Governing Body.

Conversations were held with the Chair of Governors face-to-face, and via zoom with a further two Governors.

Governors talk with much pride about the school, based on their knowledge as Governors and also as parents. They were able to articulate how they are involved in the school, for example from committee meetings, receiving reports, and visits to the school as part of their nominated governor role. The chair visits the school on a very regular basis, discussing current and future issues with the headteacher. They talked about levels of accountability (eg headteacher performance management, impact of the school improvement priorities). Their work encompasses all aspects of the leadership and management of the school, including an overview of standards in each cohort, of the progress of identified groups (eg pupil premium children). They know how the budget supports key priorities for the school, through for example the use of specialist teachers, provision for pupil development or raising standards.

Governors consider Longton to be a learning organisation, where they know the strengths of the school but also the areas for development. They articulated many strengths of the school, principally the community feel to the school, the care and support provided by all staff and the leadership and management of the school. At the heart of this is the depth and warmth of the relationships with children and families, particularly amongst senior leaders. They consider the curriculum to be outstanding; broad and varied with many opportunities for all children to grow, flourish and succeed.

Governors consider standards of achievement to be above average, although they are aware that standards in two year groups are below expectations. They spoke passionately about the high quality of provision during successive lockdowns, and the extra lengths all staff went to meet the needs of the children, parents and wider community. They talked about the impact of COVID on the learning of children, and the social and emotional impact on children and their families which has impacted on certain behavioural characteristics. Importantly Governors were able to talk about the bespoke, tailor-made support which the school has (and continues) to provide.

Governors spoke with much passion about Longton Pupils Shine, about learning with character (LPS+). They spoke about its development over many years, that provision is real and is not regarded as a bolt-on extra. They know this through the communication and engagement as parents and as Governors. They see how LPS+ develops and builds on previous experiences and learning. An example they cited was drama, which is taught throughout the school from Reception onwards.