

## **Shalford Governors Impact Statement 2018/19**

The Governing Body of Shalford Infant School is required to publish details of its activities over the school year. This statement is an opportunity for Governors to share with the wider Shalford community how our decisions and discussions benefit the vision and strategic direction of the school; in this case, over the academic year 2018/19.

The Governing Body at full capacity has 10 members. During 2018/19 it consisted of:

- Headteacher Governor – Mrs Dutton
- 1 Staff governor – Miss Beswick
- 2 Parent governors – Henrietta Stock (Vice-chair); Charles Maguire
- 5 Co-Opted Governors – Susie Smillie (Ex-Chair); Sarah Hardcastle (Chair); Andrew Gumbiti-Zimuto; David Gleadhill, Rob Hall, Ian Springett
- 1 Local authority Governor – Vacancy
- Clerk to the Governing Body – Helen Evison

At the start of the year the School and the Governing Body began working more closely with the formation of Athena Schools Trust. Following discussion amongst the Governors and to help provide expertise in early years governance at AST our Chair of Governors Susie Smillie become a Trustee and continues to work in governance of the Executive there; Rob Hall left the Governing Body.

For Governor attendance records please see table below.

We meet as a Full Governing Body four times a year and also have two sub committees; the Learning and Pupil Welfare Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee.

### **Our statutory core functions are:**

#### **1. Setting vision, ethos and strategic direction**

Our vision, “Enjoying Learning Together” is the golden thread running through everything we do at Shalford Infant School and the Governors along with the staff, are passionate about this. We constantly review our strategic goals and look for ways to ensure the best learning experiences for children attending our school now and in the years ahead.

In 2018/19 our focus has been the potential to take on Shalford Pre-School as part of a combined early years education offer for Shalford. As Governors, we felt this would be of strategic benefit to the current and future education of children in the village and the surrounding area.

We worked collaboratively with the Surrey County Council early years advisers to fulfil due diligence processes and investigated the potential with the full support of the Pre-School Committee. Both the committee and the Governing Body concluded the best outcome for the future development of early years education in our community was to absorb the pre-school and we were well supported in that decision by all parties. As of September 2019, the staff and children at the pre-school became part of the responsibility of Shalford Infants School and we look forward to continued implementation of plans to develop and improve the children’s experience as Acorn class under the guidance and vision of Mrs Dutton.

The Governing Body has also continued to work with Athena Schools Trust to complete our full membership of the MAT. As a school community, we agreed last year to join AST following consultations with parents and other stakeholders. It's taken much longer than anticipated to iron out some legal issues with Shalford's deeds, but at time of publication we are confident the full transition will take place in November 2019.

The delay hasn't prevented us from working collaboratively and fully with the other members of AST; Guildford County School, Pirbright Village Primary School, Northmead Junior School and Stoughton Infant School throughout the year. Our Governors have had full involvement with the mechanisms of the Trust; as members of the Joint Governors Council; holding the Trustees to account; taking part in Governor training; benefitting from School Improvement advice and sharing best practice with the Governors and leaders of the other member schools. During this year, all our staff at Shalford Infant School benefitted from continuing professional development provided by the Trust.

The Trust's vision states that its member schools are led locally by those who know their students, staff and communities best - their headteachers and local governing bodies. The Trust provides support services and structure to enable local leaders to deliver excellent education.

We continue to focus on ensuring Shalford's community benefits from this vision and all that the Trust has to offer our children's education.

## **2. Holding the Headteacher to account**

An ongoing priority for Governors is fulfilling our statutory role to monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to Mrs Dutton and her team.

Mrs Dutton meets regularly with Governors in an official capacity and offers every opportunity for us to visit and see the workings of the school and the delivery of the children's education directly.

The Chair and the Headteacher meet regularly and continue to work closely. This results in effective communication between leadership roles and a clear understanding of responsibilities; the operational one of the Headteacher and the strategic one of the governors. They have a very good working relationship; one that is open, honest, mutually respectful with a shared passion for education and the success of the school.

Through the full governing body meetings and the smaller committee meetings all Governors work to support and strengthen the school's leadership by holding the headteacher to account for the day-to-day running of our school, including for example, budget management and the performance management of staff.

Governors who conduct the annual Headteacher's Appraisal and Review are fully trained to ensure effective performance management. All objectives are linked to the School Development Plan and the Headteacher does the same in the objectives she then sets for her team.

At each Full Governing Body meeting the Headteacher reports to governors on all aspects of the school development plan. Governors question the details and data thereby effectively holding the Headteacher to account for improving pupil and staff performance. The main responsibility for this sits with the Learning and Pupil Welfare Committee and their activities are detailed below.

### **3. Learning and Pupil Welfare Committee**

The LPW committee last year was made up of five governors including Mrs Dutton and Miss Beswick. It met once in each term to discuss, question and monitor a range of issues relating to the children's learning and welfare.

The Terms of Reference were reviewed and re-established at the start of the year – allowing us to reconsider whether they were still relevant to the wider aims and ambitions of the school set out in the School Development Plan and with the anticipated change to academy status.

Our prime responsibility was to monitor standards and progress in all areas of the school's work relating to the children and their learning. This included analysing all performance data and target setting and reviewing the curriculum, social and personal development of every child. Our responsibility was not to set or influence how that curriculum is interpreted or delivered, our role was to question the success of the delivery and to make sure the appropriate policies and structures were in place and applied to enable it to happen in the most creative, exciting and safe environment for the children.

The first LPW meeting of the year (December 2018) was our opportunity to analyse performance data for EYFS, Yr. 1 and KS1 for the previous academic year. We questioned Mrs Dutton on all indicators – including comparison of our data to other schools in Surrey and we were pleased to see such outstanding results. We further how we had achieved these results and any lessons learned to take forward. We also noted that the current year was expected to be more challenging as the number of more children in vulnerable groups were greater, this included SEND and Disadvantaged pupils and EAL. Four children had also joined the Year 2 class since September, one of whom had EAL.

We continued to look for any trends in the data and discuss actions taken to resolve issues for individual children, support provision for children where needed and staffing arrangements and implications.

Our assessment of attainment was repeated in the meetings in March and July 2019 discussing overall performance and situations for individual children and what percentage of children were 'on track' to meet their end of year targets. We were delighted to see that the expected outcomes for pupils remained high in all monitored subjects and the outcome in July met expectations with only the expected children identified at the start of the year not achieving desired outcomes, although making good progress. The focus of the committee allowed us to assess whether these children had been given the best support possible and we concluded this was the case as the positive impact from interventions and support was clear for the majority of children.

Our responsibilities also covered pupil welfare in terms of attendance and safeguarding. Through termly safeguarding newsletters from the headteacher and updates at LPW we are able to ensure that we are up to date with the latest DfE safeguarding guidance and requirements. All governors have received training to ensure their understanding of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and it will be updated during the year 2019/20. The Committee monitors attendance figures during the course of the year and the final 2018/19 whole school attendance figure will be reported in the to the full Governing Body this term.

We reviewed and approved the Staff Behaviour Policy, the School's Behaviour Policy and the Sex and Relationships Policy. We discussed and agreed to support Athena in their successful bid to obtain money from DfE for specific school improvement projects for disadvantaged children and monitored

the effectiveness of the spend at Shalford through the attainment reports of the cohort. We also monitored the school's online safety curriculum.

We continued to monitor the school's Values Policy throughout the year and were pleased to see how this has been embedded in the day to day running of the school and has become an essential part of the school's culture. This and all relevant School Policies are available on the School's website.

In our final meeting of the year we reviewed the draft Principles and Purpose of Curriculum statement produced. This sets out strong principles for what the school is wanting to achieve through its curriculum and we were pleased to support it.

Finally, the LPW committee continued to scrutinise the results of parents and children's surveys to see the views of parents and children and how they feel about life at Shalford Infant School. The feedback from these surveys was once again encouraging enabling the head teacher and the teaching staff to take into account their points of view when developing the school's processes.

#### **4. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

The Finance and Resources sub-committee meets twice a term with Mrs Dutton and Mrs Banks, the School Business Manager. We work together to ensure the school is using its funding in the most efficient way. At each meeting, one of the main activities we undertake is to review the spend-to-date against the annual budget. In November each year we review a draft budget for the following financial year then review it in more detail ahead of approval in April. In April we also review the budget for the next 3 years in order to put each year in context of where we see the school heading in the future, linked to the school development plan.

The school had maintained a strong financial position for the last few years. But in the last two years we have had to manage the ongoing reduction in funding impacting all local schools as support from Surrey has reduced. In addition the birth rate falling locally means our pupil numbers are down which in turn reduces our grant from Surrey County Council.

To retain our strong financial position we have closely monitored all areas of spending throughout the year and reduced optional spending as far as possible without negatively impacting on the school's teaching provision. We have considered which services we buy-back from Surrey County Council as we transition to joining the Athena Schools Trust. We have also discussed the implications of taking on the Pre-School and how we can focus resources across both the School and Pre-School. These are areas we continue to explore.

We also take care of Premises and maintain a Premises Plan to track work required and conduct regular Health & Safety and premises walk arounds. During the year there has been work carried out on the fences, on the playground drain and to improve access to our facilities.

We completed the annual report to Surrey County council (Schools Financial Values Standard) to demonstrate that we have tested value for money in all that we do.

## **Other key activities conducted by FGB:**

### **Monitoring**

At the start of each academic year, Governors review their individual roles and responsibilities. This annual appraisal of our involvement allows each Governor to evaluate their contribution. As a result each governor is allocated an area of the school's procedures or curriculum to monitor progress throughout the year. They meet with the relevant staff leader as part of this monitoring role. They also visit the school to observe and gather evidence. They talk to teachers, support staff, the leadership team as well as the pupils and report back to the relevant committee.

All monitoring is planned on a well-structured timetable ensuring they are conducted throughout the academic year. The impact of these visits is that governors can see first-hand what is actually taking place, see initiatives from the School Development Plan being implemented and the delivery of the teaching and learning. This enables them to ask questions and understand the next steps needed in terms of school development.

In addition to curriculum visits, governors this year have been on school trips, helped to run the school Sports Day, conducted assemblies, led the school's participation in the Eco-Schools programme and attended the governors' day, Christmas Fair and PIP barbeque.

### **Training**

All governors receive induction training when they start. In line with our ethos of "Enjoying Learning Together" we continue to learn and train to ensure we are qualified to conduct our roles effectively. Besides new governor training, this year Governors have attended training in the following areas; Safeguarding, budget setting and evaluation, Chair's development and Hot Topics Updates.

### **Policies**

Governors review all relevant policies on a programmed basis to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Policies are all available on the school website.

Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list and the Local Authority recommended list.

### **Attendance**

We have an extremely supportive and dedicated Governing Body with an excellent attendance record. We have never had to cancel meetings because we have not been 'quorate' (the minimum number of Governors needed in attendance so that legal decisions can be made). An attendance record can be seen on the school website and below: