



Annual Governance Statement

This Statement was drafted:	July 2025
This Statement will be updated again:	July 2026
Governor Committee Responsibility:	FGB
Statutory policy?	No

1. THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS SEPT 2024 – AUGUST 2025

Name of Governor	Type of Governor	Current Term of Office Appointed	Current Term of Office Expires
Louise Allen	Co-opted governor	03.07.23	2.07.25
Cate Dittrich	Staff governor	13.11.24	12.11.28
Emma Furlong	Co-opted governor	13.11.24	12.11.26
Daria Ibrulj	Co-opted governor	13.11.24	12.11.26
Tom Lloyd	Co-opted governor	15.11.21	15.11.25
Sophie McGeoch	Co-opted governor	13.11.24	12.11.26
Anke Monestel	Co-opted governor	13.11.24	12.11.26
Coulter Patton	Parent governor	14.12.22	13.12.26
Claire Smith	Parent governor	03.03.22	03.03.26
Arman Kaviani	LA governor	16.07.25	15.07.29
Robin Woolner	LA governor	22.03.11	18.12.24
Nicola McCann	Associate Member	22.11.22	22.11.25
Rebekah O’Sullivan	Associate Member	27.03.25	27.03.26
Claire Tkacz	Associate Member	16.07.25	15.07.27

Laura Brooks	Headteacher	Ex-officio	
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There are 11 places on the Governing Board comprising the Headteacher, 1 Local Authority Governor, 2 Parent Governors, 1 Staff Governor and 6 Co-opted Governors. Our Governing Board also appoints Associate Members to support our work.

The Governing Board undertake a skills assessment and diversity assessment annually to ensure that a breadth of skills and diverse voices contribute to The Russell School Governing Body. We continue to recruit Associate Members to build capacity and additional experience to the Governing Board. More information on individual governors experience can be found via profiles on The Russell School website.

2. CLERK TO GOVERNORS

The Clerk to Governors is Beth Hemphill, who can be contacted via email: b.hemphill@russell.richmond.sch.uk

3. COMMITTEES SEPT 2024- AUGUST 2025

Terms for References (TORs) for the Committees can be found online and upon request. We support Governors to undertake specific training to support the effectiveness of our committees.

1. School Improvement Committee (SIC)

- Louise Allen
- Laura Brooks
- Cate Dittrich
- Emma Furlong (Co-Chair)
- Tom Lloyd
- Sophie McGeoch (Co-Chair)
- Claire Smith

2. Resources Committee

- Louise Allen (Chair)
- Laura Brooks
- Daria Ibrulj
- Anke Monestel
- Rebekah O’Sullivan

- Coulter Patton
- Claire Smith

(The Resources Committee nominates 3 governors to form Pay Review Committee, one of which must be Committee Chair)

3. Head Teacher Performance Management

- Louise Allen
- Daria Ibrulj
- Claire Smith

4. Performance Management & Pay Appeals

Three governors, not members of the Pay Review Committee.

We have named linked governors to support on effective challenge, strategic oversight and support across key areas at school. Please find below our list of linked governors.

Link Governor Role	Governor:
Behaviour and Attendance	Coulter Patton
Children Looked after and previously looked after	Claire Smith

Communications	Anke Monestel
Curriculum and Standards	Sophie McGeoch
Diversity, Equality and Inclusion	Tom Lloyd
EYFS	Emma Furlong
Finance	Daria Ibrulj
Governor Training and Development	Louise Allen
Inclusion and SEND	Emma Furlong
IT Cyber Security/Filtering and Monitoring	Tom Lloyd
Performance Management of the Head Teacher	Louise Allen Daria Ibrulj Claire Smith
Premises, Health & Safety	Claire Smith
Pupil Premium and Sports Premium	Anke Monestel
RSHE	Emma Furlong
Safeguarding/Child Protection	Louise Allen Sophie McGeoch
Wellbeing	Tom Lloyd

4. ATTENDANCE SEPT 2024- AUGUST 2025

Governor	Number of Board meetings attended this year	Number of committee meetings attended this year
Louise Allen	3 of 3 (100%)	8 of 8 (100%)
Cate Dittrich	3 of 3 (100%)	2 of 3 (66%)
Emma Furlong	1 of 3 (33%)	4 of 4 (100%)
Daria Ibrulj	2 of 3 (66%)	4 of 4 (100%)
Arman Kaviani	1 of 1 (100%)	0 of 0 (n/a)
Tom Lloyd	2 of 3 (66%)	3 of 4 (75%)
Sophie McGeoch	1 of 3 (33%)	3 of 3 (100%)
Anke Monestel	3 of 3 (100%)	3 of 4 (75%)
Coulter Patton	3 of 3 (100%)	4 of 5 (80%)
Claire Smith	1 of 3 (33%)	3 of 8 (37%)

5. TRAINING UNDERTAKEN BY GOVERNORS - SEPT 2024- AUGUST 2025

During the year, Governors have undertaken training relevant to their own specific roles, or wider cross school areas of importance. This can include government courses, AfC training, GovernorHub training, or others. All governors undertake safeguarding training.

The following training has been undertaken this year:

- Behaviour and Attitudes - Briefing for Governors (Governors)
- Chairs' Network (Governors)
- Cyber Security for Governors/Trustees
- Cyber Security Training for School Staff
- Director's Termly Briefing for Chairs and Vice Chairs (Governors)
- Director's Termly Briefing for Chairs and Vice Chairs (Governors)
- DSL Training
- eLearning: Information Sharing and Consent
- Leading in Governance (Developing Chairing Skills) (Governors)
- Making Sense of the EIF and preparing for inspection

- Multi-agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Training (Level 3)
- New Governors - Understanding your role
- The Performance Management of the Headteacher
- Prevent Awareness Course
- Prevent Refresher Awareness Course
- Primary Curriculum - the Governor's Role (Governor)
- Pupil Attendance - Briefing for Governors (Governors)
- Safeguarding: eLearning for governors and trustees
- Safeguarding - the Governing Board's role (Governors)
- Safeguarding Level 2
- Safeguarding and Child Protection for DSLs (Level 3)
- School Complaints - The Governor's role
- School Revenue Funding workshop (Governors)
- Supporting a whole school approach to mental wellbeing (Governors)
- The Prevent Duty
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance: DfE guidance overview for school

6. CHAIR & VICE CHAIR STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

As Chair and Vice Chair of The Russell School Governing Board, we are delighted to share the annual governance statement with you. Thank you to the wonderful students, staff, parents/carers and governors of The Russell School for all that they do make our school a special and safe place to learn and thrive. With thanks to our Head, Laura Brooks, who has an unrelenting focus on standards.

As a Governing Body, our responsibility as stated by Department of Education guidance requires our Board to be strategic and focus on core functions including setting the vision and strategic direction of school, holding the head teacher to account for educational performance and ensuring financial resources are well spent. These principles are at the heart of what our Governors do.

Our School Improvement Committee has this year dedicated time to strategic review of educational outcomes and attainment, with a particular focus on attendance, attainment, the support and progress of children with SEND/PPG, the effectiveness of spending on Sports Premium, and of course safeguarding. Our Link Governor for Safeguarding has undertaken thorough reviews of safeguarding at the Russell. We remain vigilant.

Whilst the financial landscape remains challenging, the Russell has set a balanced budget and we remain committed to increasing income for our school through effective usage of the fantastic space and donations/grants. We are considered with our budgets, whilst focusing on the priorities as set out in our School Development Plan and ensuring that children that live locally choose the Russell. The future financial landscape remains challenging, and there is more work to do to address the ongoing challenges because of funding and falling roll pressures.

Our Resources Committee has focused on high quality financial oversight, income generation and ensuring the effective use of resources. We welcomed external challenge on our effectiveness and rigour with regards to our financial management and governance and were pleased to see the findings demonstrated strong governance at the Russell.

Our school continues to drive up standards of educational outcomes with an unrelenting focus on meeting and exceeding Richmond and National Averages. We are particularly pleased to see strong results across Phonics, Year 4 Multiplication Check and Year 6 SATs.

We were supported both externally and by our governing board to bring challenge and rigour. Our Linked Governors (responsible for key areas of school life) visited the school to provide strategic challenge and the SLT met with Governors regularly on key issues. We welcomed advisors from Achieving for Children (AfC) on attendance, safeguarding, writing and more. Our School Improvement Partner met with our Head termly to share reflections which were shared and discussed with the governing Board. At Board we reviewed the SDP to ensure that priorities agreed at the start of the year had progressed for the benefit of the children and staff at the Russell.

We thank the PTA for their support this year in running excellent events and working with Governors to streamline donations so that we can maximise our income at a time of budgetary pressure.

In governance, we sought to focus on strengthening the processes of the governing board, to recruit further governors to bring in wider skills and develop training, included in this report. We remain committed to exemplary governance and have ambitious plans for September to further bring challenge, support and rigour to governance at the Russell.

Thank you.

7. MEETINGS

The Full Board of Governors (FGB) meet termly. Our Resources and School Improvement Committee typically at least termly. Other committees meet as required.

8. OTHER DOCUMENTS

Other documents are available on the Governors section of the school website include:

- Annual Governance Planner
- Register of Interests
- Governing Board Scheme of Delegation
- Governing Board Structure
- Governing Board Code of Conduct
- Governors Register of Attendance
- Terms of Reference for our Committees

9. HOW TO CONTACT THE GOVERNING BOARD

Please contact our Governing Board, via our Clerk Beth Hemphill, who can be contacted via email: b.hemphill@russell.richmond.sch.uk