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Headteacher
Mr Ian Garner

17 July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Wooden Hill Governing Body Annual Report

Last year we reintroduced the annual report from the Governing Body. Whilst you will have received numerous updates from the school during the year, we think it important to provide you with an update on our activities as well, and how they impact Wooden Hill Primary School & Nursery, and all our children that attend.

We have retained the format from last year's report, which is intended to provide you with some key information:

- The role of the governing body, who we are and how you can reach us;
- An outline of how governors undertake their functions;
- An outline of the priorities for the school and how these have progressed over the past year.

We would also like to thank everyone that responded to the recent feedback surveys, which will be informing our activities for the coming year.

As we come to the end of the school year, there is always a mixture of emotions as everyone looks forward to a well-deserved summer break. We also bid farewell to our Year 6 children as they move on to secondary school. Good luck to everyone. It has been our privilege that Wooden Hill has been able to support their learning and development and be ready for this exciting next stage of their journey.

Similarly, we say goodbye to some of our staff who are leaving at the end of term to take on new career challenges and/or exciting new chapters in their lives. We would like to thank them for being part of Wooden Hill and wish them the very best.

I hope that this report is useful. If you have any feedback on how we can improve future reports, then please let us know.

Yours sincerely,

Gavin Handford
Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Wooden Hill Governing Body



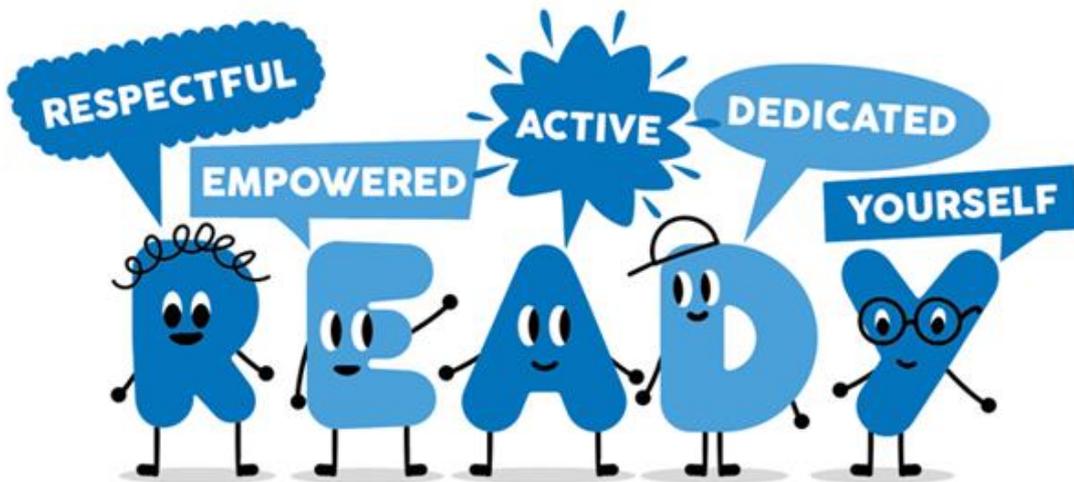


Wooden Hill Primary and Nursery School

Governing Body Annual Report

2023/24

Our vision for Wooden Hill School
is that the whole community is



for the next stage of their journey

Meet the Governing Body at Wooden Hill



Gavin Handford
Chair of Governors / Co-
opted Governor



Brian Poxon
Vice-Chair / Co-opted
Governor



Ian Garner
Headteacher



Clare Barnes
Co-opted Governor



Max Barnett
Co-opted Governor



Jodie Bryan
Co-opted Governor



Susan Leigh
Co-opted Governor



Barney Owen
Parent Governor



Jo Prior
Parent Governor



Natasha Smith
Staff Governor



Miriam Stallard
Local Authority Governor



Jane Hodgson
Clerk to the Governing Body

Governors are all volunteers, bringing different strengths and skills to the Governing Body. Having a wide range of governors makes us more effective. The thing that we have in common is that we all have a commitment to helping the school be the very best it can be for all our children.

Governors are appointed or elected for a four-year term, but they can stand or be elected for more than one term.

We have one vacancy, with a further vacancy anticipated in the Autumn term. We are looking for governors with experience in the finance or property sectors. If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a governor, please contact the Clerk.

What is the role of the Governing body?

Our role is to provide independent oversight of the management and operation of Wooden Hill Primary & Nursery School, with the aim of improving the quality of education provided and raising standards.

We have 3 core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and our pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure our money is well spent.

It is important to emphasise that the governing body does not run the school on a day-to-day basis. This is the job of Mr Garner as Headteacher and other senior staff.

How does the Governing Body operate?

The **full governing body** meets every half term. This is where the most important business is considered.

We also have a number of committees. Some of these are required (such as the Pay Committee). Others we have set up to give more capacity in particular areas and enable us to undertake our core functions effectively.

Over the last year, the following Committees were established:

- **Finance, Risk & Resources Committee**, which receives regular financial reports in order to monitor expenditure and ensure sound financial management. It also monitors compliance of our risk assessments and health and safety;
- **Standards & Effectiveness Committee**, which receives regular reports in relation to school data and educational achievement;
- **Pay Committee**, which will consider the annual pay and responsibility points for teaching staff.

Panel hearings can also be convened for certain functions.

Governors also have individual lead 'link', roles, aligned to curriculum areas. These often include visits to the school to help governors understand the school better and the experiences of our children and staff. These visits are not inspections but help us see how the school's strategy and vision is being implemented. They are also a great opportunity for us to see the school in action. Students are always very friendly and welcoming and it is great to talk to them about their learning. We have also seen some fantastic work on display across the school.

Key activities in 2023/24: Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

As you (hopefully) know from various communications and activities, we adopted a new vision that launched in September:



As governors, we have kept this vision at the forefront of our thinking throughout the year. Our visits to schools are looking at how this vision is shaping day to day activities. Educational results are important, but this vision also recognises that there are other areas where we must support our children – and ultimately respond to each of their individual needs.

Of course, there are visual signs of this vision throughout the school (such as posters in class, and murals in corridors), but there are also a range of 'behind the scenes' actions to embed and deliver this vision for our community. These include changes to our policies and strategies, the development of our curriculum and resources and the questions that we ask of senior leaders throughout the year.

We recently sought feedback from parents/carers, staff and students on a wide range of subjects. We are very grateful for all the feedback that was provided. We are still analysing the feedback, particularly the comments that were provided by many of you. This will inform our priorities and actions for the coming academic year.

Some quick headlines from the survey feedback:

- Our students felt empowered and independent
- Students said that teachers helped them in their classes and most enjoyed learning at Wooden Hill
- Students felt safe at school, but there were some occasions when behaviour could be better – parents and carers gave similar feedback
- Feedback from parents/carers suggested most feel the school communicates effectively, but we could probably improve how our READY vision is reflected in our actions and how we communicate when managing behaviour
- Staff were very positive about the school's improvements in the last year and were very proud to be at Wooden Hill

We will be analysing these further over the summer and will share further feedback in the new academic year.

Key activities in 2023/24: Holding Executive Leaders to account for educational performance

As we come to the end of Mr Garner's second year as Headteacher at Wooden Hill, it is great to see his passion for Wooden Hill still driving everything we do.

There has been a really strong focus by the senior leadership this year on improving our educational performance, recognising that the pandemic lockdowns in 2020/21 have affected some children more than others.

This activity is supported by independent reports each term that provide Governors with evidence of the school's strengths and where we want to focus our improvements.

Each term, the Standards & Effectiveness Committee receives reports on the school's educational performance, looking at assessment points and attainment predictions. Data is provided by year group and other criteria to monitor how children are progressing. This is the second year where we have full data (as Government reduced the requirements around the pandemic), enabling Governors to see progress trends across academic years.

We monitor data in all year groups, and this culminates in the KS2 results in year 6. There has been huge progress in the last year and we are particularly pleased with the number of children achieving greater depth in their assessments, which exceeded our ambitious targets! Congratulations to all our Year 6 children on their results.

2024 KS2 results (provisional and subject to national validation)

	Wooden Hill	National	Difference
Reading	74	74	=
Writing	76	72	+4
Maths	76	73	+3
Combined	66	61	+5

The table below outlines our priorities over the past year and gives a brief summary of the progress that has been made.

Priority	Progress
<p>Inclusive Quality First Teaching</p>	<p>This is essential to support learning for our children across the school.</p> <p>Our new curriculum has continued to develop and strengthen learning across year groups. This has been led by our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Smith, together with our range of subject leaders. The approach ensures that the curriculum in each year builds on the foundations of the previous year's learning, whilst also ensuring that children are not 'left behind' if they struggled with any particular aspect.</p> <p>The Senior Leadership Team have undertaken observations at regular points throughout the year. This has demonstrated that teaching continues to improve, which is also supported by independent reports.</p>
<p>Improve outcomes in phonics, reading and writing</p>	<p>Wooden Hill reviewed our approach to reading this year, introducing the accelerated reader programme that provides children with regular assessments which ensures children regularly 'move up' a level, which has boosted their motivation and interest in reading.</p> <p>This has been supported by a significant investment in books and reading materials. Feedback from children has shaped the books that have been purchased, and multiple copies of the most popular titles have been bought so that children don't have to wait long to read their preferred book.</p> <p>Writing units are planned for each year group every half term, ensuring all classes are consistent in how they support our children with writing. We have seen some great progress in writing this year, but still feel there is opportunity for further progress and this will continue to be a focus for us.</p>
<p>Improve outcomes in EYFS</p>	<p>If you have been in our reception classrooms this term, you will have noticed a huge difference. The classrooms have been revamped and redesigned, creating more space for activities and learning. Our children know where things are stored and are encouraged to set up and tidy up, encouraging their independence and curiosity. The outdoor space has also been cleared</p> <p>Significant investment has been made in new equipment, furniture and role play. This will support delivery of a more ambitious curriculum that has been developed recently, and is better connected to the curriculum in later key stages to support transition into year 1 and beyond.</p>

Priority	Progress
	<p>Parent engagement is being strengthened on Tapestry, so that our parents know how we are encouraging children in their learning and development.</p>
<p>Improve outcomes for pupils with SEND</p>	<p>This year we welcomed a new SENDCo, Mrs Mitchell. And it has been a very busy year!</p> <p>Mrs Mitchell has been working with all classroom staff to ensure that the provision in place to support individual children is effective, and where it is not, bringing forward reviews in order to improve as soon as possible and not wait for statutory review periods.</p> <p>As a Governing Board, all link visits consider how the school is supporting children with SEND, and that we are doing this in an inclusive way. We receive regular presentations on the SEND provision at the school.</p> <p>Improvements have been made, but this will continue to be a key focus for Wooden Hill.</p>

Key activities in 2023/24: Overseeing the financial performance of the school

Unfortunately, funding for the whole education sector has continued to be extremely challenging. Funding for schools is allocated based on national formulas, but our costs are increasing higher than the funding allocations.

Wooden Hill is not alone in facing these pressures.

Despite these pressures, our 2023/24 budget agreed additional resources for the curriculum. We also had to include ways to reduce costs, as the budget was very tight. Thanks to the actions of the Senior Leadership Team, and in particular Mr Garner and Mrs Swanson, our School Business Manager, we were able to invest in our priority areas and still remain within our approved budget.

Governors received regular monitoring reports throughout the year through the Finance, Risk & Resources Committee. We are also pleased to advise that we have approved a balanced budget for 2024/25, which includes further investment in our priority areas.

Thank you to the Wooden Hill Fundraisers

The Governing Body would like to thank the Wooden Hill Fundraising Committee for all the events and activities that they have planned and delivered this year.

The time and energy that they give to the school is awe inspiring, and as a result they have had a very successful year.

Our nursery children have been enjoying a new climbing frame that was installed at Easter, and this term saw a brand new trim trail installed which lots of children were very excited to test.

Thanks to our amazing staff

The Governing Body would like to place on record our thanks to the Leadership Team, Teaching and Support Staff for all their hard work and dedication this year. Working in a school brings lots of rewards, but there are also lots of pressures that our staff deal with on a daily basis. They do this with a smile and always with the desire to deliver the best for our children.

We say goodbye to two members of the leadership team this year, and Governors would like to pay particular thanks to them.

Mrs Smith has been our Deputy Headteacher for the last 2 years and been critical to many of the improvements we have seen in relation to the curriculum and reading. Mrs Smith is an advocate for all our children, and encouraged them to truly live our vision. Mrs Smith has also represented all staff on the Governing Board this year.

Mrs Brown has been our EYFS lead since January 2023 and before that played a key role in our nursery for many years. Her dedication to our youngest children has been wonderful, and resulted in our nursery becoming so popular that we have families on waiting lists earlier and earlier each year.

We wish them the very best as they make some exciting changes in their careers. We also welcome Mrs Collins, our new EYFS lead and Mr Titley-Rawson, our new Deputy Headteacher.

How to contact the Governing Body

The best way to contact Governors is via email:

Gavin Handford, Chair of Governors

chair@woodenhillprimary.co.uk

Jane Hodgson, Clerk to the Governing Body

clerk@woodenhillprimary.co.uk

Alternatively, you can write to us via the school office.

Please remember that Governors do not have a role in the operational day to day running of the school. These matters should be addressed via the school office or your children's class teacher.