PA to the Head teacher became our Clerk and has been settling into the role during this year. This term we have been trying to recruit and have successfully put one Parent Governor in place – a former Governor who will be a great asset. At the end of this year the Vice Chair will be leaving us due to personal reasons, but has agreed to stay on as an associate Governor attached to the PDBW Committee. We seek another Co-opted Governor to replace her.

The full Governing Body met four times with the three committees meeting each term and reporting back to the full Governing Body. All meetings held were quorate. The Governors come with a wide range of experience and background and are selected to offer the school their various skills. The first meeting of the year combined with a short meet the staff session, when Governors introduced themselves and staff had the opportunity to ask questions or make contacts. The Chair of Governors has been in regular contact with the Head teacher to monitor school life and to support where necessary. Full names of the Governors, individual roles/responsibilities, and attendance at meetings can be seen on the School Website.

The three committees are:

School Improvement and Standards – monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, the Curriculum, Educational Visits, pupil progress data, EHCPs, target setting, the SIDP and SEF

Finance, Premises and Personnel – including the monitoring of Health and Safety of the school site, the Business Continuity Plan and Asset management plan, Premises development, staffing, salaries, budget setting, the Strands Charity, and ensuring value for money

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare- including the monitoring of Safeguarding, SEND, LAC, Attendance, Behaviour, the Residential Provision, Cyber security, GDPR compliance, Well-being and Mental Health.

The work done in the full Governing Body and the committees over the past year

Governors received written or verbal reports from the Head Teacher and staff covering aspects of school life and invited key staff to make presentations to the Governors Including the Curriculum Leads, the Pastoral Phase Leads and Senior Leaders. Some individual visits were also made and events attended.

Information relating to the school site with regard to Health and Safety / Maintenance was provided in the form of the School Business Manager's termly Report. Link Governors were encouraged to make contact via email and visits to key staff to gain information and challenge progress regarding targets on the School Improvement Plan. School policy and Guidance documents were reviewed on a regular basis and governors were often involved in the Interview process for new appointments.

The school budget was presented by the School Business Manager and agreed by Governors with a regard to value for money. Governors approved the start Budget at an extra meeting in April, monthly monitoring

reports, revisions, and completed the Schools Financial Value Statement. Governors continue to receive information regarding Fundraising and how any funds from the Strands Charity are spent, plus the reports from any Audits and Capital Expenditure. Safeguarding procedures and training were updated and reviewed as part of the annual process. Governors received regular updates of the use of the online systems covering Child protection issues, attendance and behaviour. In particular the half-termly monitoring and reporting system was continued by the Safeguarding Governor and DSL, which has proved successful. Compliance with GDPR rules and procedures has been monitored with DPO continuing to oversee this, with Audit and reports.

Governors ensured that Performance Management was carried out across the Staff as required led by the Head and Senior Leaders, and carried out the Headteachers' Performance Management last November. Governors have been monitoring the development of the Curriculum with particular reference to our Dragonfly Phase, and has supported a full Curriculum review in line with new Ofsted guidance. This has led to new Pathway leaders replacing Curriculum Leads and a new curriculum for September. The leadership structure continues to be under review but has not changed this year. Ofsted rated the school as Good in November 23. The Pastoral system, now restructured into age-based phases, has continued to develop this year and will be moving forward with new Phase Behaviour Hubs to support the students better. Pupil voice is a real strength as evidenced through the School Council meetings.

Governors also made termly monitoring visits to the Residential areas, with a focus on the Offer to the Boarders, and monitored the Standard 3 checks. The Residential Units have been widely used this year and Ofsted made their annual inspection rating it Outstanding. The Residential Managers continue to review and develop the provision. Governors are pleased at the way the Residential staff have adapted given the complexity of boarders needs. There is a cohesive approach across all Units with regular Clubs in operation which have developed further and continued to be successful, with new Activities and visits being introduced.

Arbor, the MI system, continues to show academic progress and attainments of pupils including timetables and base line data. Attendance has fallen just short of our targets due to a small minority of pupils but much work has been done to highlight the benefits of good attendance. The use of the Pupil Premium, and PE money has been monitored by the Governors and available annual reports can be viewed on the school website. Many outside visits/trips have taken place regularly.

The Parent Governors continue to reach out to Parents and Families via the private Facebook group providing support and information, alongside the work being done by the Parent Support Officer. The Strategies project continues to provide pupils with the intervention needed in the areas identified on their EHCPs and specific Target Time has been established to help them meet their targets. The Thrive programme is currently being replaced with L.I.F.E to the benefit of students. Our mission statement is 'Achievement beyond expectation' and the Governors support the Head Teacher and staff in making this a reality for every individual with the ethos and values of the school - to be supportive, encouraging, caring and challenging for the pupils, promoting independence and resilience, but in a fun-but-safe environment.

Future Plans for School and Governors.

As the DFE new build project was postponed last July we await news of a new site and a new school, which has meant a lot of work to be done on the old site to address pending issues to make it safe for our students in the interim. New IT equipment and Play equipment will benefit the students over the next year or so. We will continue to make improvements where we can, using Capital funds, acquiring a new site van and minibus.

While we await the DFE and LA decisions we are still in a period of uncertainty, but we are still confident that the end result will provide a whole new learning environment for pupils in years to come. Budget

issues continue to be a challenge for us to run the school as we would wish to, but by examining our spending and budgeting carefully, we will continue to do our best to provide a safe inclusive, environment for our pupils and Staff. Governors are still in the process of withdrawing from the SEN Norfolk trust as it is dissolved and envisaging becoming a Foundation School without Foundation, which will lead to huge responsibilities for the Governing Board, although if legislation changes, we may consider returning to LA maintained status in future.

How you can contact the Governing Body.

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents and carers. Contact can be made to the Chair, via the school office – details on the Website.