



The Willows Primary School

Annual Report from Governors – Academic Year 2022/23

Introduction to the Governing Board and Governance Structure

In accordance with the Government’s requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Board are to:

1. ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. hold the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
3. oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.

The Instrument of Government can be viewed on the school website in the About Us section, under “Governors”.

In 2022/23 the full Governing Board met on nine occasions. The Chair of the Governing Board was Huw Griffiths, and the Vice Chair was Nikki Stevens.

Individual governors take on responsibilities for key areas of the school and report to the Governing Board on issues and progress in those areas. In 2022/23 governors taking lead roles were as follows:

	Key areas of responsibility	Meetings attended
Huw Griffiths	Chair of Governing Board Safeguarding Curriculum Planning: English	9/9
Nikki Stevens	Vice-Chair of Governing Board SEN	8/9
Steve Beeson	Finance	6/9
Chris Pritchard	Health and Safety	8/9
Sarah Wilson	Pupil Premium Grant Curriculum Planning: Maths	8/9

Governor recruitment is an ongoing challenge for the Board with three vacancies remaining open for the whole academic year. The Board as a whole has been actively seeking to recruit new governors and this will continue into the new academic year.

Safeguarding

The Board takes very seriously its duties and obligations to ensure the safeguarding of pupils at the school. Our nominated safeguarding lead governor communicates regularly with the school leadership to review safeguarding arrangements, and the outcome of the governor's work is reported to each Governing Board meeting. We also ensure that all training is up to date.

The School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SDP) is the key strategic document for the school, defining its aims, plans, and priorities for development and improvement over the coming year. The SDP is drafted based on evidence from a number of sources, including data (both the results of Key Stage testing and internal data) and the school's Self Evaluation document. The Governing Board formally reviewed the SDP at the start of the 2022/23 academic year and then reviewed the progress of the SDP each term. The majority of the objectives and actions in the SDP had been achieved by the end of the year and in the few cases where objectives were partially or not met, the reasons were clearly explained and the action carried forward to the next year.

Curriculum

The school puts in considerable work to plan and deliver a rich, relevant, and child-centred curriculum. Curriculum reviews and enhancements are carefully planned and communicated through the SDP, and the Board also has full visibility of all years' Learning Journeys for each term. The detailed information provided to Governors enables them to understand how effectively this curriculum is taught, and whether there are ways in which the Board can support and enhance its delivery.

The diversity of the curriculum, including out-of-school trips for all years, encourages enthusiasm for and commitment to learning, and we commend all staff, children, and the senior leadership team for their ongoing drive towards improvement and exceptional outcomes.

Pupil Progress and Attainment

Governors receive a comprehensive written Headteacher's report each term as well as detailed data reports, covering all areas of pupil progress and the school's performance. We carefully review these reports, questioning and challenging the school leadership where appropriate. We want every child, including disadvantaged and SEN pupils, to achieve the best possible outcome. Where areas for improvement are noted, the school identifies improvement measures and these are monitored by the Governing Board in future meetings.

The school has a detailed plan for the use of Pupil Premium funding to support the learning and development needs of eligible pupils. Information about this is available on the school website under Key Information.

We were very pleased with the Key Stage 2 results achieved in the summer term, which were above national standard in all areas. These excellent attainment levels will stand Year 6 pupils in good stead on their transition to their secondary schools, and we congratulate staff for their continued hard work and an outstanding achievement.

School Site and Premises

Our health and safety lead governor regularly visited the site with the Caretaker and the Headteacher to review premises and health and safety issues, reporting the outcome to the Governing Board. Through these visits and regular updates at meetings, we have sought to ensure that the school is well maintained and stay informed of potential issues.

Finances

The Board and its Finance Committee regularly monitors the school budget to ensure that funds are appropriately spent. Despite the financial challenges we face, the school has continued to run a balanced and robust budget with a reasonable level of reserves held in 2022/23. Our effectiveness is reviewed through the annual completion of a Schools Financial Value Statement assessment process which is scrutinised by the local authority.

Looking Forward to 2023/24

Huw Griffiths and Steve Beeson departed the Governing Board at the end of the 2022/23 year as their term of office has come to an end; we thank them for their time and efforts. We welcome Kate Parietti and Peter Goodchild as new Board members and look forward to their contributions.

We look forward to continuing our work over the coming months and to supporting and working with Miss MacArthur and her staff.