



## Annual Report on the Evaluation of Governor Effectiveness, 2023-24

### **Background and Context**

This annual report provides an evaluation of the Governing Body effectiveness during the period under review.

This report comprises the following sections:

- 1 Overview
- 2 Meetings of the Governing Body
- 3 Remit and achievements of the Governing Body and its committees
- 4 The composition of the Governing Body and its committees, and attendance

### **1 Overview**

The governing body conducts its business to take account of the three roles of the governing bodies as outlined in the Governors' Handbook:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the Head teacher and senior leadership team.

The governing body also ensures that the school complies fully with statutory safeguarding procedures. All staff have signed a record to confirm they have read Part 1 of the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education". The governing body has familiarised itself with the document and are working with the safeguarding lead in school to complete the annual safeguarding audit. Safeguarding training took place for all Governors on 20 November 2023 and all Governors were asked to complete an online training course on online safety in April 2024.

School was inspected by Ofsted in June 2024 and Governors were invited to meet with the inspector to provide their insight and answer questions on their role and remit within School. The meeting was positive and we await the outcome report and recommendations.

## **2 Meetings of the governing body and attendance**

The Full Governing Body met on 5 occasions and each of the two sub committees met which met 3 times during the year. All meetings were clerked by a trained professional clerk.

Full Governing Body and TLPS meetings were in person apart from a couple of occasions where it made sense for the meetings to be online (one because school was closed for a training day and the other because it was only a short budget ratification meeting) and Resources continued to be online as that format suited attendees. All Committee meetings enjoy a good level of attendance and positive engagement and debate throughout. Governors are a lively bunch and their passion for supporting school and its leadership shows through at every meeting.

Governors have good attendance at meetings overall. Apologies for non-attendance are considered on an individual basis; governors are aware through the code of conduct that non-attendance, which includes apologies not being accepted, will result in the removal of a governor six months from the date of first non-attendance. No Governors were removed as a result of non-attendance during this period.

## **3 The remit and achievements of the governing body and its committees**

Through all activities Governors have supported and monitored the School against the key priorities for 2023-24, which are:

### **Shire Oak – Key Priorities**

- Articulating and embedding the Shire Oak ways of teaching as we have new teaching staff and changes to year groups taught
- To ensure that our broad and balanced curriculum is well led and understood and that our sequence for teaching is structured for children to be successful. Prepare all leaders for deep dives
- To embed a consistent, whole school approach to the teaching of English including early reading and writing (phonics), reading and writing
- To embed a consistent, whole school approach to the teaching of maths in line with mastery principles (representation and structure, mathematical thinking, variation, fluency and coherence)

### **Key Achievements during 2023-24**

It is important for the Governing body to reflect on its key achievements over the last year.

School continues to use considerable resource supporting children who have been adversely affected by the long term associate causes of the pandemic requiring educational and wellbeing support. This will continue to be the case for some time to come.

Notable achievements evidencing the impact of the Governing Body throughout the academic year include;

- **Curriculum updates** – we have enjoyed a number of curriculum updates including History and PE which has given Governors in depth knowledge of an area of school
- **Assessing children’s educational requirements** in a stable school environment – the TLPS committee has supported the work of the School throughout 2023/24, providing rigour to ensure that high standards of teaching and assessment have remained in place despite a lack of consistent benchmarking and assessment;
- **Monitoring financial position** – Resources Committee apply regular rigour and challenge to ensure that the budget and resources are managed despite challenging circumstances, ensuring that priorities are resourced. School continues to run to a deficit budget and has an action plan in place which will be monitored through Resources Committee.
- **Monitoring Safeguarding** – Charlie Stobbart, with responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding works closely with school to monitor safeguarding processes;
- **Health and Safety** – David Walls and Kate Wright have embedded new procedures for health and safety which are robust and comprehensive.
- **Supporting staff** – the Chair of Governors supported Staff with email thank you’s at regular points. A staff survey was completed in April 2024 which provided positive feedback in most areas. This was shared with Staff in June;
- **Stakeholder feedback** – pupil and parent surveys were conducted in 2023/4, in addition to the Staff Survey referred to above. A Governors newsletter was circulated in September 2024.
- **Governor training** – All Governors attended a Safeguarding training session in November 2023 and were asked to complete an online training course in online safety in April 2024. The Chair attended a preparing for Ofsted training course as well as various Governor update sessions throughout the year. New Governors attended Governors Induction training.
- **Ofsted inspection** – this took place in June and Governors look forward to receiving the report and recommendations, which will then be reviewed in the light of School priorities in the next academic year

#### **Statement from the Chairs of each sub-Committee on their work during the academic year 2023-24:**

##### **Dick Killington, Chair of Teaching, Learning and Pupil Support Committee (TLPS)**

The merger of the T&L and PPP Committees to become the TLPSC last year proved to be effective, efficient and an overall time saving format. As such the TLPSC is now the permanent Committee for teaching, learning and pupil (and parent) support.

The Committee met face to face in October 2023, January 2024 and May 2024. I would like to thank members for their time, intellectual input, and for the dedication they show to Shire Oak School during often lengthy meetings. With a possible Ofsted inspection on the agenda for 2024 it was important that governors monitored and questioned staff on a broad range of topics and ensured that all procedures and policies were in place.

Topics covered at meetings included reports and discussions on the broad and balanced curriculum, quality of education, impact of government funding, assessment, pupil progress, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, health and safety, special education needs, equality and inclusion, food and school milk, extra curricula activities. Monitoring the Shire Oak Development plan was the main priority for the committee.

The Committee monitored progress and triangulated evidence through receipt or internal reports (oral and written), monitoring visits and information from external sources (including the School development officer and the English Hub).

The four key priorities in the plan in 2023-2024 were:

1 – to articulate and embed the Shire Oak ways of teaching as we have new teaching staff and change to year groups being taught.

- This was achieved by an excellent weekly mentoring scheme for teachers

2 – to ensure that our broad and balanced curriculum is well led and understood and that our sequence for teaching is structured for children to be successful

- This was achieved by subject leaders delving deep into their subjects and ensuring all staff were aware of their expectations

3 – to embed consistent whole school approach to the teaching of English including early years reading and writing (phonics)

- This was also a priority in 2022-23 and the subject leader has made huge advances in this area (this being confirmed by NOVAC and English Hub visits). The FFT phonics schemes is now well embedded and managed very well

4 – to embed a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of Maths in line with mastery principles

- This has seen Maths becoming perhaps the strongest part of the Shire Oak curriculum, again with excellent work by the subject leader along with all staff input

The Committee was assured that the Shire Oak School Development Plan for 2023-2024 has been given appropriate time and attention and has progressed satisfactorily.

The Committee was effective in ensuring effective safeguarding and child protection procedures were in place and endorsed the effectiveness of the provision for children with special education needs and disabilities. The School also clearly promoted the general well being of pupils and the provision of school food and milk makes DfE standards. School attendance and behaviour are excellent.

The Committee received and accepted a number of policies that were due in 2023-2024.

In June 2024 members of the Committee were invited to speak with the Ofsted inspector. We were pleased with the outcome of this meeting and look forward to receiving the report.

I cannot say this too often, but many many thanks to the very professional and dedicated staff of Shire Oak School whose number one priority is always what is best for its pupils.

## **Antonia Nicholls, Chair of Resources Committee**

Resources Committee has focussed on the Budget and deficit action plan, which School continues to manage in ever challenging circumstances. The financial year ending April 2024 ended in a lower deficit than was projected, which was a very positive outcome and one that I know the leadership team worked hard to achieve. We scrutinise financial decisions, Service Level Agreement arrangements and constructively challenge school leaders to ensure that they always seek to ensure good value for money and use finances wisely to support the key requirements of School.

During the 2023-4 academic year David and Kate have developed a new approach to Health and Safety, following guidance and checklists from Leeds for Learning and. Each term they conduct a health and safety walk around school and focussed on a particular section of the checklist (5 September, 12 March and a date to be arranged before the end of the summer term). This is reported to Resources. No major concerns were identified this year and minor issues have been addressed promptly by school.

Staff wellbeing continues to be important. Issues raised through the recent staff survey undertaken in May 2023 was monitored again through a Staff Survey in April 2024. The response was very positive, with an average of 4 or more (out of 5) for 17 of the 21 questions asked. The most positive responses were that:

- Staff have clear goals and objectives for your work
- School provides a safe working environment
- Staff believe that everyone is treated fairly regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age
- If staff have a problem, issue or concern, they know who to talk to about it

The most mixed response was to the question “I feel that I can influence key decisions in school”. Interestingly the same question was the lowest scored last year as well.

There are some lovely individual comments in response to “the best thing about working at Shire Oak is...” indicating supportive and positive working relationships, the children, high standards of teaching and enjoying being part of a community, all of which are consistent with last years survey.

I attended school on 13 June to be available to any staff who wished to discuss the survey and in particular to expand on any comments. Comments received were largely positive and it was lovely to spend some time with the team, who were all very welcoming and engaging.

School had 2 newly qualified teachers in this academic year and Resources ensured that appropriate procedures and resources were in place to support them in their early career years. We also ensured that performance reviews took place and were responsible for the performance review of the Headteacher, which confirmed in September 2023 that all objectives were well met and we know that she is on track to complete all this years’ objectives when we arrange the next review in September 2024.

## **Governing Board Priorities for 2024-25**

- Governors will continue to support and constructively challenge the School to ensure that its activities are robust and meet the objectives of School, as outlined in the School Development Plan, and its stakeholders;

- Governors will continue to monitor teaching, learning, pupil support and partnerships to ensure that they are effective and meet the strategic and educational needs of the school community.
- Governors will continue to monitor School finances, the premises, health and safety and staff wellbeing;
- Governors will continue to monitor academic, social, emotional, spiritual and physical needs of the children;
- Governors will monitor and support School on the achievement of a number of School priority projects, including the replacement of the Headingley Children Centre building which has been a challenge for some time and continues to be so and the Acorn club;
- Governors will review the Ofsted inspection report from June 2024 and monitor recommendations into next academic year.

## 5 The composition of the governing body and its committees, and attendance

The school's Governors are drawn from different groups associated with the school including staff, parents, the church, the local community and from Leeds City Council. The Governors have a wide range of skills and experience to be able to fulfil their roles to support the Head Teacher and school staff. The last skills audit was conducted in 2022, so it is a good time to undertake this exercise again.

There have been a few changes this academic year. Charlie and Kate (parent Governors) were elected for another term and Laura McCullagh joined as a new parent Governor when Anna Hyslop's term came to an end after serving two terms (8 years). Sally Dyster, co-opted Governor, stood down this summer after being a member for more than 20 years. Her experience and insight as a Governor will be hugely missed as we seek a replacement for this position - Governors extend their sincere gratitude to Sally for her service and support as a longstanding member who has seen many changes! Rev Angela Birkin stood down from Governors due to her retirement and has been replaced by Katharine Salmon as Foundation Governor.

There are currently vacancies on the governing body for a Local Authority Governor and a co-opted Governor.

The current constitution of the Shire Oak Governing Body is:

- Headteacher (Jane Astrid Devane)
- 1 Local Authority (LA) governor, recommended by the LA and approved by the governing body (vacant)
- 4 parent governors, formally elected through a ballot of parents unless the election is uncontested (Kate Wright, Charlie Stobbart, Jessica Watson, Laura McCullagh)
- 4 co-opted governors, nominated and appointed by the governing body (Dick Killington, Sally Dyster, Ann Dudzinski, Antonia Nicholls – NB, Sally Dyster resigned in May and we are seeking a replacement)
- 1 staff governor, formally elected by staff employed at school (Bianca Woodruff)
- 2 foundation governors, appointed by the foundation (David Walls, Katharine Salmon)
- 1 Associate member (Marcelle Maver, Deputy Head), appointed by the governing body and can vote in committee meetings.

The governing body operates with the following committees:

**Resources committee** - responsible for staffing including the appointment and role of the SENCO, equality and diversity, finance, property management, health and safety and nutritional standards.

**Members:**

Antonia Nicholls (Chair)  
Sally Dyster / vacancy  
Ann Dudzinski  
David Walls  
Kate Wright  
Jane Astrid Devane  
Marcelle Maver

**Teaching, Learning, and Pupil Support committee (TLPS)** - responsible for monitoring teaching and learning and curriculum provision, target setting, standards and achievement, SEN, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance, children's spiritual moral social and cultural development, children, parent and staff voice, extra-curricular activities, cluster and other partnerships.

**Members:**

Dick Killington (Chair)  
Kate Wright (Deputy Chair)  
Charlie Stobbart  
Jessica Watson  
Laura McCullagh  
Bianca Woodruff  
Jane Astrid Devane  
Marcelle Maver

**Advisory Board for the Horforth, Headingley and Ireland Wood Children's Centre****Members:**

Jane Astrid Devane  
Antonia Nicholls  
Four members of Broadgate Primary School to include, Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and representative stakeholders.  
Four members of Ireland Wood Primary School to include Headteacher, the Chair of Governors.  
Manager of the Children's Centre.

**Governors with specific monitoring duties**

- Looked After Children – Charlie Stobbart
- Child Protection and Safeguarding – Charlie Stobbart
- SEND – Jessica Walton
- Complaints – Antonia Nicholls
- Training – Antonia Nicholls
- Health and Safety – David Walls

- EYFS – Dick Killington

**Headingley/Kirkstall Partnership**

- Ann Dudzinski was delegated with making decisions on behalf of the governing board.

Current and recent (in the last 12 months) governors and business/other interests declared are provided in the table below. Governors and associate members, if appointed, are reminded that they should declare any changes as and when they occur.

Name of governor	Category of governor and committees served	Date appointed and term of office	Relevant business/personal interests	Any other educational establishments governed	Relationships with the school staff including spouses, partners and relatives
Katharine Salmon	Foundation	13/5/2024 – 12/5/2028			
Ann Dudzinski	Co-opted	20/11/23 – 14/03/28			
Sally Dyster (resigned May 2024)	Co-opted	24/11/14 – 22/11/26			
Jessica Watson	Parent	13/03/23 – 12/3/27			
Dick Killington	Co-opted	15/07/15 – 14/07/27			
David Walls	Foundation	26/09/22 – 25/09/26			



Antonia Nicholls	Co-opted	19/9/18 – 25/09/26			
Charlie Stobbart	Parent	6/11/23 – 5/11/27			
Laura McCullagh	Parent	3/11/23 – 2/11/27			
Vacancy	Local Authority representative				
Bianca Woodruff	Staff	21/9/20- 20/9/24			
Kate Wright	Parent	6/11/23 – 5/11/27			

The following is an attendance record for individual governors at meetings of the full governing body and committees.

**Shire Oak CE Primary School Governing Body**

Attendance List: 2023/2024

Y - in attendance

N - not in attendance and no apologies received/accepted

A - apologies received and accepted

X - not in post/not a member

	<b>FGB 18/9/23</b>	<b>Resources 10/10/23</b>	<b>TLPS 17/10/23</b>	<b>FGB 20/11/23</b>	<b>TLPS 23/1/24</b>	<b>Resource 27/2/24</b>	<b>FGB 25/3/24</b>	<b>TLPS 7/5/24</b>	<b>Extra FGB 13/5/24</b>	<b>Resources 18/6/24</b>	<b>FGB 8/7/23</b>
Jane Astrid Devane	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ann Dudzinski	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y
Sally Dyster	A	A	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	X	X	X
Dick Killington	A	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y
Laura McCullagh	X	X	X	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	A	X	Y
Antonia Nicholls	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Katherine Salmon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Y	X	Y
Charlie Stobbart	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y
Anna Swinburn	N	X	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
David Walls	Y	Y	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y

Jessica Watson	Y	X	Y	A	Y	X	A	Y	Y	X	Y
Bianca Woodruff	Y	X	Y	Y	A	X	Y	Y	Y	X	Y
Kate Wright	Y	Y	A	Y	A	Y	Y	N	Y	A	Y