



Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026

Mission Statement:

At Claypool everyone is valued, inspired, and nurtured on their individual journey of success.

Governing Body Membership:

The Board of Governors is made up of 12 members. 4 Parent Governors appointed by ballot by people with parental responsibility for a pupil at the school; 1 Staff Governor appointed by ballot by staff at the school; 1 Head Teacher who is ex-officio and 6 Co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Board based on skills and expertise. 1 Vacant position for a Local Authority Governor.

Board meetings are clerked by Bolton Governor Services; Human Resources section of Business Committee and Policy Committee are clerked by a member of the committee. Curriculum and Inclusion and Buildings and Finance section of Business committee meetings are clerked by Mrs Debra Nevins.

Name	Representation	Office Ends	Special Responsibilities
Mrs Sharon Stevenson Chair	Co-opted	10th November 2028	• Chair of Governors • Chair of Policy Committee • Performance Review and Pay Review • Safer Recruitment • Business Committee • Training Link Governor
Mrs Elaine Gilmore Vice Chair	Co-opted	31 st January 2027	• Vice Chair of Governors • Safeguarding and Child Protection • Performance Review and Pay Review • Safer Recruitment • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion • Business Committee • Curriculum and Inclusion Committee • Beech and Hazel Class (1&2)
Mrs Amanda Hulme Head Teacher	Ex-Officio	_____	• Safer Recruitment
Ms Zoe Bluer	Parent	29th April 2029	• Website Compliance • Business Committee
Mr Peter Dunn	Parent	6th June 2027	• GDPR • Health and Safety • Chair of Business Committee • School Fund and SFVS
Mrs Emma Fisher	Co-opted	12th March 2027	• Curriculum and Inclusion Committee • English and Modern Foreign Languages
Ms Lydia Gibbons	Parent	24th June 2026	• Science, Computing and Music • Rowan Class Governor • Well-Being and Inclusion
Miss Saxon Miller	Staff	22nd September 2028	• Curriculum and Inclusion Committee

Name	Representation	Office Ends	Special Responsibilities
Mr Colin Myers	Co-opted	31st January 2027	• Chair of Curriculum and Inclusion • Disadvantaged Pupils and CLA • Willow and Sycamore (3 & 4) Class Governor • Performance Review and Pay Review • Attendance and Punctuality
Mrs Sarah Worden	Co-opted	17th March 2027	• Business Committee
Mr Dan Hodgson	Co-opted	22 nd June 2029	• Business Committee • Silver Birch and Oak Class (5 & 6)
Mrs Sayeh Mariner	Parent	13 th October 2029	• Curriculum and Inclusion Committee • Cherry Class (Foundation)
Mr James Davies	Co-opted	13 th October 2029	• Curriculum and Inclusion Committee • Pupil Voice
Vacant	Local Authority		

The Governor's role is to provide support and challenge to the Head Teacher to continually improve Claypool and provide the best education for every child. Our 3 core functions are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction.
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The Annual Governance Statement is one way for us to share our impact on school improvement with all members of the Claypool family and the wider community.

The Work of the Governing Board this year

Governors have worked positively and enthusiastically all year, and I want to thank them on behalf of everyone who benefits from their support and guidance. They all have commitments — full time jobs, children, elderly parents to care for and even play football for England— but they always create time to carry out their responsibilities, often at very little notice, because they know how important it is to make the school the best place it can be for all the Claypool family. They are a great team, sound and considered in their approach supporting each other and the school community. We have had several changes and appointments this year involving the induction and training of those new to governance, but the team always step up to the challenge welcoming new members to the team and working alongside them to embed the new skill they bring. These are examples of the impact of our meetings, visits and support this year:

Decision Making

- Governors have continued to undertake Safeguarding training and to support the school in maintaining best practice and compliance in Health and Safety.
- Governors have continued to support Rowan class, ensuring that children are integrated as fully as possible into the wider school community.
- Throughout the year, we have provided support and challenge to the Head Teacher and staff in school both in the general development of the school and the preparation and inspection carried out by Ofsted.
- We have supported Mrs Hulme with school recruitment across the year, interviewing and appointing new staff.

- Governors have monitored website compliance to ensure statutory information remains up to date and accessible to parents and the wider community. A formal audit is scheduled for completion in September as required.

Finance

- Through the work of the Business Committee, governors have considered recruitment activity, staffing proposals, insurance arrangements and associated costs, and the review of service contracts. Governors have provided appropriate challenge to ensure decisions are well informed, represent good value for money, and support the school's strategic priorities.
- This is the first year in which the school has operated with a budget deficit. This position reflects a combination of wider national funding pressures affecting schools alongside a number of exceptional local circumstances. In particular, extended absence within the senior leadership team has necessitated significant additional expenditure on cover arrangements.
- At the same time, the age and condition of the school estate have required substantial investment, including works to the roof and the boiler, which have further impacted the budget.
- Throughout the year, governors have maintained close and constructive engagement with the School Business Manager and Local Authority, which has recognised that these challenges are not unique to our school and has provided appropriate support. Together with school leaders, governors have rigorously scrutinised the underlying causes, forecasts and proposed actions in relation to the deficit. Steps have been identified to increase income and reduce expenditure over the short and medium term, and all reasonable measures have been pursued without compromising the quality of teaching and learning.
- The governing body will continue to monitor the situation closely and remains committed to restoring financial stability while safeguarding educational standards.

Staffing

- The challenge of recruitment has continued and, despite national shortages, we have worked with school leaders to appoint new members of staff who have enhanced provision across school.
- To ensure that we always recruit the right people to work with our children, governors have updated their Safer Recruitment training as safeguarding remains our first priority.

Developing the Team

- This year saw a significant leadership transition within the Board. Mrs Elaine Gilmore stepped down as Chair of Governors after 15 years of exceptional service and dedication to Claypool. The Board has provided invaluable support and guidance as I have settled into the role of Chair, ensuring continuity of strategic leadership and a smooth transition.
- We welcomed new co-opted governor appointments to help fill the vacancies that arose following previous departures, and work continues to build a full and skilled board. One co-opted vacancy remains.
- Despite changes within the governing body, relationships between staff and governors have continued to strengthen, underpinned by a shared commitment to collaboration, transparency, and the school's strategic goals. Governors have stepped up to cover governor vacancies and additional responsibilities without hesitation.
- The Business Committee structure, combining Buildings and Finance and Human Resources into one committee, has continued to operate effectively this year, avoiding repetition and enabling multi-functional decision making.

Monitoring

- Class governors have visited to monitor Maths and English, finance, health and safety and compliance areas across school. It is always a pleasure to meet with staff and children to see how they are progressing and to hear about achievements and challenges.
- This year leaders identified attainment in external assessments as an area for development. This was included in the School Development Plan as a priority, and monitoring of English and Maths has focused closely on standards in these subjects.
- Governors embraced the school's commitment to Adaptive Teaching throughout school, with monitoring highlights including engaging teaching, excellent pupil behaviour enabling children to continually thrive, good content and pace, and staff and pupils who fully engage with and enjoy the approach.
- Supporting the school through its Ofsted inspection provided clear evidence of the improvements already made. The inspection report recognised the quality of governance: 'Members of the governing body carry out their roles with a clear sense of responsibility. They check curriculum priorities closely, including the effectiveness of support for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Governors hold leaders to account with increasing rigour for how well pupils achieve.'
- Observations of Rowan class have continued to show steady development in curriculum and assessment. Learning Support Staff are now carrying out similar sessions to the teacher and other outside agencies are involved. The class governor has built strong relationships with class staff and all governors have thought carefully and meaningfully about the inclusion of Rowan class.
- Health and Safety monitoring visits have taken place as required. All remaining monitoring visits are scheduled for July.
- Governors have scrutinised policies and practices to ensure they reflect current legislation and the ethos of the school.

Governors want to thank staff for their continuous hard work, parents and carers for helping support school to raise funds, the Junior Leadership Team, and all children and parents who make Claypool special. We are proud to be your Governing Board, and it is our privilege to serve this community.

If you wish to access further information about our work, you can find it on the school website and minutes of meetings by request from the school office.

Sharon Stevenson
Chair of Governors