



October 2016

## **Chair of Governors End of Year Report – Academic Year 2015-2016**

For the past couple of years, I've issued a Chair of Governors End of Year Report. This year I've produced it a little later than normal as we decided to hold our annual self-review at the start of this academic year and also felt that we wanted to avoid sending it out in July with potentially a lot of other information that you might be receiving from school.

Again, I've attempted to focus on successes and challenges of the past year from a governance perspective.

I have structured the report to cover the following areas:

- Goodbyes & Welcomes
- Governor attendance at meetings
- Monitoring
- Resources
- Standards & Curriculum
- Engagement with key stakeholders
- Focus for next academic year

### **1. Goodbye & Welcome**

Due to work commitments we've lost a couple of our governors over the past 12 months – Kim Apted, Alex Reece and Nicki Wadley. We also lost Richard Crocker when he left to work at another school. This is in addition to some vacancies we held from the previous year.

Recruiting governors over the past few years has proved challenging and we are still holding a few vacancies but we are delighted that John Evans and Tracey Turner have come in as parent governors. Julie Ingram and Andrew Shelton have recently joined to take on two of our co-opted governor positions.

I am hopeful that in the next month or so we will have filled our remaining vacancies and will be back up to a full contingent. This is important for us as a Governing Body so that we don't overload other members of the team.

### **2. Governor attendance at meetings**

The table below provides a summary of Governor meeting attendance throughout the year compared to last year's figures.

The figures show that attendance at our Resources and S&C Committees remained stable and increased respectively which is pleasing. However, there

was a dip in attendance at Full Governing Body meetings. This is a little concerning given the importance of these meetings and so I will try and get to the bottom of why this might be and look to address any issues in this area. Last year we started to publish our meeting attendance figures on the website and will continue to do this going forward to try and identify any trends/issues as early as possible.

	Average Attendance % <sup>1</sup>	
	Academic Year 2014-2015	Academic Year 2015-2016
Full Governing Body	84	76
Resources Committee	82	81
Standards & Curriculum Committee	86	88

### **3. Monitoring**

As previously reported, as a Governing Body we have developed a mechanism for monitoring against school plan priorities. This year I'm pleased to report that we were able to undertake all the monitoring we planned at the start of the year including against PE which we added in as part of our self-review last year.

Though Governor Monitoring has been reported as a strength by OFSTED in the last few inspections, we continue to explore how we can improve our monitoring activities. To that end, this year we intend to develop a template for monitoring visit reports so that we have a common look and feel for our reports. We're also going to look at shared ownership of the monitoring plan so that it's not just one person's responsibility to create and maintain it. Currently, Candida Spedding undertakes this and does a fantastic job but I'd like to share this around a bit more equitably.

Finally, monitoring visits and writing reports from these visits requires a lot of time and effort from Governors and so I would like to pass on my thanks to my colleagues who have given up their time to come into school and produce such high quality visit reports that clearly demonstrate impact. I'd also like to thank Mrs Curtis and the Staff for supporting us in these visits and to Candida who has looked after our plan for us again this year and kept us on track!

### **4. Resources**

The Resources Committee is responsible for setting and agreeing the budget and tracking spend against it. In addition, it looks after Premises and we've had a number of building projects that we've overseen including replacement of the perimeter fencing to improve safeguarding, replacement of Key Stage 1 toilets and the re-modelling of the corridor to enable move of Reception class. We're delighted with how these projects have turned out and in particular how the Key

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<sup>1</sup> Note, these figures were calculated by working out the % attendance of each member and then taking the overall average.

Stage 1 corridor now looks. We feel this will really help enable closer working and integration with Hillview Early Years.

Looking forward to this academic year, the next building work is likely to be replacement of the Key Stage 2 toilets. We were initially hoping that this could be undertaken over the summer months but this could not be done so there is likely to be some disruption this year. Please bear with us as we look to further improve the school environment.

In last year's report, I said that our budget from the Local Authority had not been as generous as previous years and this year we experienced a further reduction. Whilst there has been some recognition that Gloucestershire is poorly funded compared to other Local Authorities, it is likely to be some time before the balance is re-dressed. In the meantime, we continue to exercise caution when setting budgets.

As always, thanks must go to Mrs Curtis and Mrs Cook for the management of the individual budgets on a day-to-day basis and maintenance of a reasonable contingency despite the building project work we've undertaken. Also, huge thanks to Keith Morgan who as Chair of the Resources Committee makes sure we stay on-track and focused on the priorities.

## **5. Standards & Curriculum**

This year in the Standards and Curriculum committee, we have continued to monitor strategic aspects of the school plan. At the start of the year, we agreed the monitoring priorities with the Senior Leadership Team and scheduled meetings and visits around availability of attainment and progress data.

The main focus areas for monitoring last year were:

- to develop our own understanding of Depth of Learning across the whole curriculum and how we could effectively monitor this;
- closing the gap;
- attainment in maths;
- attainment in writing;
- feedback and marking;
- middle leadership;
- PE and Real PE.

Monitoring takes place in different forms. This year we have undertaken learning walks, pupil conferencing and book looks as well as inviting subject leaders to report on the latest available data on attainment and progress of our children. Also, Mr Roser, PE Lead shared with the Governors the annual Sports Premium Report and our PE Link Governor attended school a number of times to look at our PE provision and the impact that is having on the children.

On top of this, we've supported the school through the changes to the testing regime and the seemingly endless changes coming from the Department of Education!

So, all told another very busy year for the S&C committee and thanks to Candida Spedding and her team for all the hard work.

## **6. Engagement with key stakeholders**

By stakeholders, I really mean parents, children and staff. Taking each in turn, here are my thoughts on where we've done well and what we could do better next year:

### **Parents**

In light of feedback from last year's parent questionnaire results, we've really put some effort into improving our engagement with parents. Last year, we:

- Ensured that the Governor newsletters were circulated more frequently;
- Refreshed our Governor section of the website (though need to do more on this in light of recent governor changes) and put governor details on noticeboard in school entrance;
- Ensured we had Governor attendance at most, if not all, of Mrs Curtis' Tea & Toast and Coffee & Cake sessions;
- Attended Parents Evening and produced short questionnaire for parents to complete (overall responses received were very encouraging ☺).

I would hope that, in light of all of the above, the results of the next questionnaire might show further improvements in how parents feel we engage with them. In the meantime, if anyone has any other ideas as to ways of improving our engagement with parents, I would be very pleased to hear them, thank you.

### **Children**

I believe we have continued to strengthen our engagement with children through the following:

- Regular attendance at School Council meetings;
- Prime Minister and Vice-Prime Ministers came to one of our Full Governing Body meeting;
- Pupil conferencing as part of monitoring activities;
- Support to Friends of Hillview events;
- Going to and taking active part on Y6 residential trip.

Furthermore, I believe as Governors we make a conscious decision to put the children at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make.

### **Staff**

Engagement with staff this year has been through:

- Our Staff Governors;
- Monitoring visits;
- School Council Meetings;
- Subject leader reports to S&C;
- Interview panels;
- Head/Chair regular catch-up meetings;
- Attendance at recent INSET session to discuss and agree school vision, values and ethos;
- Y6 residential.

This year, we will plan to do the same plus hopefully we will have a chance to get to know and work with some of the new staff that joined us this year.

Also, I'll be looking to attend some of the strategic Senior Leadership Meetings.

### **7. Summary & Focus for next academic year**

All told it's been another busy 12 months for the Governing Body and whilst there's always room for improvement, I feel we have delivered on most of the things we said we'd do last year and as such remain an effective and committed Governing Body.

Looking forward, I expect this year to be a similarly busy time. Some of the key topics for this year are likely to be:

- Continued development of the school through replacement of KS2 toilets;
- Review and refresh of our 3 year Premises Plan;
- Ensuring we maintain a balanced budget;
- Review of our position around Academies;
- Governor recruitment, training and development – recruit for remaining vacancies using skills audit to assess gaps and undertake induction of new starters;
- Understand dip in attendance at FGB meetings and look to address whilst maintaining strong attendance at committee meetings;
- Try to keep up with any further changes in OFSTED framework and what this means for the School and the Governing Body;
- Develop how we monitor and report progress;
- Continue to enhance our engagement with parents, children and staff;
- Maintain the excellent work of Resources & S&C committees – the heart and soul of the work we do.

I hope this has been a useful report. I am more than happy to receive feedback on its content – what you liked / didn't like etc and if there are other areas of focus you'd like included in the future.

I'd like to finish by thanking my Governor colleagues for their continued commitment, support, contribution and enthusiasm over the past year.

Kind regards,

**Dave Stoddart**  
**Chair of Governors – Hillview Primary School**

