

WILDERN ACADEMY TRUST

Trust Board Annual Statement: July 2022

Vision and Values

Wildern Academy Trust includes Wildern School, a secondary school providing high quality education for 2,000 pupils currently on roll, Boorley Park primary school, which opened in 2019 and currently comprises of Year R to Year 2 cohorts and Deer Park secondary school that opened September 2021 to Year 7. The key principles and ethos of the Trust are built on Care, Opportunity and Quality.

Our commitment to serving the local community has been a key driver in developing the Trust. Wildern Academy Trust's principle aim is to provide an outstanding learning experience for each child within the community. We are ambitious for all our students and offer a clear focus on achievement for all and high-quality teaching in a stimulating environment.

Governance Arrangements

Governance for the Trust is now as follows;

Members – 4 Members appointed with 1 vacancy

10 Trustees – includes the Executive Headteacher

Wildern School Local Governing Body (LGB) – 9 Governors that includes the Headteacher, 2 parent governors, 1 staff governor, 4 Trustee appointed governors and 1 vacancy (Trustee appointed)

Boorley Park LGB – 9 Governors that includes the Headteacher, 2 parent governors, 4 Trustee appointed governors and 1 staff governor and 1 Trustee appointed vacancy

Deer Park LGB - 9 Governors that includes the Headteacher, 1 parent governor, 1 staff governor and 4 Trustee appointed governors and 1 parent governor vacancy and 1 Trustee appointed vacancy

The Trust Board meets at least once each term. The Finance Committee and Local Governing Bodies meet once each half term. The Health and Safety and Safeguarding Monitoring Group meet termly and feed up to the Trust Board. These groups consider different aspects of the school enabling the Trust Board to adopt a strategic approach to running the school.

Members meet once in every 15 months at the Annual General Meeting, as required by the Articles of Association. Ad hoc Members' meetings are arranged at other times as required to ensure Members are fully informed and continue to have adequate oversight of the Trust.

Wildern Community Management Committee (WCMC) meet once a term. The Community Management Committee is currently comprised of a Wildern School Local Governor, the Executive Headteacher, the Trust's Business Manager and local council partners; it manages community use of Wildern's extensive sport, leisure and arts facilities aiming to operate at a small trading surplus. The Community offer will be enhanced from September 2022 with the facilities available at Deer Park school and the Committee will evolve as necessary to manage the Trust's full community offer.

Additional governance meetings take place if required.

A list of Members, Trustees, Local Governors and their roles is available on the Governance webpage of the Trust's website and each school's website.

Board's composition in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact

The Board still has vacancies across the teams but these are proactively being addressed based on the gaps identified in the last skills audit.

Local Governing Body vacancies are being filled with members of the community who have approached the Trust. These applicants provide key skills that directly support the schools.

The LGBs are becoming well established with governors who effectively support the schools. The Chairs who have managed the LGBs over the last two-three years have provided excellent leadership. Trust Board is now delegating further governance responsibilities but remains accountable overall.

Members continue to offer valued oversight, are regularly updated and actively engaged, attending the AGM and other Member meetings that are held as required.

Further details of the Trust's work are detailed under the headings below of work undertaken and progress and future developments.

Overall, the governance is sound and all those involved provide the challenge, support and oversight needed.

Attendance Record

All types of meetings have to be attended according to the Terms of Reference or the Articles of Association by a minimum of Members, Trustees and Local Governors to ensure that the decisions made are legally binding.

Details of attendance is available on the Trust's website.

COVID-19

The pandemic continued to impact the schools significantly during the Autumn and Spring term of this academic year, particularly as social restrictions were eased within society. Over this last term the pressures have eased and sickness absence levels amongst staff and pupils/students is noticeably reducing. However, the lack of immunity in pupils in the primary school does appear to be causing higher absences than would previously have been expected.

Overall COVID has had an impact on the behavior of young people and their resilience. The Schools' staff are well aware of this and are taking the necessary action to ensure that wellbeing of families and children is paramount. Similarly the impact on staff and their families is not overlooked and wellbeing is a key consideration for all.

Work undertaken

Wildern School

- Monitoring school standards takes place at the start of the academic year with a formal presentation to the Trust Board. Trustees and Wildern School Local Governors are involved in two days of department reviews with all Heads of Department, looking in detail at outcomes and action for the future. This involves an in depth scrutiny of data with appropriate challenge and also an opportunity to celebrate successes. The change to awarding of grades has and will change the

format of this review but it will still retain the scrutiny and challenge required of Trustees.

- Throughout the year curriculum and pastoral reports are presented to the Trustees and Local Governors as well as two annual visits to all departments, this is undertaken by individual Local Governors who are allocated specific departments. Visits have taken place within schools this year.
- Classroom blocks around Wildern School have been renovated and redecorated to ensure the school remains an enjoyable environment for students and staff.
- The school was inspected by Ofsted in May 2022. The report is available at <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50187201>. The categories of Quality of Education and Leadership and Management were rated Good. Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development were rated Requires Improvement. Action has been taken immediately to address these areas.

Boorley Park Primary School

- Staff continue to have been recruited over the year to support the requirements of the cohorts.
- The school continues to identify gaps in learning and put interventions in place to ensure pupils are provided with the learning needed to close those gaps. These are greater than would normally have been seen due to the impact of COVID.
- Year R intake for September 2022 will be full and has a waiting list. Other year groups are increasing in numbers.

Deer Park School

- A former Assistant Headteacher at Wildern School was appointed as Deputy Headteacher at Deer Park school in 2021. Following an intensive interview process the Deputy Headteacher was appointed as the Headteacher in the Spring term taking up the roll permanently in the Summer term.
- The September 2022 Year 7 intake is full.
- There is positive collaboration between Boorley Park and Wildern School to support pedagogy.

Trustee activities

- The Trust continues to recruit high quality professionals in all schools in spite of the national challenges with teacher recruitment and impact of the pandemic. All leadership appointments involve Trustee participation.
- Trustees, in line with one of the academy's key aims, remain committed to the wider community and linked primary schools. Much of this work is monitored through the community management group. Changes have taken place nationally with Teaching Schools and the Trust are considering a strategic approach in response to this.
- Trustees continue to ensure best value and a rigorous scrutiny of the schools' financial management, which is reviewed formally at the half termly Finance Committee meetings as well as annual audit visits and internal scrutiny reviews.
- The Trustees continue to work with the Executive Headteacher and Headteachers in maintaining high quality facilities for the students/pupils.
- Appointments to the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies has continued. This is ongoing to appoint to the vacancies as detailed on Page 1.

- Economies of scale opportunities continue to be utilised for the multi academy trust and staff changes and appointments made using the extensive skills and expertise already available within the Trust.
- Safeguarding and attendance is a key focus at local governing body and Trust Board meetings to ensure all necessary actions are taken and responsibilities adhered to.
- Due to the in catchment demand, Trustees have continued to work with the Local Authority to ensure that all catchment children for each school are allocated a place.
- Boorley Park and Deer Park will hold Trustee and Local Governor review evenings to cover the data that they currently have available over the next year.

Progress and Future Developments:

- The community offer for Deer Park will continue to be established.
- The Trust is preparing for its ninth intake of trainees for the SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training). Regular updates are given to Trustees and Governors around progress and links to recruitment. The SCITT was subject to an Ofsted Inspection in the Spring term, with a positive rating and also received re-accreditation, both great achievements. The future of SCITTs has been redefined by the Government and the opportunities available to Wildern SCITT are being considered.
- Trustees and Local Governors will continue to receive regular training on the national accountability measures as necessary.
- A comprehensive training plan continues to be established by the Trust Board to support new and existing members of all governance teams to ensure the ethos, strategy, vision and individual and collective responsibility of the MAT is understood at all levels. This will be progressed over the next year, having been disrupted due to COVID-19.
- The Trust Board will actively continue to seek persons with the right skills to fill the vacancies for Members and Local Governing Bodies.