

Plaxtol Primary School

Governor's Annual Statement 2023 to 2024

One major focus of this academic year has been to improve in the areas identified in the Ofsted report of March 2023.

The HT prepares the School Improvement Plan for approval at a Full Governors meeting, and this sets the program of monitoring for governors within the appropriate focus groups.

The purpose of Governing Body

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Appointing and holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is spent in accordance with the school improvement plan

This is a strategic role and governors do not get involved in the day to day running of the school which is the Head Teacher's responsibility.

The Structure of the Governing Body

There are six full governing board (FGB) meetings each year and there is an independent clerk to the governors who is responsible for taking the minutes. Governance at Plaxtol Primary School follows the Circle Model which means that governors are appointed to Focus Groups.

Focus Groups

- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development
- Finance, Staffing and Buildings
- Leadership and Management

Attendance data

The way that attendance data is collected was an area of improvement identified by Ofsted. Governors from the 'Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development' focus group have had oversight of the implementation of an improved attendance data analysis system. This now includes more breakdowns of persistent absence through the use of an attendance tracker divided across demographic groups such as SEN and PP children. Attendance exceeded the 95% target for 2023 to 2024.

Behaviour management

Ofsted also requested more precise record-keeping in the event of a serious behavioural incident. The 'Leadership and Management' focus group have had oversight of how more precise record keeping can be used to monitor and evaluate improvements to behaviour. A positive handling policy has been created including plans for specific children.

Safeguarding

Ofsted found that safeguarding at Plaxtol Primary School was effective, but they felt it could be improved further by leaders seeking advice from external agencies more frequently. The 'Leadership and Management' focus group have been part of discussions with the HT and support from Early Help has been sought. There is an Annual Safeguarding Report to Governors which is posted on the school website.

Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

This year saw the appointment of an experienced teacher to the position of SENCo. The SENCo is being mentored by the HT and has provided several reports to the Governors to show the progress that has been made in identifying and meeting the needs of children with special needs. All teachers (and governors who are able to attend) have had training on specific areas of special need such as 'Anxiety Based School Avoidance' and 'Autism'. Governors have seen an improvement in the support that children with special needs and their parents have received.

Quality of Education

Governors from this focus group have seen that the School Improvement Plan is robust and challenging ensuring that all children have access to a wide balanced curriculum. The governors see data for each year group. They are able to question progress and compare data with national and regional averages. Monitoring visits have taken place and subject action plans have been scrutinised. Data for 2023-24 is on the school website.

Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development

Governors from this focus group have helped to develop the Behaviour Policy by providing feedback at the draft policy stage. Pupil feedback is also considered, and new school rules have been developed which are owned by all stakeholders.

Finance, Staffing and Buildings

Health and safety governors have carried out 3 monitoring visits. They have accompanied the Head on site visits, discussing current concerns, issues identified during periodic statutory inspections and any work required to rectify them. All issues are followed up until they are resolved. Governors also monitor training undertaken by staff with health and safety responsibilities.

The governors from the Finance focus group continue to help to ensure that the school remains on a sustainable financial footing and maximising value for money. As well as reviewing the school's progress versus its budget throughout the year, the governors have undertaken benchmarking and standardised assessments to help provide objective feedback the school's financial health. Monitoring visits have observed how budgetary decisions are made and policy enacted by school leadership, ensuring resources are effectively allocated.

Leadership and Management

For much of the year the role of chair was shared between two governors. Regular meetings with the Head Teacher were held. An experienced teacher has been appointed as Assistant Head Teacher (AHT). Some responsibilities have been delegated to her such as teaching support staff appraisal, which will support the HT in using her time effectively. Safeguarding

meetings took place which included an audit of Filtering and Monitoring which is a key priority for the online safety of children.

Informal visits

Governors have been invited to a range of school events over the course of the year. This has included the Macmillan coffee morning, assemblies, sports day, school plays and end of term events. It is a great opportunity to see the school in action and see how confident and happy the pupils are.

Future Plans

The school will continue to develop high quality provision for pupils with SEND. The SENCo will complete the National Professional Qualification for SENCos.

The school will work towards achieving the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools – Bronze Award.