

Governance Impact Statement 2022-23

What were the significant challenges for the governing body in 2022/3

Recruitment

At the start of the year there were two places vacant for Co-opted governors and the knowledge that our Vice Chair would be standing down as a Parent Governor at the end of the academic year. The annual skills audit showed a need for greater financial and business experience among the governors as well as experience in the field of Human Resources.

The start of the next academic year will see two different Co-opted Governor roles become vacant. Workload has become a significant barrier in the retention of governors.

Succession planning

The Vice Chair comes to the end of her term of office in July 2023. Also the Chair has been in post for six years and is looking for replacement so she can stand down at the end of the year.

Putting SEND at forefront as well as Safeguarding

In a climate of budget constraints and LA services cut backs, creative ways must be found to deliver the best offer to SEND pupils

Training and preparing for OFSTED.

Governors and the leadership of the school are very aware that an Ofsted inspection is imminent.

Monitoring while maintaining staff wellbeing

Governors must ensure the Vision of the best education possible is being delivered inclusively to all pupils while at the same time being aware of the mental health and wellbeing of all staff.

How were the challenges met?

Recruitment and Succession Planning

A strategy has been employed to train a parent Associate member who will now become a fully Co-opted governor allowing another highly skilled Parent to be elected to join the governing body starting in September 2023. The Chair has been preparing the FGB for her departure by mentoring, clearly defining all necessary tasks and delegating across the Board, so no individual Governor takes on all the responsibility of Chairing and it is recommended that going forward there should be Co-Chairs.

Training

Governors are constantly updating their training, particularly on Ofsted readiness from their training providers and this year hosted further training from the School Effectiveness Partner.

The Strategic Plan

Safeguarding: Training of every governor on Safeguard and Prevent, with certificates as evidence. It is a standing agenda item in every FGB meeting, a set question for all governor visits and Safeguarding is checked in Safeguarding Governor visits every term, reports on which are presented to FGB and uploaded to Teams. This year governors were included in the additional whole school training from The Two Johns on internet safety. The Safeguarding governors also attend the LA online regular training updates.

Curriculum, teaching and learning: termly governor visits set monitoring questions based on Intent, Implementation and Impact of each subject, comparing progress with the priorities of the School Improvement Plan delivering a curriculum pinned to the Vision and Ethos of the school. Employing triangulation of data using Peer Reviews from DEEP, reports from the School Effectiveness Partner and national data sets. Attending regular training on Curriculum areas and liaising with a broad network of Chairs to share best practice.

Leadership: Use of Headteacher Performance management, holding the headteacher to account for delivery of the best education in keeping with the Vision for the school. Continuing training of Chair and Governors to ensure they are fulfilling their roles.

Inclusivity: as a pillar of the Strategic Plan by which the Vision and Ethos are delivered, governors ask challenging questions in FGB relating to the PSHRE curriculum, about how any gaps in cultural capital are filled and how the broader curriculum is delivered. They offer support as well as challenge to the SEND team requiring evidence of the Impact of interventions and use of different individual learning plans.

Health and emotional wellbeing: As another of the pillars of the strategic plan, the welfare of all stakeholders is of vital importance. Governors monitor them all, using surveys spaced throughout the academic year.

Sustainability: Governors have a sustainability strategy which covers all areas of sustainability from energy usage to use and reuse of resources and encouraging awareness in the whole school community to the challenges of climate change.

What were the achievements of the governing body for 2022/3?

Keeping Safeguarding and Wellbeing and the good mental health of staff and pupils prioritised as well as the delivery of the highest quality education for ALL children.

Continuing recruitment of highly skilled governors.

Stakeholder consultation through Parent Forum, Surveys and raising profile generally of the governing body among parents and staff.

Providing support as well as challenge in a year which presented many personnel issues for SLT to manage.

Working together with Chairs in the DEEP Partnership to raise the issues of underfunding in SEND provision.

Maintaining monitoring through visits and reports and triangulating information so that the FGB is prepared when Ofsted arrive to demonstrate how well they know the school, its strengths and areas needing development.

Progress towards full sustainability audit to identify areas for improvement and seek funding.

How have these achievements improved areas of school life (impact)?

The FGB have provided a stability in fulfilling their roles of challenge and support effectively, which has given a confidence to the school community. They have provided personnel for committees and panels as required, and contributed to the smooth running of the legal processes of the school. The setting of a broad and ambitious Vision for the Senior Leadership team to deliver has led to parental satisfaction as expressed in this quote from an Exit Survey carried out by Governors in July 2023.

“Felsted Primary has balanced the learning aspect of school and the need for children to have fun and be creative very well. We have been extremely happy with Felsted Primary School and we believe it has given our (child) an amazing foundation to build on. Thank you to all the team who work so hard for the children at Felsted Primary.”