
External Board Review

Plumpton College

Reviewer: Rob Lawson OBE

July 2025

Version	Approved by Board Reviewer	Date
Draft	RWL	27/7/25
Draft for moderation	RWL	28/7/25
Draft post moderation/shared with college	RWL	31/7/25
Final		

Executive Summary

This External Board Review (EBR) is based on a framework developed by the AoC and ETF. The framework considers, but is not limited to, principles from Codes of Governance and the DfE's current guidance on external board reviews.

The report sets out the findings made against the three Board dimensions in the Framework with the key evidence that informs those findings.

The following table summarises some of the headline strengths and areas for development:

Strengths	Areas for Development
BOARD COMPOSITION	
1 Effective chairs who lead focused meetings at good pace while allowing time for debate.	1 Introduce mapping of governor networks and contacts, overlaid against SMT networks.
2 Impressive mix of skills, particularly in the areas of finance, education and leadership.	2 Succession planning and more to do to reinforce Nolan Principles.
BOARD STRUCTURE	
1 Busy schedule of Board, committee and TAFG meetings allows time for plenty of debate.	1 Website's governance area needs developing.
2 Experienced and efficient Clerk.	2 Cover sheets could be improved.
3 Mature relationship between SMT and Board.	3 Clarity of governance structure.
4 Self-assessments, evaluation and listening to the student voice.	4 Risk – the proposed new approach to risk needs to be defined and clarified.
BOARD INTERACTION	
1 Scrutiny and challenge is a strength, with some good examples observed.	1 What more could governors contribute through their skills and networks?
2 Good relationship between SMT and the Board.	2 Replace the title of Clerk
3 Effective triumvirate relationship.	

The overall conclusion is there is strong evidence that the Board is highly proficient and consistently impacts positively on college strategy, effectiveness, and outcomes. Plumpton has a highly-functioning Board with excellent Chairs of the Board and committees.