

## **Rettendon School Annual Governance Review Statement 2017-18**

### **Section 1 – Annual Review**

This annual governance review provides a brief summary of the activities of the governing body over the last academic year 2017-18. As always it is intentionally brief, as significant activities are reported as they happen throughout the year via the school newsletter and web site.

The report is organised around the three primary objectives of the governing body – setting the strategic direction of the school, holding the school to account, and ensuring the financial well being of the school. In addition it includes an update on the governing body and looks forward to the new academic year.

#### **A Strategic Direction**

In July 2018 the governors reviewed and confirmed the school vision and aims as

Our Vision

*'To nurture respect, confidence and talent across the school.'*

Our Aims

- *Inspire children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.*
- *Learn to respect others, their views, cultures and beliefs.*
- *Embed academic skills to prepare children for further learning and a productive childhood.*
- *Take learning beyond the classroom and be creative.*
- *Develop children to become reflective learners who have a sense of responsibility for their own learning and development.*
- *Build confidence, resilience and motivation within our children*

Over the course of the 2017-2018 academic year, as a board of governors we worked closely with staff and pupils to deliver the vision and aims and are very proud of what the school has achieved.

In addition to the normal work of the board we held our normal strategy days at which we set and reviewed the strategic plan that delivers the vision, evaluated governance, scrutinised the financial position and investigated possible future scenarios for taking the school forward into a strong future

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

The governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the head teacher and staff are adhering to the school's policies and delivering the best possible learning experience and outcomes for all children.

In July 2017 the school retained its 'Good' grade as a result of an Ofsted inspection. Although very proud of being assessed as 'Good' by Ofsted, as a school we always aim for excellence in everything we do. We will continue to ensure that the school responds to the needs of all children, including those with special education needs and disabilities, and those on the gifted and talented register. Our goal is for every child to achieve the minimum standards defined by the government, and for as many children as possible to exceed these targets and to fulfill their own potential.

Governors are very proud that the school has maintained its high standards and our 2018 KS2 results deserve special commendation for being significantly above the national average. All staff have been congratulated on the hard work, commitment and excellent pupil support and teaching that led to those results.

However, we do not consider excellence to apply only to academic achievement. We encourage all children to fulfill their potential in a wide range of non-curricular activities and to contribute to the school community. In July 2018 we celebrated achievements in these areas once again through the presentation of the governor achievement awards at a special assembly.

A key priority for the governing body is to ensure that the school has strong leadership and an effective Headteacher. For the last 22 years this has been provided by Mrs J Barber who left at the end of the summer term to take up a post in Dubai. Governors wish her well for the future in her prestigious new post.

As a result of a very successful recruitment process governors are delighted to announce the appointment of Mrs S Sloper from January 2019. An interim Head, Mr P Malcolm, has been appointed for the autumn term supported by Mrs Adams as Deputy. A letter was sent out to parents in July explaining the arrangements.

Governors are very proud to work closely with the School Council that has done some excellent work this year. They played a very important role in the selection of the new Head teacher including interviewing each candidate and providing feedback to the panel. Their assessments were very clear and contributed to the final decisions.

All governors are kept up to date on pupil data. The Curriculum Committee monitors pupil results very closely across each year and works extensively with staff to analyse these results and identify areas for improvement. We also spend a lot of time monitoring the progress of all children throughout their time at the school. Individual governors link in with subjects and themes through a variety of activities including school visits, which is work they enjoy very much. We are helped in this work by regular reports from the Headteacher and our key-monitoring document is the School Development Plan.

School policies are reviewed on a rolling programme throughout the year, and the governing body has statutory responsibility for some of these. The policies are all available on the school website.

Governors pay particular attention to the views of staff, pupils and parents and receive reports on the various surveys that are conducted across each year.

### **C Financial Well-Being of the School**

Parents and Carers will no doubt be aware from the media that pressure on school budgets continues, particularly for small schools. The governing body therefore believes it is to the great credit of Mrs Barber and Mrs Walsh that the school finances continue to remain viable in such challenging circumstances. However, we have had to continue to make significant economies and as a result have made some changes for the academic year 2018-19. These have already been published in the school newsletter. As always these have been difficult decisions but governors are satisfied that they will not have a detrimental impact on the learning experience of the children.

Nonetheless, despite having taken decisions to ensure that we have a balanced budget for 2018-19 things remain extremely tight and we are keenly aware that it will be another challenging year. Therefore, we will continue to monitor the school's finances rigorously on a regular basis to ensure the best value for money is being obtained, and the long-term viability of the school is secured.

## **D Governance**

The governing body were pleased to welcome Mr Stuart Hill as a new governor in January 2018. In July 2018 Mr M Aherne and Mr R Thaleman resigned as governors due to work and family commitments. The governing body are in the process of recruiting another governor and hope to have a full complement by November 2018.

The full governing body meet four times a year. The detailed monitoring work is supported through three committees who carry out the detailed scrutiny and report back to the Board for final decisions. These are

- **Curriculum Committee** monitors the school development plan; pupil achievement; teaching standards; safeguarding; SEN; subject policies; works with the school council and receives presentations on curriculum aspects throughout the year along with parent and pupil surveys.
- **Finance, Premises and Health and Safety Committee** – monitors and prepares the school budget; oversees all financial aspects; leads on the development of new income streams and monitors health and safety
- **Personnel, Pay and Performance Committee** – responsible for Headteacher appraisal; staff pay and conditions; appointments

In addition there are two working groups looking at ways of increasing income for the school and the development of a community strategy.

More information about governor membership, attendance and business interests is updated throughout the year on the school website.

## **Section 2 - Looking Forward 2018-19 - Governance Statement of Objectives**

As a small village school we recognise that we have to operate within the financial constraints of the income we receive, and the governing body is duty-bound to continually reassess how to ensure the school remains viable and able to provide the best quality education to its pupils. We will continue to seek additional sources of income for the school to the extent that the ethos and vision are not compromised.

We will continue to monitor closely the school's standards of performance in our aim to achieve standards of excellence in everything we do for our pupils.

The governing body will regularly reassess the skills and experience it needs to continue to provide strong strategic guidance to the head teacher, and will actively seek to recruit new members who can fill any gap in these skills. We will continue to explore opportunities to collaborate with other local governing bodies.

We will explore opportunities to collaborate with other schools where these are mutually beneficial to the pupils of each school.

We believe that parental involvement in a child's education is an essential factor in achieving excellence. We are committed to keeping parents informed about and engaged in their children's progress and achievement and look to strengthen our

links with parents. We are grateful for the significant support provided by parents and the FRS in 2017 -18 and look forward to working closely with them in 2018-19.

We are also very grateful to Mr Malcolm and Mrs Adams for the work they are doing this term in ensuring that the school continues to make excellent progress in preparation for the arrival of the new headteacher, Mrs Sloper, in January 2019.

Paula Whittle  
Chair of Governors  
September 2018