

## Annual Governing Body Report for Great Totham Primary School

Academic year ending: July 2016

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the 3 core strategic functions of Great Totham Primary School's Governing Body are:

1. **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction to set stretching aspirations for the all-round development and attainment of the pupils at the school;**
2. **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;**
3. **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

### How the school is governed

Great Totham Primary School is a Foundation School, which means that, while it is funded via the Local Authority, it is not directly under Local Authority control; rather the Governing Body has significant responsibilities for admissions, employment of staff and management of the premises. The Governing Body of Great Totham Primary School is made up of 12 Governors and the Head Teacher as an ex-officio member (13 in all). The 12 Governor positions are allocated as follows: 1 Staff Governor (elected by the staff), 2 elected Parent Governors, 2 Partnership Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor and 6 Co-opted Governors. Partnership and Co-opted Governors are appointed by the Governing Body and are people who, in the opinion of the governing body, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The co-opted Governors bring skills such as: Finance, HR and Premises Management. Of the Governing Body of 13, 10 are parents of current or former pupils at the school.

The full Governing Body meets twice each term, and has a number of committees to consider different aspects of the school in detail. We have a Resources Committee, which focuses on finance, premises and some personnel matters; a Curriculum and Standards committee, which also covers Admissions, and a Pay and Performance Committee. We also have committees that meet if required to consider pupil discipline and staffing matters.

### Attendance record of Governors

Governors have excellent attendance at meetings and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not "quorate" (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).

### This year's work in brief

The Governors have been overseeing the introduction of the new national curriculum, focused on the needs of our children in Great Totham, equipping them for life in modern Britain.

The Governing Body has had another busy year, focusing on continued school improvement, especially with the removals of levels and a more challenging framework for pupil attainment and progress, but not at the expense of the values of the school. Through the year a series of Governor development sessions looked at and prepared for inspection under the new Ofsted framework. We also planned and undertook a first round of small group sessions to gather pupil feedback across all year groups, were actively involved in the distribution and collation of

parental feedback questionnaires through the parental survey, and supported communications and awareness on e-safety. Special development sessions were held considering fundamental British Values and how the ethos and curriculum supported these, looking at how the school is applying the pupil premium funding in closing the gap in educational attainment and progress for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and receiving updated training on Child Protection and Safeguarding. The governing body continues to keep a watching eye on policy developments for academies, but currently has no plans for change. The new approach for Link Governors buddying up with year groups continued to bed in, so that Governors can follow the progress of cohorts of children through their school development. The school also hosted a visit from Governors of some of the schools in the Blackwater Partnership, of which it is a member, to share experiences and best practice on school leadership and governance.

The Curriculum and Standards Committee focuses on teaching quality, learning outcomes and key data giving the results of pupil achievement and progress, so that we can be sure that the school is on track to fulfil its ambitious targets for all pupils. We are also concerned about our "vulnerable groups" of children and focus on how the Pupil Premium Grant is being spent by the school and what impact this has on their outcomes. The plans and budgets for this work can be found on the Pupil Premium section of the school website.

The Resources Committee looks at the maintenance and development of the school premises, and makes decisions about how the school should use the budget. Mrs Batley is our Health and Safety Governor and carries out termly checks of the premises. We have developed a new partnership with Thurstable School for support for Health and Safety and Premises management.

Governors are particularly concerned about safeguarding. There is a Nominated Governor for Safeguarding (John Gilbert), the Governing Body receives a formal Annual report on any safeguarding matters as well as periodic updates from the Head teacher. The school successfully completed the Essex Safeguarding Audit again as well as receiving update training as above.

We also take inclusion very seriously and, within the constraints of the premises and the site generally, try to ensure that we continue the strong tradition of provision for children meeting SEND criteria with a dedicated SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), who is also an experienced senior teacher, integrating this work with our family support team. The successful project funding received from Essex County Council last year has been used to develop this work further and embed it in everyday practice.

Early in the summer term, the Resources Committee approved the 2016/17 budget plan for the school: the school continues to be in a healthy position financially, and has completed further development projects to improve the physical environment at the school. This summer will see the construction of an extension to the Key Stage 1 building to provide new toilets and support intervention space. For some of the longer serving Governors this represents the realisation of a long-awaited plan! We are always grateful for and humbled by the strength of support, both personal and financial that the Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association provides to the school, which has enabled us to extend outdoor play areas and will also contribute to redevelopment of the former caretaker's house to bring it into use for more facilities for staff and pupils.

One of the roles for the Governors is reviewing and agreeing school policies, and this year we have considered a number of key policies, including Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, Teaching and Learning and Homework.

We have a continued focus on supporting and developing healthy lifestyles, outdoor learning provision, encouraging participation in a wide range of sports and providing interesting and healthy menu choices for midday meals. Participating in sports not only improves their fitness, but also builds their confidence and wider interest. The children have had another successful

year in local inter-schools' competitions. How we have spent the Sports premium funding can be seen on the relevant section of the school website. Like all primary schools, we provide free school meals for all Reception and KS1 children and these have proven extremely popular with a very high take-up. We are grateful for the outstanding work of the whole catering team in providing such attractive, nutritious and high volume meals all prepared and cooked on site.

### **Future plans**

The Governing Body is focusing on ensuring continuing improvement in the learning environment in the school, maintaining and developing high standards of teaching and understanding how to continue to rise to meet the challenge of the new curriculum and performance standards so that the school can meet its aspiration to enable all pupils to have the best possible range of choices for secondary education and help equip them to meet the challenges of life in modern Britain.

### **How you can contact the governing body**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors, Mr. Gilbert, via the school office. You can see the full list of Governors and more information about what we do, on the Governors' page of the school website.