

2016 - 2017 Annual governance statement from the Board of Governors for Rodings Primary School



This statement gives a brief overview of the activities of the governing board during the last year as well as our action points and plans for the coming year.

The report is organised around the three primary objectives of the governing board – setting the vision and strategic direction of the school, holding the school to account, and ensuring the financial well-being of the school.

Vision and Strategic Direction

In July, we reviewed our vision for the school for the next three years. This September we will again welcome a double intake in our Reception class and will therefore have three double year groups in the school for the first time. Following the many discussions surrounding the practicalities of this increase in numbers, we recognise that the popularity of our school locally may lead to a general rise in school numbers over the coming years. We are also aware of the increase in house building in the local towns and villages – some of it within our priority admissions area. Above all we are committed to providing places for children from our local community and we will strive to ensure that the quality of care, support and teaching that we provide will continue to be excellent.

Over this past year we have continued to build on our good connections with other school governing boards within DEEP (Dunmow Excellence in Education Partnership) and through the network of west Essex and Bishop's Stortford schools using our governor training provider. We are committed to reviewing our practices with other governing boards and in building excellent relationships of support, challenge and shared knowledge within the network.

Holding the school to account

All our governors are keen to support the school with regular visits and have spent time in school, enjoying the happy environment and being able to evidence the good work taking place.

Governors have attended 'Learning Walks' with the Headteacher and his staff, have looked at variance and progression in children's books, reviewed updates to policies, attended assemblies and special school days and observed particular lessons and classes. We also continue to work through a programme of reviewing key school policies.

Some of our governors help within classes or on special subjects or projects and individual governors continue to support the school staff and pupils with class links, generally maintaining this link with their class as they move through the school. These links can be found at the end of this report.

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection governors (Steph Green and David Lucy) have between them carried out 6 safeguarding checks this year and are confident that safeguarding at the school is good.

We have two governors who are linked to Special Education Needs and Disability – Brian Hardcastle and Sarah Stevenson – and they have met with our SEND Co-ordinator (Mr Raraty) and are impressed with the amount of planning and encouragement which goes into supporting our SEND and disadvantaged children.

Our H&S governor Bernard Lawrence has been able to carry out a full audit of the school building and grounds and the school has been steadily working through a list of upgrades and changes with more work to be completed over the summer holidays.

Governors are also responsible for monitoring staff development and pay and with the help of the School Improvement Partner (Anne Fisher), the Personnel and Pay Committee has carried out the Headteacher's performance management review and helped set targets for the future.

We continue to deepen our own understanding of the attainment, achievement and progress of pupils throughout all year groups especially at the end of Early Years, KS1 and KS2. We hold the Headteacher and his staff to account for the continued improvement of these results and the setting of ambitious progress targets for all pupils. We are strongly committed to supporting our school and we continue to be impressed and inspired by the enthusiasm and professionalism of all staff.

Our visits and discussions with staff help governors to understand and identify potential improvements, as well as celebrating successes.

Financial Well-Being of the School

As you will no doubt be aware from the media, pressure on school budgets is greater than ever, particularly for smaller schools. The governing board therefore believes it is to the great credit of Mrs Parmenter, Mrs Paget and Mr Raraty that the school finances remain strong in such challenging circumstances. Our school is by no means immune to this budget pressure, and therefore we will continue to monitor the school's finances on a regular basis to ensure the best value for money and to secure the long-term viability of the school.

This year the Finance Committee has worked hard in helping review the budget setting process. Our Chair of this Committee – Andrea Beard - as well as another governor, John Hildrew, were on hand when a full audit of the school's financial procedures was carried out in the spring term.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the ongoing financial contribution from the Friends without whose support and hard work we would not have been able to purchase many key resources this year. In particular we are grateful for the time and resources expended on updating Katie's library which is an excellent resource for all the children to access.

Governance

Structure:

Our Board of Governors is made up as follows:-

4 elected parent governors, 2 staff governors (of which one is the Headteacher and the other is elected by staff), 1 Local Authority governor, 2 partnership governors and up to 5 co-opted governors. Both partnership and co-opted governors are appointed by the governing board for their specific skills and experience.

Who's Who:

In September, Steph Green was re-elected as our Chair and in the last year we have welcomed Mark Walker and David Lucy as new Parent Governors. We have also very recently recruited Leah Bruce from within the local community and we look forward to working with her over the coming year. Unfortunately, we said goodbye to Teresa Wood who was also our Vice Chair. Leeann Goddard was elected as our new Vice Chair in April. Andrea Beard took over as Chair of the Finance Committee in March. The governing board would like to thank Teresa for her hard work over the past four years.

Vacancies:

We currently have one vacancy for a Partnership Governor from within the local community and we will continue in our endeavours to find local people with the skills and experience necessary to continue our work.

Meetings:

The full board of governors has met 9 times this year including an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the proposed double intake. We also have several committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. We have a Teaching and Learning Committee which meets termly and a Personnel and Pay Committee which has met five times. Our Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee has held five meetings.

Information:

Our governing board has an excellent attendance record at meetings. We are required to publish very specific information about our attendance, membership, and business interests and this information can be found on our school website.

Training:

Governors have attended many and varied training sessions this year. These were: Induction Training for Governors, Challenging School Leadership, Assessment Data, Safeguarding for Governors, Safeguarding for the Nominated Governor, Special Educational Needs for Governors, Mental Health First Aid, and Safer Recruitment. We have also received in-house training on Safeguarding and on Prevent. Our Chair and Vice Chair have attended several local network sessions.

Self-Evaluation:

We have continued our programme of governor self-evaluation, carrying out a full skills and experiences audit as well as checking our knowledge of good governance against nationally recognised parameters.

We have compiled a pack of working documents for the governing board, learning more about the life of the school and becoming better informed in the process. Recently we have started using a software application which allows us to keep in touch, up-to-date and be able to file documents in a secure central environment.

Summary

The governors are pleased to report that during this last academic year we have continued to build on the excellent foundations laid during previous years. Governors are part of the leadership of the school and together with the professional team we have established excellent links between staff and governors and increased our understanding of the school through individual and team visits to meet staff and to observe lessons and other activities.

How to contact the Board of Governors

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents. Please contact the Chair of Governors via the school office. Any parent or member of our wider school community who is interested in becoming a school governor is encouraged to make an appointment to discuss this further with Steph Green.

Steph Green

Chair of Governors

July 2017

Attendance of Governors at meetings during the 2016-2017 Academic Year

Please note that not all governors have served a full year of office or been on the same committee for the entire year. Therefore the number of 'available' meetings may vary between governors

	Full Governing Board	Personnel and Pay Committee	Finance, Premises and H&S Committee	Teaching and Learning Committee	Total attendance by Governor
Andrea Beard	8/9		4/5	1/3	77%
Leah Bruce (term commenced 10/07/2017)	1/1				100%
Leeann Goddard	9/9	1/1		1/3	85%
Steph Green	9/9	5/5	5/5	3/3	100%
Brian Hardcastle	7/9	3/5		3/3	77%
John Hildrew	8/9		5/5	2/3	88%
Bernard Lawrence	6/9			3/3	75%
David Lucy (term commenced 20/03/2017)	4/4			1/1	100%
Colin Raraty	9/9	5/5	5/5	3/3	100%
Sarah Stevenson	8/9	4/5		3/3	88%
Colin Todd	7/9		1/2	1/3	75%
Sian Turnbull	8/9			0/3	67%
Mark Walker	8/9			2/3	83%
Teresa Wood (term finished 23/01/2017)	4/4	4/4	3/3	0/1	92%
Total attendance by Committee	89%	88%	92%	66%	85%

Name of governor	Class the governor is linked to in 2016-2017	Class the governor is linked to in 2017-2018
Andrea Beard	Year 1	Year 2
Leah Bruce		Year 1
Leeann Goddard	Year 4	Year 5
Steph Green	Year R	Year R
Brian Hardcastle	Year 2 Lions	Year 3
John Hildrew	Year 5 Penguins	Year 6
Bernard Lawrence		
David Lucy		Year R
Sarah Stevenson	Year 2 Tigers	Year 3
Colin Todd	Year 5 Koalas	Year 6
Mark Walker	Year 3	Year 4
Teresa Wood	Year 6	