

Walford Nursery & Primary School Board of Governors
Chair of Governors Impact Statement
Wednesday 9th October 2024

Introduction

The Governors are very keen to ensure that parents/carers are kept informed of the work of the board of governors. On the school website, under the **Governor's** banner, please take time to read through the **'The Governance, Strategic Leadership and Planning Document - 2023'**. This sets the scene in relation to how the governing board meetings and committees are structured and organised, and the important work which is undertaken by the governing board.

1. As this was the **Annual General Meeting**, the Governors had to elect both the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Board. Paul Deneen OBE JP DL said he was delighted to have been re-elected and he was also particularly pleased that Emma Parkes was re-elected as the Vice Chair of Governors. Both positions were unanimously agreed.

2. The **Governors meeting in July** was postponed due to an Ofsted inspection which took place on the 10th and 11th July. As part of the inspection visit, the Chair and Vice Chair met with His Majesty's Inspector of Education, Gareth Morgan and a shadow Ofsted Inspector, Sam Cosgrove, Director of Education for Birmingham. We discussed leadership, governance and planning, governor committees, benchmarking data, pupil performance, pupil premium, SEND, curriculum, pupils, parents/carers and staff voice, community links, business partnerships, site management, attendance and behaviour. It was a thorough and challenging discussion about the work of the school. The feedback at the end of the inspection was most positive and we were told that there would be a 30 working day validation process so we expected to receive the final report later in September.

3. At the very beginning of the Autumn Term 2024, and much earlier than expected, we received notification of our Ofsted report, outstanding in all areas, and we were delighted. The school inspection report has now been published on the Ofsted and school website. The gradings were particularly pleasing, as the school received the **overall effectiveness grade of 'Outstanding'**.

The breakdown of the gradings were:

Quality of Education - Outstanding

Behaviour and Attitudes - Outstanding

Personal Development - Outstanding

Leadership and Management - Outstanding

Early Years Provision - Outstanding

The Headteacher, staff and pupils thoroughly deserved this recognition from Ofsted for their superb work. The pupils proved to be excellent ambassadors and it was a wonderful opportunity for the school to showcase and celebrate its success. The Governors are most grateful to Louise George for her inspirational leadership, and to Emma Hanham, Deputy Headteacher for her superb support. We thank the staff, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community who all work together to ensure learning and enjoyment is at the forefront for 'every child, every opportunity, every day'. We also thank our School Improvement Adviser, Sarah Somers, for her excellent advice and support over many years. All parents/carers received a copy of the published school's Ofsted Report.

4. A Press Release with photographs was issued by the HT celebrating the 'outstanding' grading received from Ofsted. Governors are pleased with the overwhelming amount of positive feedback and congratulations sent to the Headteacher and staff regarding the school's impressive work and superb Ofsted inspection result. Well done to all involved.

5. As the various governor committees would be held later in the term, the Chair of Governors asked the Headteacher to provide the governors with an interim position statement as a brief/update about the start of the school term. A summary provided by the HT as follows:

- i) **Attendance** - Pupil attendance was 97% which was above Herefordshire and National benchmarking data.
- ii) **Curriculum** - There was a celebration of Hedgehog Day / Macmillan, World Mental Health day, together with the Harvest Festival early in the term and all was going well.
- iii) **Achievements and Awards** - The school had retained its Regional Training Centre status from Apple which is wonderful recognition of the great work being undertaken at the school, and for more than a decade. The school had also achieved the 'School Games Platinum Award' for the first year (following the achievement of five consecutive annual gold awards), which was wonderful recognition for pupils and for PE.
- iv) **Staff Training and Development** - The school had undertaken a considerable amount of training and development of staff at all levels, including a RWI Development Day and whole school brain development training.
- v) **Personnel and Staffing** - The school are managing staffing issues well despite some challenges.
- vi) **Site Management and Premises** - The school are managing site management and caretaking issues well, despite some challenges. A new Creative Arts Studio had been set up and ready for use. This will be an excellent addition to the school.
- vii) **Budget** - There were no issues of concern with the school budget or the nursery budgets.
- viii) **Safeguarding** - Staff training had been completed. Governors will complete their safeguarding training before the December meeting.
- ix) **Pupil numbers** - All was fine in relation to pupil numbers, and no issues of concern were noted.
- x) **SEND and Pupil Premium** - SEND will be reviewed in the Spring Term along with Pupil Premium and Sports Premium.

6. Governors updated their involvement in the **Committees and Panels** and the dates of meetings were agreed. The Clerk would update the website in relation to governors, including their declarations of personal and business interests. All governors supported the National Governance Association's Code of Conduct. It was decided that there would be no changes to governor committees for the ensuing year. Dates of meetings were circulated. Paperwork would be updated in relation to Governor Terms of Reference, committee agendas and reports. 'Support and challenge,' in the form of questions raised by governors, would be included, and the overall impact of work undertaken, would be captured in the Headteacher reports.

7. Paul Deneen, the Chair of **Pupils, Personnel and Community Committee** reported that all teaching staffing had been in place at the beginning of term. Further discussion on support staff would take place in the near future. The HT would be undertaking performance management reviews for all staff.

8. Charlie Lawson, the Chair of the **School Business Committee** reported that all was well with the school budget and finances. Governors were pleased to receive a comprehensive budget, combining the school and Nursery budget, which was particularly useful. He would shortly be receiving a further update from the school's Strategic Financial Lead to prepare for the next committee meeting which would be meeting later in the term. Charlie would provide an updated report at the next full governing board meeting.

9. All was working well as far as the **Nursery** was concerned. Funding was reported separately as a budget heading. The budget, numbers of pupils and staffing were also being regularly reviewed. No issues of concern were raised.

10. Emma Parkes, Chair of **Standards, Teaching and Learning Committee**, would be holding a meeting this term and report back to all governors at the next meeting. The school's pupil tracking was up and running. The School Improvement Adviser would provide an external report on pupil performance and update on both curriculum issues and Ofsted updates in December.

11. The Chair of Governors reported that there had been a most productive discussion with the **School Improvement Adviser** in relation to the Headteacher's performance management review (PMR). More information would follow, once the report had been completed.

12. The Headteacher would meet with the Vice Chair to discuss the **School Improvement Plan**, following the Headteacher's PMR.

13. Governors agreed to review both its **SEND** provision and the support for pupils regarding **Pupil Premium** and **Sports Premium**. Kate and Paul would arrange to discuss key issues with the Headteacher and team in the Spring Term, which will be reported back to all governors.

14. Governor Training and Development was discussed. Information and briefings from the Local Authority, Herefordshire Governor's Association, National Governance Association (NGA) and its magazine / weekly briefings would provide updated information. The Clerk would also advise governors of any local training courses available. There was also 'bite size' training available from the NGA. New NGA Governor and Chair of Governor Handbooks would be made available in the near future, and would be a useful update for the chair, the clerk and for governors. Safeguarding training for governors would be reviewed in December.

15. The HT briefed the governors on the revamped PTFA, now known as the WOW Team (Walford-on-Wye), led by our School Council, putting pupil's at the heart of fundraising. This team would be involved in agreeing a programme of activities via each year group, with volunteer support being requested from parents, carers, staff and the wider community. I will arrange to meet with the School Council/WOW Team this term. The new arrangements will be overseen by the Pupils, Personnel and Community Committee who will offer advice and support as required.

16. The Headteacher would be reporting later in the term on the results of the **Pupil Survey**.

17. The Chair of Governors would meet with the School Council and would report back on '**Pupil Voice**' issues.

18. Governors 2024/2025

Governors would review their programmes of work via each committee. A training and development event for the governors would consider all of this information in the Summer Term 2025. There was also the opportunity to reflect on any ideas and key issues of concern which had been raised by parents/carers in the parent/carer survey, as well as reflecting upon the views of the pupils via pupil voice, and those of the staff via the staff survey. The overall aim is to continually self-improve.

19. Governors continue to act as a '**Critical friend**' to the school. At each meeting governors offer appropriate 'support and challenge' and make recommendations/decisions as required. There is a professional working relationship between the school and governors/governance.

20. The Chair thanked the **Clerk to Governors** for ably putting together all of the relevant paperwork in readiness for the meeting.

21. The Chair thanked the **Governors** for their input and support which was much appreciated.

22. The Chair finally thanked the Senior Leaders and 'Team Walford' for their superb work, dedication and commitment. This had been a busy term so far, with so much on offer for all pupils and families. Governors wished to thank the team for their excellent work in supporting pupils and for all that they do to enhance, enrich and support pupil's education on a daily basis. The Headteacher, Louise George has been inspirational in relation to the leadership evidenced.

Particular thanks were also addressed to Emma Hanham, Deputy Headteacher for her valuable input and to the two Administrative Assistants for their superb efforts in supporting the work of the school.

The Governors believe that the school programme and all that had been arranged and organised for pupils throughout the term had evidenced and supported the key message from the school's mission statement of: **'Learning and Enjoyment... Every Child, Every Opportunity, Every Day!'**

Thank you for taking the time to read this report - much appreciated.

Paul Deneen OBE JP DL
Chair of the Board of Governors
16.10.2024