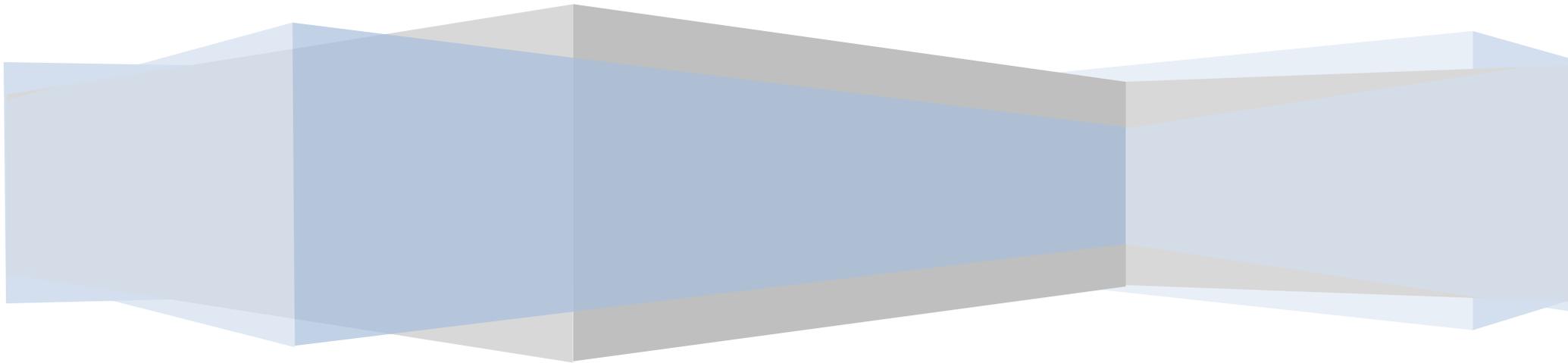


GLM Quality Mark for School Governance

Assessor Feedback and Recommendation Form Dore Primary School



Name and Address of School	Dore Primary School Furniss Avenue Sheffield S17 3QP	
Name of Assessor	Maxine Ward	
Date of Assessment Visit	9 June 2014	
Outcome of Visit	Recommend Accreditation now	YES
	Recommend Working Towards Further assessment visit in how many months time?	

Criterion 4: Strategic Leadership	
Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance at Dore Primary School has been strengthened under the leadership of the Chair of Governors who has been in role for 2 years. The Chair has led and introduced new and improved processes which demonstrate good and better practice. For example, there is a clear, agreed Strategic Vision Statement, which not only establishes short, medium and long term priorities, but incorporates the roles of leadership and management, community and parents and the role of governance. <p>The statement starts appropriately with the focus on providing an outstanding curriculum for the children and the scope of the statement provides a framework from which the governing body can base future decision making.</p> <p>It embraces values, the school character, curriculum design, achievement and resources required. The statement is time bound, for example: <i>'We are committed to working towards Outstanding school status.....by 2018'</i>. We will explore all possible options for the governance of the school and make a decision.....by 2017'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the last year the governing body has established a governors' portal on 'Google Docs'. This is best practice because it provides simple storage with easy (password) access for all governance resources, including Headteacher reports, RAISEonline, School Improvement Partner visit notes, the Self Evaluation and School Improvement Plan, together with Terms of Reference for committees, governor visit reports, agendas, minutes and other documents relevant to governors. It means that all governors have equal access to school improvement information and self-evaluation tools when they need it. Governors recognise the importance of data and this easy access ensures they are informed and able to hold the school to account.
Things the governing body does well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence of the governing body's involvement in self-evaluation and improvement planning in a number of ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role and impact of governance is built directly into the School's Self-Evaluation. Many of the comments and judgements about governance are validated by drawing on external perspectives, for example, the School Improvement Partner in January 2014. <i>'There is a high level of.....and excellent interaction between governors and SLT which recognises the gaps and is committed to improvement.'</i> ESCAL report: <i>'Governors are well informed.'</i> Progress in Maths is rightly identified as an improvement area in the SEF. The governors' role in ongoing improvement activities such as the Maths presentation to governors and the appointment of a Maths link governor and involvement in the annual work scrutiny is clear.

<p>Things the governing body does well</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors are involved in the creation of the School Development Plan, drawing on priorities identified in the Self-Evaluation. There are 4 key priorities in the SDP and the role of the governing body is incorporated through them all as well as being evident throughout the whole plan. This is approved annually by the governing body and reviewed at governing body meetings every term. • There is evidence of challenge around the effective use of resources and in the past, there were issues with some governors resisting capital spending even when it was identified as high priority for safety. These problems have been overcome and the both the headteacher and governors reported that the new Chair of Finance is leading a more collaborative approach. Comments in the <i>SFVS</i> now include '<i>...governors' bold choices and decisions ensure that limited funds are spent wisely and..... The best interests of pupils....at the core</i>'. • Governors have an active role in performance management and have supported the appointment of an external advisor to assist with the process. The external advisor reports and presents directly to the governing body – This is evidenced in minutes along with consideration of the value provided and includes reference to the school development priorities being used to inform performance management objectives • The headteacher has announced her intention to retire in late 2015 and the governors are being proactive in designing appropriate succession plans. This includes a review of different models of leadership for the school, for example, amongst others, the pros and cons of academy status are being considered.
<p>Areas for development</p>	

Criterion 5: Statutory Responsibilities	
Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors led an initiative to introduce different coloured lanyards to assist with security checking for visitors and staff. This ensures that any visitor who does not have an appropriate CRB/DBS check can be challenged if they are found to be unaccompanied anywhere in school. See the well-being and safety impact statement below.
Things the governing body does well	<p>Minutes demonstrate that the governing body has a well-established plan for reviewing all statutory policies. This follows a published cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school contributes to national initiatives that promote equality and the governors are supportive of these. The activities link closely with the school vision and values and governance oversight is evident in review activities and involvement. • The governing body places high priority on safety and Dore primary school was the first school in the City to receive the Gold Travel Award which recognises the focus on educating children on road safety. • Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the appointed safeguarding governor meets termly with the Headteacher. Actions/notes and progress from these meetings are reported to all governors via the safeguarding report and filing of information on Google Docs. 3 governors have completed safer recruitment training this year. The Single Central Record is checked. Pupil questionnaires/council report that children feel safe in school. • Governors have supported resource allocation and best practice activities which have resulted in the school receiving recognition/awards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anti-bullying, Expert centre for Global Education, Safe Child School, Unicef Rights Respecting School and several more. • The wider stakeholder voice is accessed through The School Change Team established by governors and the SLT to focus on aspects of school life bringing together the views of staff, parents and governors. A relatively recent court case over rights of way had caused tensions between the school and some members of the community, but the active involvement of a new community governor has helped to rebuild relationships. The School Change Team sets an agenda at the beginning of the year with agreed priorities. Feedback on actions and outcomes is then provided at the end of the school year. .
Areas for development	

Criterion 6: Strengths and weaknesses	
Best practice	The Chair provides strong leadership and guidance. The focus and purpose of governance is embedded in activities undertaken by governors providing tangible evidence of how the school's vision and ethos drive a practical framework to continue to raise already high standards and to develop the children.
<i>Things the governing body does well</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, Governors know the school well. There is good attendance at meetings and there is a programme of governor visits. Each Year group has a link governor who visits the school termly gathering views from staff and pupils. For example, a series of visit reports show the governors' engagement with Maths and involvement in discussions around maths improvement. • Governor Training has high priority and features regularly on governing body meeting agendas. New governors attend Induction training. The governing body takes advantage of the training provided by the City Council and also organises whole governing body training. • The governing body had a good knowledge of standards. A decision was taken to have a small group of governors with a particularly strong grasp of the data. Others have sufficient knowledge to hold the school to account. The Chair's presentation/report on data addressed what governors should know, questions that would be asked by Inspectors and current trends/performance at Dore Primary School. This demonstrated a good grasp of the issues, including the significance of 'blue' boxes in RAISEonline, progress and value added. Conclusions covered improvement at Key Stage 1, Good attainment at Key Stage 2, but progress is an issue and below floor standards for Maths and Reading. The areas of concern are correctly identified and carried through into improvement priorities. Conversations with governors and the headteacher satisfied the assessor that governors know their school well. • Governors know how the Pupil Premium is spent and the impact it is having on the children it is aimed at. The target group is small, but governors are provided with comprehensive information on the funding received and the impact it is having on closing gaps. This is provided for every year group. • Dore has been acknowledged as a particularly successful school in the way it has used the Sports Premium and it now a DfE Case Study demonstrating good practice in how this funding has been used.

Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness of meetings would be improved by ensuring that meeting times and agendas are planned better to tie in with availability of relevant information. In two sets of minutes it was reported that the information available at the moment is the same as that already discussed, and that the new information will be out tomorrow. (See also the data item in the minutes of 23 January which record that the information available is the same as that discussed at the last meeting and there is nothing new to report.) <p>It is recommended that when meetings are planned, account is taken of when the most up to date information will be available so that agendas are planned to ensure effective scrutiny of relevant information and governors can take timely action where necessary.</p>
Criterion 7: Support and Challenge	
Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair of Governors is proactive in seeking 360 ° feedback from other governors and staff. The results of last year's questionnaire have been shared and this open approach with a clear emphasis on building relationships is supporting the governing body's drive to re-build fractured relationships with the headteacher and SLT.
Things the governing body does well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall the governing body provides effective support and challenge. The headteacher confirmed that now there is a good level of trust and respect which has developed over the last two years. She described the Chair as: 'supportive but firm – in fact he is brilliant and ensures the governing body holds the school to account.' The governing body and headteacher were open about the challenges that had existed previously and the work that has gone into improving relationships. Governors took decisive action to appoint a new Chair of Finance. Governors completed a skills' audit and have been active in recruiting governors to fill gaps. This was evident in the appointment of the new Chair of Finance. A new Governor Charter has also been drawn up and is shared with new governors who all complete Induction training. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and this was evidenced in the conversations with the assessor and the input of the governor responsible for training and development. The headteacher commented on the Chair's aim to ensure that all governors are involved in active governance. Governors are allocated work that is as far as possible linked to their skills and interests; this work forms the basis of effective succession planning across the governing body.

Areas for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="611 147 1902 280">• Governors are aware that improvements can be made in recording challenge and how they hold the school leadership to account. Agendas and minutes tend to be focused on process and discussion rather than improvements in outcomes and records of challenges where the governing body is holding the school to account. <p data-bbox="653 318 1860 415">The governing body would better demonstrate how it fulfils its corporate role by ensuring that agendas focus more on school improvement priorities and minutes provide a more specific record of scrutiny and challenge.</p>
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8. Impact: Areas where the work of the governing body has influenced achievement in the school

School Improvement (pupil progress / standards)

The issue identified and why

Several improvement priorities are identified in this statement including overall pupil progress, achievement in Maths, standards in Early Years and the need to close the gap for Pupil Premium and SEND groups.

What was the governing body's action and involvement

The statement is wide ranging and encompasses a number of strategies to raise standards at Dore. There is a tendency for governors to include everything that is being done to improve standards in this statement with some generalisations about school improvement. However, from the visit the assessor was able to establish specific strategic activity driven by governing body decisions. The work and decisions governors have taken to support improvements in Early Years is of particular significance.

The last Ofsted report had identified Early Years as an area for improvement. Governors focused on the need to allocate funds to improve the physical environment and to invest resources for staff recruitment and development. Spaces were opened out and providing children with better opportunities to make choices develop their independence. New staff were recruited with infant phase expertise.

The governing body has several systems and methods that enable effective monitoring including Headteacher reports and school visits. Governors know what is effective and what is working as they have ensured that information is triangulated by an external advisor, (key governors attend termly visits) moderators and feedback from the school working towards a wide range of external quality marks.

What was the impact of this strategy and action

Since the last Ofsted Inspection, governors are able to demonstrate improvement in achievement in the Early Years and the school is now regarded as a Centre of Excellence for Early Years and hosts staff from other schools to share best practice. It was awarded the Charter Mark for quality provision in Early Years in 2013 and tracking shows that pupil outcomes demonstrate a good level of overall development.

Partnerships and Community Engagement including pupil progress**The issue identified and why**

Relationships with some parents and the local community needed to be improved. In recent years there had been a tense relationship with some parts of the village community. This had arisen largely due to the need to erect a boundary fence which impacted on land that had previously been open access and used by dog walkers. Parental surveys also indicated areas of concern around the way the school communicates with and engages parents.

What did the governing body's action and involvement

The governing body has addressed the issue by focussing on the make-up of the governing body. A new community governor was appointed in 2012 who is a member of the Dore Village Society (DVS) and has a good understanding of tensions and perceptions in the village. This governor has encouraged work to strengthen the damaged relationship by supporting community projects in the school. This has involved children from both key stages working with members of the DVS and the children produced their own well dressing for the 2013 village gala.

In 2013, activity was further strengthened by the appointment of a new governor who was given responsibility for parental engagement.

What was the impact of this strategy and action

The relationship with the community has strengthened and positive comments in the village magazine about the school are described as a significant step. The new governor has experience of working with the School Change Team, bringing together the parent community, governors and staff to prioritise and agree areas for improvement. This work has led to the school introducing a new Home School Agreement for September 2014.

Pupil wellbeing and safety**The issue identified and why**

Three areas were identified by the Governing Body for improvement, these were security of the entrance porch, responding to governor concerns around internet misuse/cyber bullying and ensuring that parent volunteers have appropriate CRB checks.

What was the governing body's action and involvement

Governors managed the budget to enable funding to be allocated for the construction of a new secure porch, allowing for safe evacuation in emergency situations. A significant development has been the introduction of an electronic signing in system and the introduction of coloured lanyards for identification of staff/governors and visitors.

A member of the governing body was able to support the headteacher in delivering Safer Internet Training sessions for parents and the governing body has supported a zero-tolerance policy on cyber-bullying and inappropriate text messaging. The safeguarding governor has taken responsibility for independent checks of the Single Central Record.

What was the impact of this strategy and action

The new security system and entrance has been effective and this is recognised in the Local Authority Risk Survey report. It is another example where the school has been recommended to share good practice. Pupils and parents report that

children feel safe in school and this builds community confidence as well as supporting the children's well-being.