

Annual Governance Statement for 2022-23

Autumn 2023

This statement seeks to outline the impact of governance arrangements at Mawsley Community Primary School throughout the course of the 2022-23 academic year.

1. The Board of Governors

The Instrument of Government for Mawsley Community Primary School allows for 14 governors across different categories.

Throughout the 2022-23 academic year the Governing Body saw a few more changes to its membership as 3 new governors (1 co-opted and 2 elected parent) joined. These new governors brought a variety of skills to the board. In turn the board also lost 5 skilled and committed governors due to work commitments, terms of office ending and retirement from governance.

Over the course of the year the Governing body was chaired by John Joy with Greg Guilford as vice-chair.

The work of the Governing Body continued with the support of Erica Wilson as Clerk to the Governors.

The Governing Body membership for the current academic year can be found on the school website, under 'Governors' then 'About us'.

2. Attendance

The Governing Body continued to demonstrated positivity, commitment, challenge and support to the school and the roles to which they had been assigned. There was a mixture of virtual and physical meetings throughout the year.

The attendance registers for 2022-23 can found on the school website, under 'Governors' then 'About us'.

3. Structure of Governance

The Governing Body works collectively with a whole Governing Body approach. This model is often referred to as the Circle Model of Governance. Last year the Governing Body met twice in each full term. In addition to these 6 Full Governing Body meetings there were a further two meetings focused on administration and budget approval and additional short 'extraordinary' meetings as required.. There was one committee which focused on Pay and Performance. The annual planner and agenda for each meeting included all the tasks which the Governing Body was required to consider.

The Governing Body set up 'working groups' to complete assignments or activities arising from the business of the main board. These groups reported back any findings, actions or recommendations to the board, which was recorded in the minutes. The reports and outputs from the 'working groups' informed the collective strategic decision making by the Governing Body.

In addition to 'working group' activities, to ensure that the Governing Body's core functions were fulfilled, monitoring responsibilities were delegated to link Governors or 'monitoring pairs'. Every area the Governing Body determined required a level of monitoring had two Governors assigned to it. This ensured a level of continuity and succession planning but also a level of challenge and consistency. These areas included the statutory required individual roles e.g. Safeguarding and focused on the priorities of the School Improvement Plan. The monitoring pairs also reported their activity and recommendations back to the board.

The Governing Body recognised that the delegated monitoring pairs were replacing committees in terms of challenge, responsibility and accountability when undertaking their monitoring and reporting back to the Governing Body meetings. The Circle Model has the potential to impact on the workload of the headteacher and the staff of the school so the monitoring pairs were considerate to the well-being of school staff and the headteacher and referred to the DfE teacher workload reduction toolkit.

Each member of the governing board also reviewed different aspects of the school during monitoring visits throughout the year. These visits were designed to be efficient, and to not cause disruption to the normal school day.

Panels related to a particular purpose such as dealing with complaints or exclusions were constituted as they were required. Members were drawn from a pool of suitable governors in line with the determining policy and guidance.

4. Impact of Governance

The Governing Body, the committees, working groups and monitoring pairs all had a continuous oversight of the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Impact of the Full Governing Body

Over the course of the last academic year, the Governing Body maintained a full programme of meetings and continued to adapt to meeting successfully via Zoom as well as in person meetings where appropriate. The Governing Body demonstrated notable impact through

- regular updates and reports from the headteacher on safeguarding matters
- maintaining a strong focus on the wellbeing of staff, children and their families
- discussed and monitored the use of Covid catch-up funding
- keeping a continued focus on the long-term sustainability and strategy of the school
- monitoring the Pupil Premium and PE funding
- supporting the delivery of the school budget for the school year, setting a balanced budget for the next year and having a forward plan for the next three years
- continuing the development of our whole school curriculum
- monitored the delivery of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Impact of the Pay and Performance Committee

Over the course of the year the Pay and Performance Committee demonstrated impact regarding

- Ensuring that the criteria set in the Teachers Pay Policy were applied fairly and consistently at the teachers' annual reviews
- Monitoring the process to ensure that all statutory and contractual obligations were adhered to
- Applying the outcomes of the Headteacher appraisal process
- Working with the Headteacher to ensure that the Governing Body complied with the requirements of the Teacher Appraisal Regulations
- Having regard to the impact that increases to pay would have on the financial planning for the school and more importantly the impact on the three-year plan

Impact of Monitoring

As well as attending meetings, governors were required to monitor aspects of the school and identified areas. Monitoring took several forms; monitoring pairs to focus on particular areas and monitoring as part of a larger group in school and focusing on areas of the School Improvement Plan through governor 'monitoring walks'.

Governors must visit the school to understand more about school life, so at least once every term and depending on governor availability, governors visited the school to see aspects of the school's work linked to the School Improvement Plan 'in action.' They visited classrooms, looked at work and most importantly, listened to pupils talking about their work and progress. They also spoke to and questioned those who work with them.

5. Governor training

One of the strengths of the circle model of governance is that governors work is often collectively undertaken, so members were always able to benefit from their different points of view and considerations. However, the Governing Body also benefitted from numerous training courses on various topics (listed below).

- Governance: Your role, your responsibilities, your organisation
- Safeguarding: the governor's role
- Safer recruitment elearning course

All governors completed the NGA Skills audit at the start of the academic year. This highlighted the areas of the governing body which required further development. The two main areas which were highlighted by the skills audit were curriculum understanding and interpreting data and statistics. Both areas were covered by workshops in the Autumn term 2022.

6. Chair's statement

2022-23 has yet again been another busy year for the Governing Body.

As a governing board we strived to continue to support the work of the school following last year's positive OFSTED outcome. We have worked together in our strategic role:

- to ensure pupils enjoy school, feel valued and part of the school community
- to ensure pupil attainment is monitored and maximised
- to oversee and approve the school's budget
- to ensure the staff are supported as needed
- to approve policies and procedures

In line with this, we regularly reviewed our roles and the experience, knowledge and skills we individually and collectively brought to the board, ensuring there were no gaps that could affect efficient governance of the school. We continued to identify suitable training and were able to attend some face to face training sessions and other training through online training portals.

We had access to an independent training and clerking service who were available for advice if needed, and who provided training and meetings to help us to remain well informed.

We recruited new members to the board to replace some of our valued governors who left and have provided support and mentoring as needed to help these new governors to fulfil their roles.

In order to ensure all governors can enhance their governance and leadership skills, we continue to look at the membership of the board with the aim of having a diverse set of skills and experience. If in reading this you are also thinking about being a governor, then please do not hesitate to contact the school.

We know that our senior leadership team and all the staff at the school continue to do their very best for all the children and that their health, safety and wellbeing is always at the forefront of their minds. Our children, their families and the village community which we are at the very heart of also continue to play their part in supporting the school to develop our children into amazing human beings.

School improvement

Our School Improvement Plan is based on priorities identified from data, the school's self-evaluation, our local authority and Ofsted priorities. The plan for 2021-22 was discussed, carefully researched, monitored and reviewed each term. It changed over time to meet the needs of our children. The Improvement Plan was written drawing on the analysis of the school, our Ofsted Report, parent questionnaire, monitoring visits and discussions with governors. Our key focus areas, which were split down into a number of different goals, were:

- To further develop, the range of challenge strategies, in order to increase expected and more than expected progress in reading, writing and maths.
- To nurture and develop the talents and interests of children across the curriculum.
- To further develop the curriculum driver of diversity, to strengthen children's understanding of the importance and impact of diversity in modern Britain.
- A focus on school budget and making the best use of funds available.
- Consideration of local Academy Trusts Engagement of all staff and parents in the communication related to moving to an Academy Trust
- Continuing to monitor the impact funding we receive.

We continued to challenge and support in achieving these targets keeping a focus on the progress of every pupil from the beginning to the end of their journey with us before they move on and take their next steps into secondary education.

Finance and Resources

We continued to scrutinise all matters relating to finance and deployment of human and other resources to ensure best value. Last year was difficult given the news we received about falling pupil numbers in some areas of the county and in our school. We worked with the headteacher and her colleagues to determine the best way to manage this challenge.

Governors are responsible ensuring there is effective management of the school's annual budget. We had regular budget update meetings with the school's business manager, who also produced detailed and informative reports for governing body meetings.

We are responsible for approving and regularly scrutinising the school's annual budget and the 'three-year plan' which takes a longer-term view of the school's finances.

Governors also challenged and scrutinised how the school spent the pupil and sports premium and COVID Catch up funding received by the school. Named monitoring governors were responsible for governor oversight of these areas.

The board received regular reports on health and safety and all accidents (including all those playground bumps, slips and trips) to ensure that any necessary remedial or preventative action was taken. A nominated health and safety monitoring governor took a particular interest in oversight of this area.

We continued to be grateful to the Friends of Mawsley School (FOMS) for the fantastic support they gave the school in terms of fund raising, resources, time and commitment. It is reassuring too that the breakfast and after school clubs were so popular and provided a vital and comparatively inexpensive service to many parents.

Forward plan

Although the school was recognised as a 'Good' school by Ofsted, the school continued their good work, in ensuring that the children continued to get the best from the school.

The government mandated that by 2030 all schools will need to be part of an Academy Trust. This was, and will continue to be, a major focus for the governing body to ensure that all options are considered, and the best option for the school is chosen.

The focus for the governing body for 2023/24 involves

- To further develop, the range of challenge strategies, in order to increase expected and more than expected progress in reading, writing and maths
- To further develop the teaching strategies for children with additional needs and those who are disadvantaged in order to narrow the gap in expected progress for reading, writing and maths.
- To further develop the curriculum driver of diversity, to strengthen children's understanding of the importance and impact of diversity in modern Britain.
- To provide children with a diverse curriculum which enhances their opportunities to study/experience a wide range of people, places and events.
- A continued focus on school budgets and making the best use of funds available.
- Consideration of local academy trusts.
- Engagement of all staff and parents in the communication related to moving to an Academy Trust
- Continuing to monitor the impact funding we receive.

7. Other information

Further information regarding the work of the governing body can be found at

<https://www.mawsleyschool.co.uk/governors>

This includes further information regarding governor Declarations of Interest.

Alternatively, stakeholders are always welcome to engage with the work of the governing body by contacting the Chair of Governors via email.