

## **Annual Governance Statement 2017-18**

This annual governance statement gives a brief overview of some of the activities of the governing body over the last year. We report activities as they happen throughout the year via the school newsletter and therefore this is an intentionally brief summary of the year's highlights.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core functions of St Stephen's Infants School Board of Governors are:

1. Setting the vision and strategic direction of school
2. Holding the head teacher to account for its educational performance
3. Ensuring financial resources are well spent

### **Strategic Direction**

#### School development plan (SDP)

The SDP details aims for the forthcoming years to achieve the vision and values of the school, which are published on the school website. The SDP lays out clear strategies and tasks, details who is responsible for carrying these out, and the resources required. This year, in a change from previous years, Governors were linked to specific parts of the SDP (Link Governors) and had responsibility for monitoring and reporting on their designated sections. This was mostly achieved through governor visits to the school, meeting with relevant staff and feeding back to the governing body at Full Governing Body (FGB) meetings. Each governor conducted at least one monitoring visit this year, covering all areas of the SDP.

### **Holding the school to account**

The governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the school is delivering the best possible outcomes for all children and adhering to its policies. We do this through our FGB and committee meetings, as well as through our other regular visits in to school. School policies are reviewed on a rolling programme throughout the year, and the governing body has statutory responsibility for some of these.

Curriculum and resources committees, as well as reviewing and approving policies, discharged their duties as follows:

#### The Curriculum Committee:

- Analysed academic performance data, from both internal and external sources, and questioned /challenged the head teacher on areas where the need for improvement was indicated
- Received and analysed regular reports on the provisions in place for children who qualify for Pupil Premium, and the impact of these provisions
- Analysed pupil attendance and behaviour data and questioned / challenged the head teacher on areas where the need for improvement was indicated
- Ensured that the school policies and procedures met the DfE requirements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as defined in their publication "Keeping Children Safe in Education"
- Successfully completed Local Authority Safeguarding audit

#### The Resources Committee:

- Challenged and approved the annual school budget proposals
- Monitored ongoing spend against budget plan and reviewed the impact of any potential underspend / overspend

- Maintained and reviewed progress against an ongoing (3 year) plan for maintenance and refurbishment of grounds, buildings and equipment
- Ensured value for money was obtained for any expenditure
- Conducted an audit to ensure compliance to the Local Authority Schools Financial Value Standard
- Ensured an audit of the School Fund took place
- Monitored the implementation of new regulations regarding the protection of the personal data used by the school
- Monitored completion of actions resulting from a Local Authority Audit of Financial Procedures
- Reviewed provision of school meals by a new supplier
- Reviewed and endorsed proposed and actual use of the Pupil Premium and Sports grants and monitored the impact of the spend
- Endorsed Pay Committee recommendations for staff pay increases
- Responded to Health and Safety/ Fire Prevention inspection reports, ensuring required actions were taken
- Reviewed and updated policies covering financial and health and safety procedures

### **Challenges**

One of the biggest challenges this year was financial. The challenges facing schools have been widely documented in the media over the last few years, and it certainly has been an extremely challenging year in terms of setting the school budget. The resources committee and governing body, met numerous times whilst trying to finalise the budget, and with this came some difficult decisions. For example staff on temporary contracts were unable to be retained. The impact of this is that there are now fewer teaching assistants and reading assistants than we have previously had. We ran a parents meeting to share this information with the school community and to share information more widely about cuts in education.

Overall we will continue to closely monitor the school's finances on a regular basis to ensure the best value for money is being obtained, and the long-term viability of the school is secured.

### **Governing Body**

There has been little change to our governing body this year. Following her son's movement to the junior school, parent governor Rachel Scott became a co-opted governor. This leaves us with a parent governor vacancy, which will be recruited in term 1or2 of 2018. A full list of Governors is available on the school website and photographs should be found in the school reception area. Minutes of the FGB and Committee meetings are public documents and are available to view at the school office on request. We have reviewed our effectiveness and some governors have attended various training courses delivered by governor services, including Safeguarding, Attendance, School Improvement, and Safer Recruitment.

FGB and committee meeting attendance figures for governors can be found on the school website.

### **Our current priorities**

Plans for this year include

- Closely monitor the budget and impact of the changes that have been implemented due to budget constraints
- To work on reviewing and setting the school vision, alongside the school community
- Continue to take steps to improve our visibility to, and contact with, the parent community

### **Contacting the Governors**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors via the school office.