



**Attendance and punctuality**

Governors discussed school attendance at their spring term meetings. They were disappointed to hear that attendance at FSD so far this year was below the national average (95%) in three year groups (see table below).

Persistent absence is also too high and well above the national average.

The governors supported the strong letter sent to all parents by Mrs Rayson (Deputy Headteacher) in January. She is right to state that **“Absence from school during the year will reduce your child's chances of success; their achievement could seriously affect their progress in all subjects and will eventually impact upon their GCSE grades”**.

The school expects every student to aim for 100% attendance. Individual students and their parents received additional letters if attendance was a concern. The school has then discussed these issues with parents either at home or in school.

Since these measures have been put in place it is pleasing to hear that attendance has started to improve this term. It needs to improve further.

Staff and governors are working hard to move the school back to an Ofsted judgement of Good. We need the support of parents in all matters, but especially in an area as important as attendance.

Since September 2017	%
Attendance year 7	95.37
Attendance year 8	95.20
Attendance year 9	93.44
Attendance year 10	93.62
Attendance year 11	94.16

**Punctuality**

Governors would also ask parents to support the school by ensuring their child arrives on site by 8.25am each day. Learning starts at 8.30am.

Attendance %	Descriptor	Learning Hours Lost
+98%	Outstanding Attendance	0-20
95%	Good Attendance	47.5
90%	Improvement required	95
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee	105+
85%	Special Measures	142

**Governor Training – spring term 2018**

Governors have taken part in the following training this term run by Durham L.A.:-

- Children who are looked after
- Equality Duty training
- Safer Recruitment
- Implementing the Prevent duty
- Understanding school data
- Social Deprivation and Pupil Premium
- Preparation for Ofsted training
- Supporting pupils with behaviour problems

Angela Darnell and Amanda Hopgood attended the Inaugural conference for Chairs of Governors organised by Northern Education in January 2018. Issues arising from the training will be followed up in committee meetings and through link governors.

**Link Governor Visits**

Each member of the governing board is linked to a specific area of school life. The following visits have taken place since September:-

**Mrs O’Driscoll – link to the Maths Directorate.**

Issues discussed included ICT, Hegarty Maths, student progress, staffing and curriculum changes.

**Mr Gurden Williams – link to Science Directorate.**

Issues discussed include staffing, funding constraints, issues with laboratory facilities and technician space, student numbers in science.

**Mr Martell – link to the English Directorate.**

Issues discussed included challenges of the new GCSE specification, marking, feedback and assessment, the English curriculum and support for disadvantaged students.

**Councillor Hopgood – link to the Sixth Form**

Issues discussed included improved monitoring of student progress, well-being and enrichment for students, use of STEP time in the 6<sup>th</sup> form and links with Durham University.

**Professor Martin – Link to Curriculum issues**

Issues discussed included the move to a two year KS3, government policy on the curriculum and discussions with subject directors.

**Improvements to the athletics track**

Governors were pleased to hear that external funding had been obtained to improve the athletics track at the front of the school. £4,500 will be used to clear the track of weeds and debris and to up-grade it to its original high standard. This will complement the impressive new sports hall and the flood-lit multi-games area which is now in full use by both the school and community.