

Governance Arrangements – from 11 November 2024

Interim Executive Board

On 11 November, 2024, an Interim Executive Board (IEB) was formally appointed by Devon County Council to take on the governance functions at the school. An IEB is an interim governance arrangement for the school and expected to last around 12 months.

An IEB's function is to provide interim expertise and high-quality governance to support future improvement in the school.

The main objective for West Hill Primary School's IEB is to focus on strategic leadership for the school – governance and school leadership. We will also be focussing on supporting the school to evaluate and implement an effective communication strategy with stakeholders of the school including parents.

During the interim period, the IEB will take on the responsibilities of a normally constituted governing body, including the management of the budget, curriculum, staffing, pay and performance management and the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

Once we are established, we may seek to appoint further interim executive members.

Who we are

Dr Fiona Hammans (Chair)

Fiona has extensive education leadership background – as a secondary head for 9 years, then executive head for a further 5 years as two primaries joined the secondary in a federation arrangement, then converting to an academy. She then worked for an academy group providing advice and training to schools in preparation for Ofsted inspections, quality assurance, and project management for new schools and capital developments. She has trained and practiced as an Ofsted inspector.

Having had a period of time running her own consultancy, she joined a small academy trust in November 2018 as part-time CEO, which has two secondaries and a primary school (all graded Ofsted Good), and another primary joining in December 2024. In this CEO role, significant improvements have taken place through a focus on strategic leadership, both governance and school leadership, as well as ensuring that an increasingly positive daily learning experience for all pupils is always at the heart of decision-making.

Fiona has served as a Member and Trustee of a large multi-academy trust in the SW region between 2016 and 2019, has been a governance adviser to a group of independent special schools and she has been a Chair of an IEB for a primary school in 2019/20 in the Midlands. She is a former Chair of Governors of an East Devon primary school.

Fiona grew up in Devon and now lives in Torbay.

Nicola Taylor-Bashford

Nicola is currently working as Strategic, Continuous Improvement and Resilience Lead within the UK Civil Service

Until joining the Civil Service, she was working as an Educational Advisor and prior to December 2022, she was working as a Headteacher in a Devon primary school.

During her time as Head, she led the school from RI to Good in Ofsted, and from RI to Good with Outstanding features under the Catholic Inspection framework. Nicola was successful in greatly improving the reputation of the school in the community and the staff survey showed high rates of satisfaction with school leadership during her headship.

Until October 2024 she was also a Governor at a local primary school with responsibility for SEND. The school achieved a Good Ofsted rating in Summer 2024.

Dr Janet Lavelle

Janet moved to Devon after retirement, having worked as a hospital consultant in the North West. During her NHS career, in addition to clinical work, she held senior management roles.

Her experience as a school governor was initially as a parent governor at the Maintained Grammar School attended by her children. She was subsequently co-opted and served as Chair for three years. During this time the school became a first wave Academy, rated Outstanding by Ofsted throughout.

Janet moved to the South West to be closer to her family after retirement. She is a current co-opted Chair of Governors at Honiton Primary School. Transformational leadership has led to a current Good Ofsted rating.

As a Mum of four adult children Janet has always been passionate that ALL children should have the chance to reach their potential in all areas, academic and extracurricular.

How the IEB works

This is different to a Maintained School Governing Body:

Most meetings are not open to the public, and will involve the members of the IEB, the Clerk to the IEB. We will invite key people to provide us with information and data about the school, its successes and areas for improvement - including the Headteacher, other school staff, and advisers and officers of Devon County Council. Accountability of the work of the IEB is directly to Devon County Council and the Department For Education's (DFE) Regional Director, and we will provide regular feedback to parents and staff, through an update each month on our work.

Supporting the IEB is the Clerk who will provide the key link for any communication with the IEB as a whole, or to the Chair. This role is separate to the staff of the school. The Clerk to the Governors on the following email address: clerk@west-hill-primary.devon.sch.uk