

CLAVERING PRIMARY SCHOOL ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/24

Whole School Aim

To provide a caring and inclusive environment, which has high expectations and values all members within the school community. We respect the needs of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to reach their full potential.

Governors' Role

The Governing Body is key to the leadership of Clavering Primary School. The Governing Body supports and challenges the headteacher to continually improve the school and provide the best education for every child. This Annual Governance Statement is one way in which the Governing Body communicates its work and the impact we have had on school improvement to our stakeholders. In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Body at Clavering Primary School are:

- 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 Governing Body Structure

The Governing Body is made up of a group of committed volunteers who bring a range of skills and expertise and come from a variety of backgrounds. Governors are committed to improving the education of every child in our school and invest a huge amount of good will, hard work and time.

Clavering Primary School had a governing body of 9 during 2023/24 academic year, with positions filled as per the following structure –

- 3 Parent Governors
- 3 Co-opted Governors appointed by the Governing Body based on a skills audit
- 1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority
- 1 Headteacher
- 1 Staff Governor

In 2023/24 the Governing Body appointed Jackie Sweeting as the professional clerk, responsible for arranging meetings, taking minutes and following up on all actions. Jackie's extensive experience and skills developed in her role with National Governance Association means that she is fully qualified, up to date with current legislation and practice and she has used this knowledge to advise the Governing Body throughout the year and has provided support to develop and improve governance processes.

The chair and vice chair are elected by the Governing Body and work closely with the headteacher and the clerk. In September 2023 the Governing Body elected Ray Gooding as Chair of Governors and Julia Mackintosh as Vice Chair. Chris Peters (co-opted governor) and Nick Briggs (parent governor) joined the Governing Body in 2023/24 bringing expertise and an interest in finance, HR and wellbeing and mental-health.

Training

To effectively fulfil its role, the Governing Body must ensure that all its governors have the required skills and knowledge to support the achievement of the school's priority objectives. All members of Governing Body have undertaken training, supported by a governance coach and facilitator, and continue to do so. Mandatory training such as Safeguarding and PREVENT were carried out during the academic year. The impact of this is that the Governing Body has kept up to date regarding the latest requirements and expectations from the Department for Education.

Impact of Full Governing Body Meetings

The Full Governing Body met eight times over the 2023/24 academic year to inspect, review and agree school policies and monitor progress against the School Improvement Plan which identifies the key areas on which the school and the Governing Body wish to focus during the academic year. The School Improvement Plan includes measures and milestones that the Governing Body uses to satisfy itself that progress is being made against objectives and that all actions being taken are improving teaching and learning outcomes for all children. At Full Governing Body meetings governors asked questions to ensure the school's standards and expectations are high and scrutinised pupil progress across all ability groups.

As well as continuing to meet its statutory obligations, the Governing Body maintained a particular focus on pupil attendance and closing the gender gap in maths attainment. Other focus areas included writing attainment, mental-health awareness and subject leadership. The Chair of Governors provided expertise, support and advice for the school during work on the school premises and sale of Children's Cottage this year.

The school budget was scrutinised and reviewed in detail at Full Governing Body meetings and the school finance officer attended a number of meetings. Using benchmarking information, governors compare the school's spending with similar schools and ensure resources are being used in the most effective ways to support the best education outcomes for all children. In 2023/24 the Governing Body was keen to ensure the school was making effective use of funding to deliver positive educational outcomes and changes to the school premises.

Performance Management

Governors are responsible for undertaking the headteacher's performance management review each year. The chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, supported by an expert external advisor, carry out the headteacher's annual

appraisal, which is reviewed at points throughout the year. The appraisal process allows the Governing Body to look closely at the headteacher's performance, and discuss areas of strength and, where necessary, areas for development. New targets are then set against criteria on which the headteacher's performance will be evaluated.

Monitoring Focus Areas in 2023/24

Governors formally visit the school up to 3 times during the year to monitor priority areas. Governors also use monitoring visits as a chance to get to know the school better, to observe and communicate with staff and to hear pupil voice. Visits enable governors to ensure that actions agreed in the School Improvement Plan are being taken forward by the school. A monitoring visit report is prepared and shared with the Governing Body, allowing other governors to ask questions.

In 2023/24, governors carried out monitoring visits during two Governor Focus Days:

Autumn Term:

Focus: English (phonics), Foundation subjects (French and Mindfulness observed)
Visits to Classes EY, 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6
Meetings with subject leads: EYFS, PE, Science, SENCo

Spring Term:

Focus: English (writing) and maths
Visits to Classes EY, 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6
Meetings with subject leads: Maths, SENCo

Governors also completed visits to monitor:

- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Filtering and monitoring
- Premises

Governor focus areas for 2024/25

The Governing Body, the headteacher and senior management team and indeed all members of staff are constantly striving to improve and develop the school. The Governing Body will continue to closely monitor the wellbeing of headteacher, staff, pupils and parent communities and the progress and attainment of all pupils.

Specific monitoring areas will reflect the School Improvement Plan priorities:

- To continue to raise attainment in maths across the school
- To continue to raise attainment in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)
- To continue to raise attainment in writing across the school – focus on boys and phonics
- To continue to develop pupil involvement in learning – AfL
- To achieve attendance target and reduce number of unauthorised absences
- To embed governing body structure – focus on stakeholder views