

Barham Church of England Primary School

Annual Governance Statement

2014-2015

This statement details governance arrangements in place and gives an assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the governing body in the academic year 2014-15.

1. Governance Arrangements

During 2014-15 the Governing Body had 13 members (including one vacancy towards the end of the year when a Parent Governor stepped down).

The Governing Body uses the 'Circle Model' of governance with full governing body meetings six times per year, and 'monitoring pairs' with responsibility for individual strategic priorities or areas who make regular visits to school and report to the Full Governing Body. During the year these Pairs were:

- Standards and Achievement
- Quality of Teaching and Curriculum
- Finance and Pay
- Behaviour and Safety
- Safeguarding and e-Safety
- Leadership and Management

During the year the GB undertook a reconstitution process (as required by national legislation) and with effect from 1 September 2015 will have 12 governors largely appointed on the basis of the skills required by the GB. Towards the end of this year we also took the opportunity to review the monitoring pairs from 1 September in light of the changing responsibilities of GBs and our strategic priorities.

The Full Governing Body met for 6 scheduled meetings during the year, and two extraordinary meetings (to ratify the appointment of the new Headteacher and to approve the budget).

2. Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction

The end of this year saw the retirement of the Headteacher after 11 years in the post. Much of our activity during the year therefore focussed on ensuring effective future leadership and governance in the school.

The Governing Body took a pro-active role in the recruitment process with the Panel drafting the recruitment materials to best present the school and attract the right kind of person. Prior to recruitment the GB reiterated its commitment to our vision statement to be sure on the direction of travel for the school and the person we would need to lead us.

The clarity of vision for the school and the closely defined person specification were critical in helping us make a high quality appointment. After the appointment the new HT and the Chair worked together informally to put in place a new framework for strategic planning in the school ready for the start of the new school year.

In addition to the appointment of a new HT, to ensure effective future governance we undertook the following activities:

External Review of Governance – we commissioned SELT to undertake an External Review of Governance. The review provided an opportunity to assess current performance, identifying both strengths and areas for improvement and providing a framework for change.

Chairs' Development Programme – the Chair began the National College's Chairs' Development Programme in June 2015. The programme is designed to help Chairs improve their leadership practice to ensure effective and high performing school governance.

Appointment of new Clerk – we recruited a new Clerk (to begin September 2015). It was a requirement of the post that they have completed, or be prepared to undertake, the National College's Clerks' Development Programme. The intention is that the new Clerk, with training and support, will work towards "leading the business of governance".

The Christian Values of thankfulness, compassion, humility, service and endurance adopted by the Governing Body in 2013-14 were the focus of collective worship throughout the year to familiarise the pupils further with the values and related Bible stories.

3. Holding the HT to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils

The usual practice of the GB is to monitor both published and school performance data as it become available during the year.

The externally published data was monitored as usual (see below), however the ability of the GB to monitor school performance data, and therefore to hold the school to account, was inhibited by the school's use of KCC's 6 steps assessment tool which, during the course of the year proved not to be able to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum.

The GB, and in particular the Standards and Achievement Pair and the Quality of Teaching and Curriculum Pair, had robust discussions with the school throughout the year on what an appropriate assessment tool might look like, and kept up to date with the emerging views within the sector that developed through the year.

The GB monitored the school in working towards the specific priorities for pupil achievement and attainment in the School Improvement Plan:

KS2:

- Increasing L5 RWM to 40% (achieved - 45%)
- Progress of maths middle achievers in KS2 (achieved)

- Secure L6 through collaboration with local schools(some L6 were achieved, but there was no collaboration with local schools)

KS1:

- Increasing L3 maths by 6.6% (achieved)
- Increasing L3 writing by 10% (achieved)
- Results match FFTD at 32% (outcome 29%)

During the year other GB monitoring also included:

- How effectively the school implemented the new National Curriculum.
- Whether ICT is used effectively throughout the curriculum.
- The introduction of the new SEND framework.

4. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

The Finance and Pay Monitoring Pair met with the HT and Bursar 6 times during the year. Their work included:

- Working with the HT in developing proposals for restructuring to ensure manageable workloads and value for money.
- Monitoring expenditure was in line with the budget.
- Maximising income. (For example the before and after school club requested by the GB opened in October 2014. This proved popular with prospective new parents (as well as existing ones) and the school was heavily oversubscribed for Reception entrance in September 2015, ensuring a full intake of 30.)
- Reviewing insurance arrangements to ensure value for money and appropriate levels of cover.
- Working with the HT and Bursar to develop a new 3-year budget and recommending this to FGB.
- Beginning to consider the impact of future rising staff costs and real terms funding cuts.
- Completing the Schools Financial Value Standard.
- Undertaking checks to ensure payments are processed in line with the Finance Policy and other requirements.

Jacqui Connelly
 Chair of Governors
 September 2015