

## **Governing Body Report for Parents 2016/2017**

The Governing Body has a **general responsibility for the conduct of the school** with a view to promoting high standards. It acts in a strategic manner to help direct **school development**.

There are 3 main strands to the Governing Body's role. They are:

1. To take a **strategic role** in the running of the school, agreeing the vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school.
2. To **hold to account** the school and the Head Teacher for the educational standards at the school.
3. To ensure sound, proper and **effective** use of resources.

The Governing body is often described as a **critical friend** to the school: that is it both challenges and supports the school and the Head Teacher.

### **Current membership of the Governing Body**

#### **Co-opted Governors**

Ellen Barratt  
Maria Button  
Neil Donoghue  
Graham Hiom  
Mike Kendall  
Tracy Locke  
James Purser

#### **Local Authority Governor**

Penny Conway (Chair)

#### **Staff Governors**

Diane Hawkes (Head)  
Natasha Stott

#### **Parent Governors**

Richard Fairbairn  
David Jones  
Gemma Manning  
Oliver Poulain (Vice-Chair)  
Paul Warmington

#### **Associate Members**

Rebekah Jenkins

Alison Gatward was the Clerk to the Governing Body until April 2017 when Julie Zausmer took on this role.

In order that we fulfil our role efficiently and effectively much of our work is done through the Committees. Our **committee structure** is as follows:

**Curriculum & Standards Committee** chaired by Oliver Poulain

**Finance Committee** chaired by Graham Hiom

**Personnel Committee** chaired by Mike Kendall

**Site & Buildings Committee** chaired by Neil Donoghue

There are also some **statutory committees** (Salary, Performance Management, Appeals, Discipline, etc) which meet as necessary.

Some Governors have particular responsibilities:

Special Educational Needs	Gemma Manning	RE	Mike Kendall
Early Years	David Jones	Child Protection	Mike Kendall
Safer Employment	Penny Conway		

The **Full Governing Body** has met 5 times during the year. In our work to promote continuing school improvement we have:

- Monitored the implementation of plans put in place to ensure continued school improvement, in particular monitoring the impact of these plans on the progress and attainment of pupils in vulnerable groups. The Governing Body agrees and monitors the implementation plans including a TOP (Termly Operational Plan). The TOP is drawn up by the school's Senior Leadership Team who closely track pupil progress by holding pupil progress meetings with staff and looking at assessment data in order to evaluate the impact of actions taken.
- Reviewed the school structure and agreed allocation of funds for a School Improvement Adviser (Little Paxton now receives very minimal support from the Local Authority following a favourable Ofsted report).
- Continued to support the partnership with Priory Park Infant School and Priory Junior School (the PPP Partnership) for mutual support and benefit of all the schools involved.
- Actively investigated ways that our partnership with the Priory Schools can be deepened and strengthened as less and less support is provided by the LA.
- The Governing Body has considered the possibility of becoming an academy and forming or joining a multi academy trust we have decided, for the moment, this would be an unnecessary distraction from the school's core purpose which would not benefit the school at this time.
- Continued to support the Head in her role of an Ofsted inspector and also supported her increasing connection with other schools through the Partnership for School Improvement (PFSI) and also as the Lead for the Maths Mastery programme's Cambridgeshire hub.
- Studied the Notes of Visit from the School Improvement Adviser who has visited the school several times throughout the year to meet with the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors to look at progress and achievement.
- Received regular reports from the Head Teacher on all aspects of school life
- Agreed the staffing structure and class organisation for 2016/2017.
- Monitored the use of Pupil Premium to ensure the budget is supporting identified pupils effectively.
- Received and considered reports of formal governor visits to the school.

We have also:

- Reviewed and agreed changes to the Pay Policy in line with the latest government requirements.
- Reviewed our own structures, procedures and effectiveness, making changes as necessary.
- Used the agreed protocol to monitor governor attendance and participation.
- Ensured governor details are included on Edubase (a national database of school information).
- Monitored attendance, supporting the school in instances where this is low.
- Consulted with the Cambridgeshire School Admissions Service about how best to increase the school intake as the village grows. Having already agreed an increase

to our PAN (the published admission number) from 34 to 45 for intakes from September 2016, the Governing Body also agreed, where possible, to over-admit catchment children. We have requested that the PAN be increased to 60 from September 2018 as all building work will be complete and all classrooms will be fully staffed from this date.

- Initiated a tendering process to select a school catering provider from November 2017. This tendering process was still in progress at the time of writing this report.
- Audited and updated the content of the school website.
- Shared information from briefing and training sessions which individual governors have attended throughout the year.
- Agreed the School Budget for 2017/2018.
- Having reviewed and changed the staffing structure for classroom based staff following the growth of the school, the Governing body has tasked the Headteacher to carry out a review of the support staff functions and to make any recommendations arising from this.
- Attended Parents' and Open Evenings to canvas parental views.
- The Chair and/or the relevant Committee has reviewed and responded to concerns from individual parents or staff.

The **Curriculum & Standards Committee** has met 3 times during the year. It has, amongst other things:

- Received summary reports of pupil progress, and rigorously sought explanations if there is a gap in standards achieved by different groups. This includes reviewing information provided by the school and also that provided by the School Improvement Partner.
- Received summary reports classroom observations each term and sought reassurance that staff are given feedback that assists them to continuously improve their classroom practice.
- Agreed the provision of Sex and Relationships Education within school.
- Monitored the use of resources within the curriculum, ensuring that the needs of all pupils can be met.
- Received a presentation from staff about RAISE (a document which provides data about attainment and achievement of pupils).
- Studied the RAISE online report for 2015/2016 which details the school's academic achievements and benchmarks them against other schools nationally and locally.
- Considered, in depth, the information provided about pupil attainment and progress by the new assessment, tracking and reporting systems.
- Received a presentation from the PE Subject Leader about sports and PE provision and the plans to improve this.
- Received reports from governors who have visited school to monitor various aspects of the curriculum and teaching and learning (see section about governor visits below).
- Analysed responses and responded to parental questionnaires.
- Monitored Special Educational Needs provision.
- Monitored the use and effectiveness of Pupil Premium received by the school, looking specifically at the impact of this.
- Agreed the targets set for pupil attainment by the school in consultation with the School Improvement Adviser.
- Reviewed and agreed the following policies: Pupil Premium, EYFS Policy, and the Educational Visits Policy.

The **Finance Committee** has met 4 times during the year. It has, amongst other things:

- Set the school's annual revenue and capital budgets for recommendation to the full Governing Body.
- Monitored expenditure against the agreed budget throughout the year. The committee is provided with monthly budgetary control reports which indicate how actual expenditure compares with budgeted expenditure. This enables the committee to closely monitor that expenditure is in line with that agreed.
- Noted that the carry-forward had decreased from the previous year and questioned why that is and what level it should be at.
- Monitored that the school complies with the appropriate financial procedures.
- Considered, given that Little Paxton is still a maintained school in Local Authority control, how much the Finance Committee should concern itself with operational and business risks.
- Supported the Personnel Committee in taking decisions about the staffing structure for the school.
- Reviewed and agreed the updated register of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.
- Continued to update necessary documentation for Schools Financial Value Standards (SFVS). School was assessed as having met the requirements of SFVS in April 2017.
- Considered the breakdown of school expenditure compared with other similar schools using benchmarking data and taken steps where our expenditure is noticeably different.
- Reviewed and adopted the Cambridgeshire Scheme for Financing Schools.
- Reviewed the Charging and Remissions Policy.
- Reviewed the Lettings policy and amended hire charges.
- Reviewed and amended the Finance Regulations and the Internal Financial Procedures.
- Reviewed and updated the Governor Allowances Policy
- The Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of Governors have met at least once each term with the Head Teacher and the School's Financial Advisor to monitor and discuss all aspects of school finance.

The **Salary Committee** has met once during the year.

It has considered performance management information and decided appropriate pay increments for individual members of staff.

The **Personnel Committee** has met 4 times during the year. It has, amongst other things:

- Monitored staff and pupil attendance.
- Monitored exclusion and other disciplinary procedures.
- Received regular staff updates from the Head Teacher which enable us to stay informed regarding staffing matters.

## Little Paxton School Governing Body

- Overseen staff recruitment and appointment following retirement/resignation of existing staff and also the recruitment of additional staff as the school grows.
- Reviewed Safer Recruitment procedures used during recruitment and appointment of staff.
- Reviewed and agreed changes to the staffing structure of the school in the light of the current budget and the increase in pupil numbers.
- In consultation with the Head and staff changed the working hours, responsibilities and deployment of some members of staff in response to the changing needs of the school and also to staff requests.
- Reviewed Performance Management/Appraisal Policy and Procedures.
- Appointed a Panel of governors to be responsible for performance management of the Head and overseen that of other staff.
- Overseen induction of new staff.
- Monitored professional development and succession planning for staff.
- Monitored Head Teacher and staff well-being.
- Considered ways to sustain and improve staff engagement with governors as the school grows.
- Monitored the use of Child Protection procedures, as well as procedures for other statutory reports (racist incidents, bullying etc).
- Reviewed and updated the Behaviour Policy.
- Reviewed and agreed amendments to policies for Pay, Trade Union Membership, Hours of work and leave entitlement, Safer Employment, Governor Allowances, Absence management and supporting attendance policy (for staff) and the Complaints policy.
- Recruited new governors to the governing body as vacancies arise and with regard to the needs of the governing body.
- Looked at succession planning for the governing body, particularly for chairs.

The **Site and Buildings Committee** has met 4 times during the year. It has, amongst other things:

- Overseen routine repairs and maintenance of school buildings and grounds. There has been relatively little work undertaken this year due to the building work but some improvements have been made such replacement of the main entrance doors.
- The Chair of the Site & Buildings Committee, the Chair of Governors and the Head have attended site progress meetings with the developers in order to monitor the building work carried out and to minimise its impact on school life.
- Ensured the full Governing Body was fully informed about any queries arising regarding the extension plans so that decisions were taken in a timely fashion.
- Monitored Health and Safety procedures and received minutes of Health and Safety Committee meetings.
- Monitored Fire Drill procedures, particularly in light of the building work.
- Ensured full accessibility for all pupils attending the school.
- Reviewed and re-negotiated our contract with Strictly Ed, the school's Property Manager.
- Liaised with community users to ensure they were fully informed of any building work that might impact on their operation.
- Considered and agreed the furniture requirements for the new extension.

## **Governor training**

The Governing Body as a whole and as individuals regularly undertake training provided by Cambridgeshire Governor Services on a variety of topics. The Chair and other Governors attend Termly Briefings in order to keep abreast of new developments, in addition to attending the Annual Governor Conference which this year focused on the topic of 'Inspiring Governance'. Individual Governors have attended training relevant to them, including induction training for new governors, and the Clerk has attended briefings for clerks. The Chair, as part of her role as a National Leader of Governance and as an Advisory Governor to other LA Schools, has attended briefing sessions which focus on the latest Government initiatives as they impact on schools.

## **Governor Visits to school**

Members of the Governing Body make formal visits to school to look in detail at various aspects of the work of the school. The focus and purpose of these visits is agreed in advance. During 2016/2017 visits have concerned the following areas:

- Impact of the building project on school life
- The Role of the School Council
- The use of pupil premium funding, particularly for the social capital group
- Handwriting, spelling and grammar
- PE and Sports Provision
- The introduction of Maths Mastery

Visits in 2017/2018 will focus on areas that the school is seeking to improve still further or are of particular significance. For example ensuring communication remains effective as the school grows and the full implementation of Maths Mastery, as well as continuing to monitor the PPP partnership and seeking ways to deepen and strengthen it.

In addition several governors visit school more regularly to help in class, assist with the Christmas Fayre, Stage Productions, Sports Day and other events. This enables governors to keep in touch with the day to day life of the school.

## **Further Information**

The school website contains a wealth of information where, amongst other things, you will be able to find a link to our last Ofsted report (February 2012), as well as to minutes of Governing Body meetings. All documentation relating to the work of the Governing Body, including minutes of meetings and updated policies, is also available in the school foyer. Please enquire at the school office if you would like a copy of any of these.

### **It's Good to Talk**

The Governing body is always pleased to hear from parents with comments (positive or otherwise) and concerns. You can write to us at school or if you wish to speak to a governor please contact the Clerk to the Governors, Julie Zausmer, via the School Office.

And finally, may I remind you that there is an opportunity for parents/carers to meet and talk with the Governors about this report and any other aspect of our work on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July; Governors will be available at the Open School evening between 3.30 and 6.30pm. We look forward to seeing you at then.