

Governors' Annual Statement to Parents 2023

Once again I am pleased to report on the work of the governors this school year.

Our core functions as a Governing Body are to:

- ensure the clarity of **vision, ethos and strategic direction** of the school
- hold the leaders to account for the **educational performance** of the school and the pupils
- oversee **financial performance** and make sure money is well spent

The team

There are 12 governors: Mrs Jackson (Headteacher), Julie Cater, Lucy Willshaw (Church Foundation), Edgar Seligman (Local Authority), Pete Wilson, James Champion (Parents), Mrs Walsh (Staff), Elly Dawson, Victoria Griffin, Richard Swan, Barbara Lunn, Hugh Porter (Co-opted). Hugh Porter was Chair for the year. Sadly Richard is leaving us at the end of the school year. We would like to thank him for his work on behalf of the school.

The full Governing Body met four times in the course of the school year. There are three committees - Personnel Premises and Finance, School Improvement and Headteacher's Performance Management. The first two met each term and the third twice in the year. Attendance at meetings was 91%. Details of individual governors and minutes of full Governing Body meetings can be found on the school website. Seven governors were linked to school subjects. They visited the school at least twice in the year, held meetings with the subject leaders, observed lessons and talked to pupils. There are also governors responsible for Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and Wellbeing. Governors do like to know parents' and pupils' opinions and we are briefed on the results of various surveys completed for Mrs Jackson by pupils and parents.

Our vision

Governors are responsible for setting the vision and strategic direction of the school. Our vision statement and values are well embedded in the life of the school. It is great to see our values permeate the curriculum plans and be a focus of everyday learning, attitudes and behaviour as observed in person by governors. Our 2021-24 Strategic Plan is available on the school website and forms the cornerstone of our annual School Improvement Plan. Governors reviewed progress on the 2022-23 plan three times and agreed the content for next year's plan. We are impressed by the progress the school has made on its various initiatives. We also reviewed many school policies to ensure they continue to reflect the ethos and values that underpin school life as well as statutory requirements.

Educational performance

Governors have been kept fully informed of pupil performance throughout the year. Staff have conducted assessments (including NFER tests) each term. The School Improvement Committee reviewed the data from these assessments. Governors have a particular focus on the progress of SEND and Pupil Premium children. In addition SATs and statutory teacher assessment were completed this year. A full analysis of the outcomes is being undertaken as the results are just coming in. It's fair to say we are still seeing the impact of lost school time during the pandemic particularly among younger pupils. The staff have been very focused on catch up especially in the core subjects.

Subject link governors have been focused on the curriculum and the children's learning experience. We continue to receive very encouraging reports on the phonics and early literacy scheme, Little Wandle, and how the latest EYFS curriculum has become embedded. The teacher leaders have worked very hard on revising the schemes of work in each subject to ensure continuity and progression in learning across the span of the school. Several new schemes have been adopted eg Maths and French.

Governors approved changes to the behaviour policy. We will be reviewing the effectiveness of the new procedures with the Headteacher in the year ahead.

Financial performance

Our Personnel Premises and Finance Committee set and monitored the school budget to ensure sound financial management and best value. Once again we benchmarked our expenditures against similar schools nationally and found that we are generally in line. Despite inflated costs and underfunding of salaries the school remains in a healthy financial position and is projected to do so over the next 3 years. As a result we hope to add some additional staffing. We also received regular reports on the premises, health and safety inspections, and personnel matters. We approved the staffing structure for 2023-24 and participated in appointments. We have monitored the use of Catch Up funding as well as the Pupil Premium and Sports grants. We have had a particular focus on reducing the school's carbon output. New LED lights have been installed throughout and the hot water controls upgraded. We are about to install solar panels that will produce half of our electricity renewably. A major fundraising appeal has been launched to support this. We would like to thank our PTA, CHASA, for their support with this as with so many aspects of school life.

Safeguarding and child protection

Governors have particular responsibilities for ensuring the school has appropriate procedures in place to keep the children safe. We follow the guidance of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. Governors have reviewed appropriate policies and received the Headteacher's Annual Safeguarding Report. We undertook a formal review of safeguarding focusing on child on child abuse and online safety. Governors are satisfied there is a strong culture of safeguarding, matched by excellent staff training and effective procedures. The designated safeguarding governor reviews anonymous cases to check school policies and procedures are followed.

In conclusion

Governors remain very grateful to Mrs Jackson and the staff for their dedication and hard work. Some children are still suffering from the legacy of the pandemic. This affects their mental health and behaviour. Governors are fully aware of the additional stress this has caused and we commend Mrs Jackson and her staff for their professionalism and care for these pupils and their families. Governors would like to thank parents and carers once again for their strong support of the school. Your help in embedding the values of the school is much appreciated. Thank you also for your response to the questions about governance in the recent parents' survey. It is gratifying that the vast majority of parents are aware of the work of the governing body and that you are happy with the way the school is governed. If you would like to contact governors please leave a message with Mrs Bacon and we will get back to you. You can also email me at chairofgovernors@crayke-n.yorks.sch.uk

I would like to thank my fellow governors for their work this year. Our role is to support the school but also to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. We can only do this successfully if we have the full co-operation of the staff. I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Mrs Jackson and the curriculum leaders for their openness in keeping governors fully informed and in responding to our challenges.

Hugh Porter

Chair of Governors