

GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER



July 2026

Hello to all in our Federation Community!

As we approach the end of the academic year, the governing board would like to reflect on some of the recent highlights and achievements that have been made throughout our schools, keep you informed on current Governance structure and make you aware of what the Governors have been working towards and collaborating closely alongside our schools to achieve in the future.

We hope you find the following information a positive way to keep our parental community engaged with school governance, and well informed as to the important work and strategic vision that our Governors hold for our schools.



Current Governors

Mr R Cole	Chair/LA Governor
Mr M Timings	Co Chair / Foundation Governor
Mrs S Foston	Executive Headteacher
Mrs J King	Vice Chair/Cowley Trust Foundation Governor
Rev M Williams	Cowley Trust Foundation Governor
Rev R Rock	Foundation Governor
Mr D Spoors	Foundation Governor
Dr S Spoors	Foundation Governor
Mr T Keast	Foundation Governor
Mr S Creasey	Foundation Governor
Miss L Craigie	Staff Governor
Mrs R Chapman	Parent Governor
Mrs Leanne Mansell	Parent Governor

Chair of Curriculum and Standards committee - Mr T Keast
Chair of Resource Management Committee - Dr S Spoors

Governor Roles and Responsibilities

School governors are responsible for overseeing strategic school management. Governors work together to carry out their core functions:

- ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent
- ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Governors must also ensure that the Governing Body complies with all legal and statutory requirements.

Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise from their professional lives to the governing board and schools benefit greatly from working with skilled volunteers, for example anyone with experience of finance, law, premises management or human resources.

Governors must work in accordance with and uphold The Nolan Principles, or Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership, ensuring decisions are made solely in the public interest.

Governor Monitoring

Background: - Governor monitoring involves strategically overseeing school performance, policies, and finances to hold leaders accountable, rather than managing day-to-day operations. Key methods include conducting focused, pre-arranged school visits (e.g., learning walks), reviewing data on pupil progress and attendance, and checking that statutory obligations like safeguarding are met. (Source The Key for Governors).

The Governors have continued to carry out their monitoring duties with recent visits focused on Safeguarding, Attendance, English, as well as a comprehensive external financial auditing process to ensure we continue to operate at the highest levels of compliance.

Curriculum delivery remains consistent across both schools, due to the collaborative working practices between leaders and staff taking place across both settings.

Standards and expectations remain high.

Areas of strengths are known, and areas of focus remain priority.

Children feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they ever have any concerns.

Pupil engagement is strong.

Financial processes, policies and procedures are robust, including ever changing asset registers, risk registers and adjustments to medium term financial planning being kept up to date and demonstrated to governors and the Local Authority.

Achievements



Following long term strategic planning regarding SEND hubs within our Federation with a view to bridging the gap between ever increasing SEND requirements and the national shortage of specialist placements available, we are delighted to be actively engaged with the local authority on the provision of specialist SEND hubs at both St Gilberts and Donington.

This vision to increase SEND provision within mainstream settings from our schools leadership and governors has been wholly substantiated by the recent 2026 Government whitepaper 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving', announcing significant SEND reforms across the country with a focus on considerable funding being made available to development SEND Hubs in mainstream settings.

Due to being engaged with the local authority at a very early stage, and ahead of the national announcement, we are already in consultation with all stakeholders, and are actively engaged with the pre-planning, design and funding process.

This is a huge achievement for our Federation and will provide fantastic additions to our existing mainstream SEND provisions which will continue to provide our children, including those named on EHCP plans, with high quality ambitious and inclusive educational opportunities through effective, targeted support. Children requiring specialist SEND Hub provision will have this specifically identified by the Local authority within their EHCP. The increased expertise, facilities and resources offered through the Hub will provide widened inclusivity across our school community.

At Horizon Schools Federation we share a firm commitment to inclusion. The development of these SEND Hubs at St Gilbert of Sempringham C of E Primary School and Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School would transform lives, creating a nurturing, inclusive environment where every young person can succeed.

Governor Welcome

We are delighted to have now welcomed Leanne Mansell on to the Governing Body as a parent Governor. We are sure that with her experience within specialist school settings, alongside her other roles in the community, she will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to her duties of governance from both an educational and community perspective.

Governor Vacancies

We have recently had to say farewell to Simon Walsh from his position as Foundation Governor. Simon has been on the Governing Body for several years and was Chair of Resources Committee. We thank Simon for his past time and efforts within the Governing Body, and for being an effective Chair of Resources. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

Sadly we are also having to say goodbye to Janet Lambert at the end of this academic year. Janet has been instrumental in the monitoring of RE and collective worship across both settings, and enjoyed her time being part of the Governing Body. As a long-serving member of the Pointon community, I'm sure we will still be seeing Janet at events and occasions going forward.

With two Foundation Governor positions now available, we will begin the applications process in due course following guidance from LCC and the Lincoln Diocese regarding suitability criteria within our current Instrument of Governance.

Governor role - Generally, school Governors provide strategic leadership, acting as "critical friends" to senior leaders to ensure high-quality education, financial efficiency, and proper safeguarding. Their core roles include setting the school's vision, ethos, and strategic direction, holding the headteacher accountable for educational performance, and overseeing the budget, they operate as a board rather than getting involved in day-to-day school management.

A Foundation Governor has all the same duties and responsibilities as any other Governor but is appointed by a school's founding religious body—such as a diocese or church trust—to serve on a school's governing board. Their primary duty is to uphold and preserve the school's religious character, values, and distinctiveness.

Year 6 Leavers

Year 6 leavers, it has been a privilege to have been part of your journey, and we hope you look back on your time with us with amazing memories.

We wish you all the luck in the world for the next step into secondary school.

Work hard, be brave, be kind and keep being you!

We can't wait to see and hear what you all become in the future, the world is your oyster!! 😊

Additional Information

Governors continue to carry out the necessary and ongoing training to fulfill their roles effectively, including membership to the National Governance Association.

We continue to invest heavily in our staff CPD (Continued Professional Development) across our schools, including many staff members completing their chosen NPQs (National Professional Qualification). NPQs are a suite of DfE-accredited qualifications designed for teachers and school leaders in England to develop expertise in specialist and leadership roles aimed improving school outcomes.

We also have staff accessing DSL training (Designated Safeguarding Lead), to offer enhanced knowledge and experience to multiple members of staff members, over and above any statutory requirements.

As a Governing Body we strongly believe in staff development and are actively investing in and encouraging enhanced training and qualifications for our team.

We believe that this not only strengthens the depth of experience and knowledge for the benefit of our schools but also acts as personal and professional growth to all staff that work with us.

We hope the above has been useful information for you, and we look forward to continuing our work as a Governing Body, working with all stakeholders to ensure that our schools continue to flourish for the good of all.

Matt Timings & Rob Cole

(On behalf of The Governors of Horizon Schools Federation)