

2015/2016 Annual governance statement from the Board of Governors for Rodings Primary School.

In accordance with the Government's requirements for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Rodings Primary School Board of Governors are:-

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

Governance arrangements

The Board of Governors of Rodings Primary school 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 (previously called 'community'). Both partnership and co-opted governors are appointed by the governing body for their specific skills and experience.

The Board of Governors plans to meet monthly. In practise this has meant that this school year we have met three times in the autumn term, twice in the spring term and four times in the summer term.

At Rodings we have a number of committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. We have a Teaching and Learning Committee which meets termly and also a Personnel Committee. This year we have set up a Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee and have had 6 meetings and several working parties this year, so making excellent progress. We also have other committees that meet if necessary to consider matters such as pupil discipline or staffing issues. All governors are members of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

A number of changes took place this year within the structure of our Governing body. In September our Chair Mrs Steph Green was re-elected as was our Vice Chair, Mrs Teresa Wood. We have successfully recruited 2 new governors from within the local community and also welcomed 2 new parent governors. We have said goodbye to partnership governor Mr Geoff Upsdell who served on our Governing body for eight years, co-opted governor Mr Mike Cosadinos who has served for three years, co-opted governor (previously parent governor) Mrs Jo LeHuquet who served for five years and Mrs Victoria Tiller who has served as parent governor for two years. We currently have two vacancies for governors from within the local community and will continue in our endeavours to find local people with the skills and experience necessary to continue our work.

Governors have attended many and varied training sessions this year. These were: Induction Training for Governors, Designated Safeguarding Lead, General Safeguarding, New Ofsted Framework, Assessment after Levels, Strategic Planning, and Finance for Governors. We have also attended networking sessions for Chairs and Vice Chairs and an Essex Head/Chairs meeting regarding school led improvement.

All of our governors are keen to support the school with regular visits and some help regularly within classes or on special subjects or projects. The Chair of Governors and the Head teacher meet at least fortnightly and all governors have spent time in school and have been able to evidence the good work taking place. We continue to be impressed and inspired by the enthusiasm and professionalism projected by all staff. Our visits to school and discussions with staff help governors to understand and identify potential improvements that could be made.

We continue to hold the Headteacher and his senior leadership team to account.

Individual governors also continue to support the school staff and pupils with class links and these are listed in the table below. Governors maintain this link with their class and move through the school with them.

Attendance record and details of governors

Governors have excellent attendance at meetings. Details of current serving governors for the 2015/2016 academic year are as follows:

Type of Governor	Governor	Attendance at Full Board of Governors' Meetings	Attendance at Teaching and Learning Committee Meetings	Attendance at Personnel Committee Meetings	Attendance at Finance, Premises and H&S Committee Meetings	Class allocation	Special responsibility
Parent	Andrea Beard	9/9		N/A	6/6	R	
Parent	Victoria Tiller	4/9		N/A	N/A	2	SEND and More Able
Parent	Colin Todd	6/6		N/A	N/A		
Parent	Teresa Wood	7/9		2/2	5/6	5	Vice Chair. Chair of Finance. Governor training
LA	Bernard Lawrence	6/9		N/A	3/6		H&S and premises
Partnership	Steph Green (Chair)	9/9		2/2	6/6	6	Chair. Chair of Personnel. Safeguarding
Partnership	Vacancy						
Staff	Colin Raraty (HT)	9/9		2/2	6/6		Headteacher
Staff	Sian Turnbull	8/9		N/A	N/A		Publicity
Co-opted	Mike Cosadinos	6/9		N/A	N/A	4 (Dolphins)	
Co-opted	Brian Hardcastle	9/9		0/2	N/A	1 (Robins)	
Co-opted	John Hildrew	6/7		N/A	6/6		
Co-opted	Jo LeHuquet	8/9		N/A	N/A	3	Safeguarding
Co-opted	Sarah Stevenson	9/9		2/2	N/A	1 (Finches)	

Some governors have been recruited part way through the school year and therefore attendance is given based on available meetings from when their term of office commenced.

The work that we have done within our Board of Governors and on our committees.

Our governors have once again had a busy and proactive year.

We have worked with our external school improvement advisor to continue our support and encouragement of changes and innovations in the Reception class. We have supported the Headteacher in finance allocation for resources and redecoration. A fantastic new outdoor canopy has been installed to provide further creative use of the outdoor classroom.

Staff have worked hard on new assessment systems and as always we have provided support and we continue to monitor key data giving the results of pupil achievement and progress so that we can be sure that we are on track to fulfil targets for all pupils. We remain focused on whether children are making sufficient progress year on year.

We have continued our programme of governor self evaluation and have carried out an assessment of our skills, knowledge and experience. We have therefore been able to build an understanding of whether prospective governors have the skills to contribute to the effective governance and continued success of our school.

Together with our external advisor, we have carried out the performance management of the Headteacher and have set targets for the future. We have assisted with the appointment of two new teachers from September 2016 including a new Deputy Head and are very encouraged that we have been able to recruit staff who have a clear understanding of the way we work and the expectations we hold for our pupil's achievement. We are also supporting the school in the recruitment of a new school business manager.

We continue to work through a programme of reviewing key school policies.

This year we have set up a new Finance, Premises and Health and Safety committee, these matters having previously come under the headings of 'working parties'. We are now able to spend time looking in more detail at the school's financial data and ensuring good value for money. We are pleased to report that the school remains in a relatively healthy position financially although new legislation on the payment of the 'living wage' and changes to NI and pensions have significantly increased our budget spend on salaries.

This year saw the approval by the Board of Governors for the purchase of 5 new 'Clevertouch' screens for the classrooms, a new outdoor adventure play area and an outdoor gym. A programme of Health and Safety audits and checks has been updated and we have also approved the Headteacher's continued programme of improvement, refurbishment and maintenance of the school buildings.

As always we are extremely grateful for the ongoing financial contribution from the Friends without whose support and hard work many resources could not have been purchased this year.

This year our school is among the first schools in Essex to become a member of a School-led Improvement Partnership called DEEP (Dunmow Excellence in Education Partnership). This is an exciting arrangement with 8 other local schools to form a formal collaboration of schools who have already been working closely together for many years, who share common values and who are committed to providing support and challenge to each other.

The work that we will concentrate on within our Board of Governors and on our committees during the next academic year.

Our Board of Governors is looking forward to the challenges of the new school year and will continue to work closely with the Headteacher and staff on all areas where we have concentrated support this past year.

We will continue our increased monitoring of the school's finances. In particular we will create a detailed three year budget plan, monitor spending of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium and be more rigorous in our benchmarking of large expenditure. We will support the Headteacher in the allocation of school funds for the development of the school premises and make informed decisions about how the school should use the budget wisely for the benefit of all our pupils.

We will 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 will hold the Headteacher to account for the continued improvement of these results and we will require the setting and fulfilment of ambitious targets for all pupils. We are strongly committed to supporting all staff in this process.

We will maintain our high expectations on the recruitment of new governors and will develop our programme of self evaluation of the Board of Governors to ensure succession planning.

We will become actively involved in the DEEP collaboration and will ensure we carry out continuous and careful assessment of our involvement. We will ensure that our school continues to benefit from collaborative working and will develop closer links with the staff and governors of the other schools.

Our governors will work closely with the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership team to further develop areas for improvement. We will develop our Strategy ensuring high quality opportunities for all of our pupils.

Summary

The Governors are pleased to report to all parents, carers, friends and staff that during this last academic year we have continued to build on the excellent foundation 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, Mrs Steph Green 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 our Chair of Governors. You can find out more information about what we do on the Governors' page of the school website at www.rodingsprimaryschool.co.uk

Steph Green
Chair of Governors
July 2016