



Governance Annual Report

2024-25

Dear Families,

It is my pleasure as the Chair of Governors to share with you the Governance Annual Report for the academic year September 2024 to August 2025.

The core functions of the Governing Board (GB) are to provide:

- **Strategic leadership:** the GB defines the school vision for high quality and inclusive education in line with the charitable objects. It establishes and fosters the school's culture and sets and champions the overall strategy.
- **Accountability and assurance:** the GB has robust effective oversight of the operations and performance of the school, including the provision of education, student welfare, overseeing and ensuring appropriate use of funding and effective financial performance and keeping the school's estate safe and well-maintained.
- **Engagement:** the GB has strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders. The GB involves parents, schools and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement.

With respect to **strategic leadership**, the school seeks to provide an outstanding all-round education provision with high academic achievement at its heart. The vision of the school is *'Our community is vibrant, curious, creative and inspires positive change. We dare to be wise'*. Working with senior leaders, the GB sets strategic objectives to help the school reach its goals.

With respect to **accountability and assurance**, the GB and its committees meet throughout the year to scrutinise reports from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and ask questions, particularly regarding the impact of strategic developments, e.g. embedding the school-wide focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. The GB triangulates information received at meetings with discussions held with staff and students during visits to the school to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the school.

With respect to **engagement**, the GB receives detailed reports of annual student, parent and staff surveys. Data is examined and themes identified so that the GB can be mindful of these stakeholder groups when making key decisions for the benefit of the school.

Reflections on the year

We are incredibly proud of the achievements of our Year 11 and Year 13 students in their GCSE and A-Level examinations. 94% of A-Level exams sat were awarded A*-B grades; a truly phenomenal set of results for our Year 13 students that has enabled the vast majority of them to reach their destination of choice. Our Year 11 students also did incredibly well and we are thrilled that 95.7% of GCSE exams sat were awarded 9-7 grades.

The School remained one of the leading state schools in the country on the 9-7 measure at GCSE and also the A*-B measure at A Level. We fully recognise that these results would not be possible without the outstanding teaching and learning that happens at the School, day in and day out. Our thanks go to all the staff who regularly go the extra mile to engender a love of learning in the students, as well as imparting their expert subject knowledge.

As you will know, this School is not all about academic results, important though they are, but about our vision to provide the very best all-round education for our students, focused on our values of 'Community', 'Love of Learning' and 'Character'. You will know that extra-curricular activities here are flourishing and at the

same time students are involved in volunteering and charity work, creating a happy and inclusive environment.

A key development last year, was the launch of the Digital & AI Strategy for the school, which was shared at Parent Focus Evenings in September. This year's focus has been on upgrading the IT infrastructure to accommodate Windows 11, implementing a new Management Information System and Parent Portal, developing our internal AI governance and associated processes and systems, embedding digital literacy in the pastoral curriculum, and upskilling staff digital and AI literacy.

The GB very much appreciates the role and contribution to the School community made by both the Parent Staff Association and the Tiffin Girls' Music Society, and their financial contributions have enhanced the School environment and had a direct impact on the students' positive learning experience. Our particular thanks are extended to all those who have supported the PSA fundraising events this year as the school has been able to upgrade much of the lighting in the Holdsworth Wing to sustainable LEDs.

We remain ever grateful for all the donations from parents to the STGSC throughout the year. The STGSC have funded classroom resources across a wide range of departments in support of teaching and learning, including: 16 guitars for Music, textbooks for History, ceramic materials for Art, a wide range of chemicals and glassware for all three Sciences. In addition, the PE changing rooms were refurbished and we installed new stage curtains in the Main Hall, which supported a myriad of different school events and the Drama productions.

We said farewell to Mr Meryon (staff governor), Daniela Perazzo (parent governor) and Nisha Rabheru (co-opted governor) during the year; we are grateful for their contributions to the work of the GB. We held a parent governor election and are grateful that six parents put themselves forward for this important role. A new parent governor has been elected and will be appointed to the Board in September. We also welcomed Misha Patel, a TTGS alumnae and an accountant, who was co-opted to the GB in July to extend our capacity of governors with expertise in finance. Catharine Mackey was elected by the staff body and will join the GB September 2025 as staff governor.

As many of you may already be aware, the school has been running on one boiler for some time with the other two having reached the end of their usable life. Each year we've submitted a bid for a replacement boiler suite and were again unsuccessful in last December's round. Over the summer, however, the last remaining boiler failed and had to be decommissioned. The school has already submitted a request for urgent capital funding from the DfE, but in the interim have taken steps to implement a temporary solution that will ensure the school remains heated during the winter, until we can secure funding to implement a full solution.

How has the Governing Board helped the School achieve its vision?

Each year the School Development Plan (SDP) sets out how the School plans to deliver its vision. The SDP is developed by Mr Keary and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), then reviewed and approved by the GB. It includes, amongst other information, key outcomes and the actions required to deliver. Each GB meeting has strategic foci and agenda items that are linked to specific outcomes in the SDP. This ensures that the governors remain focused on strategic matters that directly impact the education provided for your child.

During 2024-25:

- We held ten GB meetings, as well as three Finance and Contracts, three Pay and Personnel, three Audit and Risk and two Admissions Committee meetings.
- We received reports from Mr Keary and SLT covering a variety of areas related to school development, including student progress, attendance, safeguarding, health and safety, premises and infrastructure, risk management, data protection, equality, diversity and inclusion, sustainability and the Digital & AI strategy.

- We received presentations from Heads of Department about the curriculum for their subject area and presentations from the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator on the SEND provision at the school the and Careers Lead.
- We monitored the 2024-25 financial performance against the budget and both reviewed and approved the School's budget for 2025-26 and the medium-term financial plan to 2028.
- We approved significant capital expenditure for IT upgrades to meet Department for Education cybersecurity requirements.
- A working party of governors and SLT researched alternative solutions to boiler replacement in terms of environmental sustainability and finance.
- We engaged in AI in education discussions, including a receiving a guest presentation on ethics and future-readiness
- We received reports on the school's outreach activities, including hosting an eco-conference for 11 primary schools and a separate one for 12 local secondary schools, a medics conference for a number of local secondary schools, running a Shaping Futures Programme for local primary school students focused on English and maths, supporting a local primary school with their careers fair, a dragon's den for 10 primary schools and hosted pupils from two local primary schools for sports games led by our Year 10 Sports Leaders.
- Individual governors received training on a variety of topics; including safeguarding, online safety and cyber security. Governors also attended a strategic conference hosted by the Grammar School Heads Association on widening access for disadvantaged students and the financial challenges facing schools.
- We reviewed and approved a significant number of policies, many of which are statutory. These included safeguarding, behaviour for learning, health and safety, staff wellbeing.
- We conducted our annual governor skills audit and questionnaire. These documents are used to identify any gaps we need to fill in order to improve our effectiveness and to obtain feedback from individual governors.
- All governors participated in a self-evaluation questionnaire regarding how the GB operates and meets its core responsibilities.
- As per our Governor Visits Policy, we visited the School during the school day and received presentations from and engaged in dialogue with staff and students covering a range of topics. Each visit is tailored to specific SDP objectives and included student learning, student welfare, and premises and infrastructure related matters. A particular highlight was hearing from the student love of learning reps and the digital pioneers.
- Governors with individual responsibilities for Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Careers, Data Protection, Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, and Sixth Form Bursary had meetings with the responsible SLT members and reported the results of their visits to the GB.
- We have assigned individual Governors to have oversight of digital and AI strategy, and sustainability (including provision of school food); both conducted visits and reported back to the GB.
- Governors have attended a number of school events, including music concerts, drama productions, parent focus evenings and coffee mornings, celebration events and the school birthday assembly.
- We received a report following the parent survey last term and were delighted to see that the overriding response was extremely positive about the School, its leadership and the all-round education provision.

Looking forward to 2025-26

We will:

- Continue to support Mr Keary in the implementation of the School's vision statement and ongoing values – focusing on 'Community', 'Love of Learning' and 'Character', which dovetails with the school's Digital & AI Strategy of 'Interconnected', 'Interdisciplinary' and 'Interpersonal'
- Continue to monitor student wellbeing, student progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance, curriculum provision, safeguarding, health and safety, staff workload and financial performance
- Continue to focus on encouraging girls from disadvantaged (under-served) backgrounds and/or those who are local to sit our admissions test and also to apply to our Sixth Form
- Monitor the impact of the School's sustainability strategy
- Monitor implementation of the School's digital and AI strategy, including a focus on cyber security

- Maintain a sharp focus on financial performance against the School's budget
- Work with the SLT to agree a strategy for boiler replacement

A full list of the governors, their responsibilities and the governor role description can be found on the school website [here](#). The GB welcomes feedback and suggestions from parents regarding governance and strategic planning. The GB can be contacted via governance@tiffingirls.org

Thank you for your continued support of the school.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Beeching'.

Sarah Beeching
Chair of Governors