

A Statement of Shared Understanding

The Governing Body of Talbot Specialist School embraces the three core functions of governance as a framework for understanding its work.

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined. That the Head Teacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school and that the school's financial resources are used soundly, properly, and effectively.

Through a commitment to **Strategic Direction** the Governing Body seeks to deliver the best possible outcomes for students devising plans and policies, and taking decisions to sustain and grow this outstanding school.

Through a commitment to **Critical Friendship** the Governing Body holds the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School to account for the management of the school. It does this by building strong working relationships, monitoring progress that is being made, and evaluating outcomes and achievements across the whole community.

Through a commitment to **Financial Accountability** the Governing Body ensures that the school manages its resources judiciously, and maximises the available finance. It does this by understanding the costs to the school, prioritising need, and making financial decisions accordingly.

Governors recognise that it is not their job to undertake tasks in the operational management of the school. The Executive Head Teacher and Head of School manage the school on a daily basis, working within the co-authored strategic framework that the Governing Body has set in place.

In their work Governors must tread a delicate path between strategic and operational objectives. Sharing in an understanding which outlines how strategic objectives only become useful when translated into operational objectives, and operational objectives are only effective when designed to serve a strategic objective.

The Governing Body and its Governors

The effectiveness of a Governing Body depends on the quality of its Governors and the ways in which they work together, and with school leaders.

The membership of the Governing Body should focus on skills, and the primary consideration in the appointment and election of new Governors should be acquiring the skills and experience the governing body needs to be effective. Meaningful and effective engagement with parents, staff and the wider community is vital, but not guaranteed by the presence of the various categories of Governor on the Governing Body. Stakeholder engagement is an important, but distinct, activity for which Governing Bodies will need to assure themselves that appropriate structures and arrangements are in place.

Governors themselves should seek to assist their school to build relationships with business and other employers, in order to enhance the education and raise the aspirations of students.

The Governing Body works as a whole team. The Full Governing Body will meet to review reports and ratify statutory issues. All governors are members of the Steering Committee