

Annual Governance Statement

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22

Whole School Aim

'Learning Together with Kind Hearts and Determined Minds'.

School Value

'Belonging – Generosity – Mastery – Independence'

Governors' Role

The Governing Body is key to the leadership of Borough Green Primary School. The Governing Body supports and challenges the Headteacher to continually improve the school and provide the best education for every child. This Annual Governance Statement is one way in which the Governing Body communicates its work and the impact we have had on school improvement to our stakeholders. In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Body at Borough Green Primary School are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

The Governing Body Structure

The Governing Body is made up of a group of committed volunteers who bring a range of skills and expertise and come from a variety of backgrounds. Governors are committed to improving the education of every child in our school and invest a huge amount of good will, hard work and time.

Borough Green Primary School had a Full Governing Body throughout the 2021/22 academic year, with all twelve positions filled as per the following structure –

- 2 Parent Governors appointed by ballot of the parents at the school
- 1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority
- 1 Staff Governor appointed by ballot of the staff
- 1 Headteacher
- 2 Partnership Governors appointed by the Governing Body
- 5 Co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Body based on a skills audit

The Governing Body appoints a professional clerk who is responsible for arranging meetings, taking minutes and following up on all actions. The clerk also advises on procedural matters and plays a key and crucial role in the work of the Governing Body.

One new governor joined the Governing Body during 2020/21, replacing the parent Governor whose term of office had been completed. The chair and vice chair are elected by the Governing Body and work closely with the Headteacher and the clerk. In June 2021 the Governing Body elected George Booth and Catherine O'Neill as Co-Chairs of Governors and Stephen Cole as Vice Chair. In June 2022 Catherine O'Neil stepped down from her role as a Co-Chair due to her moving to another country for work. The Governing Body elected Richard Pearce and George Booth to be Co-Chairs for the next academic year and Stephen Cole as Vice Chair.

Attendance of each Governor is monitored and recorded. The table below is a summary of the attendance for each Governor during the 2021/22 year.

Name of Governor	Attendance
Alistair George Booth Co-opted Governor	8 out of 10
Jemma Butterfield Staff Governor	9 out of 10
Alison Chugg Co-opted Governor	10 out of 10
Stephen Cole Parent Governor	9 out of 10
Caroline Conroy Partnership Governor	3 out of 5 (Term Ended)
David Cushway LA Governor	6 out of 10
Jenny Hadfield Parent Governor	1 out of 1 (Term Ended)
Julie Harvey Co-opted Governor	1 out of 1 (New Governor)
Emma Holden Co-opted Governor	5 out of 10 (Mitigating reasons)
Richard Lucas Co-opted Governor	5 out of 6 (Term Ended)
Chloe McMenamin Partnership Governor	4 out of 4 (New Governor)
Catherine O'Neill Co-opted Governor	10 out of 10
Richard Pearce Parent Governor	9 out of 9 (New Governor)
Chris Turner Partnership Governor	1 out of 3 (Term Ended)
Karen Sandberg Ex-offio Governor	10 out of 10

Training

To effectively fulfil its role, the Governing Body must ensure that all its governors have the required skills and knowledge to support the achievement of the school's priority objectives. All members of Governing Body have undertaken extensive training and, supported by the training governor, continue to do so. Mandatory training such as Safeguarding and PREVENT were carried out during the academic year. COVID still impacted some independent learning, but the Governing Body were able to use a mixture of online and in person courses/training sessions. The impact of this is that the Governing Body has kept up to date regarding the latest requirements and expectations from the Department for Education, vital during this period of uncertainty with policies and plans changing rapidly, and governors are able to understand and challenge the information and data presented to them by the school.

Impact of Full Governing Body Meetings

The Full Governing Body met ten times over the 2021/22 academic year to inspect, review and agree school policies and monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan which identifies the key areas on which the school and the Governing Body wish to focus during the academic year. The School Improvement Plan includes measures and milestones that the Governing Body uses to satisfy itself that progress is being made against objectives and that all actions being taken are improving teaching and learning outcomes for all children.

Despite COVID causing a few issues, the Governing Body continued to meet either virtually or face to face. Five meetings were conducted virtually with the rest in person. Every meeting was quorate and overall attendance and commitment by governors remaining high. As well as continuing to meet its statutory obligations, the Governing Body maintained a particular focus on the wellbeing of the Headteacher, the staff, and children and on the complexities of rebuilding after the disruption of the pandemic. Between Full Governing Body meetings, members of the Governing Body remained in close contact with the Headteacher throughout this challenging period – providing support, considering, and approving risk assessments, and monitoring the continued provision of learning. Every monitoring visit had a wellbeing element, to ensure that staff were being supported appropriately.

The Full Governing Body continued at each meeting and during monitoring visits, to question the school on its decisions and actions. This was to ensure that the school's standards and expectations remained high and that pupils from all backgrounds and abilities were accommodated for. Information from Data, Headteacher reports and monitoring visits enabled the Governing Body to scrutinise pupil progress across all areas including vulnerable groups, with a particular view to ensuring post COVID catch up support was well targeted.

The school budget was scrutinised and reviewed in detail at Full Governing Body meetings, as well as by the finance monitoring pair who are experienced in finances and who meet regularly with the school's finance officer and Schools Financial Services. Using benchmarking information, governors compare the school's spending with similar schools and ensure resources are being used in the most

effective ways to support the best education outcomes for all children. The Governing Body felt the school was maximising its finance and noted the continued strain on finances due to increasing costs.

Performance Management

Governors are responsible for undertaking the Headteacher's performance management review each year. A panel of governors, who have undertaken training, supported by an expert external advisor, carry out the Headteacher's annual appraisal, which is reviewed at points throughout the year. The appraisal process allows the Governing Body to look closely at the Headteacher's performance, and discuss areas of strength and, where necessary, areas for development. New targets are then set against criteria on which the Headteacher's performance will be evaluated.

Monitoring Focus Areas in 2021/22

The BGPS Governing Body uses the Circle model of governance. Governors are divided into pairs and usually formally visit the school up to 3 times during the year to monitor priority areas. Governors use monitoring visits as a chance to get to know the school better, to observe and communicate with staff and to hear the pupil voice. Visits enable governors to ensure that actions agreed in the School Improvement Plan are being taken forward by the school. A monitoring visit report is prepared and presented at the Governing Body meeting following the visit, allowing other governors to ask questions.

In 2021/22, governors were able to visit the school once again compared to the previous year due to COVID restrictions. 17 monitoring visits were conducted, including mandatory areas such as Finance, Safeguarding and SEND. The Governing Body's focus on wellbeing has had a positive impact, with the Headteacher noting that she felt well supported by governors.

Specific governor monitoring areas identified for 2021/22 were:

- Early Years and Nursery
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Finance
- SEND and Pupil Premium
- Teaching & Learning
- Governor Training & Skills
- GDPR
- Wellbeing – there is no separate wellbeing monitoring pair, as all governors looked at staff and pupil wellbeing on every visit.

Governor focus areas for 2022/23

The Governing Body, the Headteacher and senior management team and indeed all members of staff are constantly striving to improve and develop the school. The Governing Body will continue to closely monitor the wellbeing of Headteacher, staff, pupils and parent communities and the progress and attainment of all pupils as they catch up after COVID disruption.

The specific monitoring pairs will continue to focus on their key areas but will also continue to report on general wellbeing of staff, pupils and safeguarding in general. Governors will also focus on continuing to increase and improving two-way communications with parents and carers, pupils and the community and will embrace the renewed possibilities to get to know our school that are brought by governors being able to visit in person.