



16th July 2021

Governing Body
'Keeping in Touch'

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are approaching the end of this term, I would like to share with you our annual governance statement for the academic year 2020/21. This statement demonstrates transparency and accountability of the way governors and the school leadership team work in partnership.

Message from the chair – Sandra Allen

It is my pleasure to provide you with this Annual Statement during another unprecedented year. Additionally, it has been a privilege to work with the newly appointed leadership team, Mrs Bond as Head Teacher and Mrs Lugg as Deputy Head Teacher together with the existing Infant Leader Mrs Johnstone. Their dedication, commitment and hard work is commended during these challenging times ensuring the children have the best possible education whether is onsite or online. I think it is important to highlight that every member of staff plays an important role in the life of your child at Elm Park and they are fortunate to have such a dedicated team that work tirelessly to achieve academic excellence whilst preserving wellbeing. A big thank you to Mrs Bond and her Senior Leadership together with all the staff for another successful year for Elm Park.

During this ever-changing academic year, the governing body has worked in partnership with the school leadership team to manage the school through lockdowns and bubble closures. Our Governing Body meetings have continued via Microsoft Teams guaranteeing that our roles and responsibilities are not compromised. Mental health and wellbeing of children, families and staff have continued to be integral to all our agendas. Governor visits to the school have not been possible again this year. Governors have met virtually with staff to gain an understanding of the different roles enabling them to make informed decisions for the school's way forward. Alongside this we have continued to work with the Local Authority to ensure that our new school build remains as near to schedule as possible.

On behalf of myself and all governors I would like to thank you as parents for your continued support during another extraordinary academic year. It has been a privilege to be Chair of Governors for the last 4 years and I would like to thank my fellow governors for all their time, dedication and honesty for the benefit of all pupils at our school.

Finally, I wish you all a well-deserved summer break. I look forward to seeing what we can all achieve together next year and hoping for a more typical one.

Governance Arrangements and Attendance

Governor name	Category	Term of Office	Attendance 2020/21
Mr. Matthew Lewis	Clerk	24/9/2014-Ongoing	FGB 6/6 P&F 4/4 L&S 1/1 S&C 2/2 EGB 4/4 PAY 1/1
Mrs Sandra Allen (CHAIR)	Co-opted	18/01/21- 17/01/23	FGB 5/6 P&F 4/4 L&S 0/1 S&C 2/2 EGB 4/4 PAY 1/1
Mrs Nicola Allaouat	Co-opted	23/11/20 - 22/11/22	FGB 6/6 L&S 1/1 S&C 2/2 EGB 4/4
Cllr Nicholas Labuschagne	Co-opted	20/01/20-19/01/22	FGB 1/6 EGB 2/4
Ms Jo Briscoombe	LEA	27/11/20- 26/11/22	FGB 3/6 L&S 1/1 EGB 3/4
Mr. David Drew	Co-opted	24/05/21- 23/05/23	FGB 6/6 P&F 3/4 EGB 3/4
Mrs Carol Bond	Headteacher	15/09/20 - Ongoing	FGB 6/6 P&F 4/4 EGB 3/4 L&S 1/1 PAY 1/1 S&C 2/2
Mrs Vicky Drew	Co-opted	14/01/21- 13/01/23	FGB 4/6 L&S 1/1 EGB 1/4
Mrs Claire Hall	Parent	01/12/18- 21/07/21	FGB 4/6 P&F 3/4 EGB 2/4 S&C 2/2 PAY 1/1
Mr Jason Walker (VICE CHAIR)	Parent	26/06/19 -25/06/22	FGB 6/6 P&F 4/4 EGB 4/4
Ms Tracy Lenzy	Co-opted	13/07/20-12/07/22	FGB 5/6 S&C 2/2 EGB 2/4 PAY 1/1
Ms Caitlin Bragg	Co-opted	28/09/20-27/09/22	FGB 5/6 P&F 4/4 EGB 2/3
Miss Rosie Griffiths	Staff	24/05/21 -23/05/23	FGB 1/1 (New Governor)

KEY:

FGB - Full Governing Board, **P&F** - Premises and Finance, **S&C** - Staffing & Communications, **EGB** - Extraordinary Governing Board, **L&S** - Learning and Standards

The Governing Body of Elm Park is made up of 12 governors. At the end of this year, we sadly say goodbye to Mrs Claire Hall, parent governor. I would like to thank her on behalf of everyone for all her support, dedication and commitment to Elm Park governors. Parent election will take place in the Autumn Term.

Overview of the school aims:

Our school vision '**Inspiring Learners, Enriching Lives, Achieving Together**' has been recognised by the Ofsted 2019 inspection where the report state: '*The school's values, 'Inspiring, Enriching, Achieving,' are at the heart of its work.* This continues to be at the forefront of the curriculum development to ensure that each aspect links to what is taught, therefore, it is central to governor monitoring.

Governors' role in promoting school improvement

Central to the governors' role is to provide strategic direction for the school through the School Development Plan and Self Evaluation Report. The way in which governors monitor school improvement priorities is through regular meetings, speaking with staff with an area of responsibility and visits to the school. Governors have still carried out this role during Covid restrictions but in a slightly different way. Regular meetings and speaking to staff have continued, virtually rather than in person. This has provided the governors with opportunity to support and challenge school leadership. Governor meetings and speaking to staff have clear agendas which focus on the impact of actions in the school development plan. Unfortunately, Governors have not had the opportunity to visit the school regularly to take part in learning walks to see first-hand the impact on children's work as in previous years. It is hoped as restrictions are lifted that this will resume quickly. This will enable governors to see first-hand how school improvement priorities and Covid have impacted on children's academic progress and well-being.

Our successes this year

Usually, our successes are measured against the impact of our School Improvement Plan key priorities. However, when the priorities were created the school was hopeful that no further school/bubble closures would happen. Sadly, this was not the case, so when reading the impact against each priority this needs to be kept in mind. As this was another unprecedented year there are other successes that require celebrating. Such as

- Revamping of the home learning offer that received incredibly positive feedback from children, parents, and staff.
- 100% return after lockdown.
- Nativity plays and Year 5/6 productions continued despite restrictions with them being recorded.
- Numbers on roll increasing at a record rate with an in-year transfer of 32 children.
- Highest reception intake in 2021 for 3 years.
- New playground in Key Stage 2.
- Active members of the FVA
- Consistent and permanent leadership and staff

Our School Improvement key priorities set at the beginning of the academic year were:

- Improving the outcomes of children in line with national expectations
- Providing a curriculum that positively impacts of children's mental health, wellbeing & achievement in all areas of the curriculum.
- To maintain good teaching throughout the school.
- Design a new building for the children and a hub for the local community.

As governors we are proud of the achievements of the school leadership team and staff for the success/impact they have made towards these priorities in another challenging academic year. We would like to thank them all for their dedication and commitment during another difficult year.

Priority 1 - impact is difficult to ascertain in the absence of no national data. The school has taken every step to ensure that children's expected outcomes have not been affected

during school/bubble closures. This includes providing a comprehensive remote learning package and catch-up sessions. School assessment has continued in the same way as usual.

Priority 2 - the school has reviewed its practise of the connected curriculum as well as its approach to promote and support emotional well-being. During the pandemic staff have been working tirelessly to further develop the programmes of study with well-planned teaching sequences building on previously learning. Wellbeing has become an integral part of the curriculum with the Sports Project focusing on active lifestyles and promoting mental health and wellbeing. Again, with all the strategies in place, impact on children's academic outcomes is difficult to ascertain in the absence of National data.

Priority 3 - monitoring demonstrates that the provision children receive either remotely or in school continues to be good.

Priority 4 - has continued to be a focus for governors. The Chair of Finance and new build link governor have been working with Mrs Bond and the local authority representatives to ensure the building of the new school remains as near to schedule as possible. In conjunction with this, a focus has been to ensure the school site is safe for children during commencement of the project.

New build link governor – Dave Drew (Co-opted governor)

Despite the apparent lack of progress on the ground with the new school, steady progress is actually still being made behind the scenes. The pandemic has obviously had its impact on the schedule, as it has on almost every other aspect of our lives, but we are assured by the local authority that things are about to pick up again very soon. In the meantime, the plans have been further tuned, with energy efficiency being a key driver, particularly in this modern era of ecological understanding and sustainability, and we now look forward to welcoming our first children into their new 'PassivHaus' standard school, before too much longer hopefully.

Our response to Ofsted/ Our current priorities

Our good 2019 Ofsted report highlighted two areas for development

- Leaders have recently revised teaching in several subjects, such as history and science. In these subjects, well-planned sequences of lessons are in the early stages of being taught. Leaders and governors will need to ensure that teaching in these subjects consistently builds on what pupils have previously learned.
- Several parents are concerned that unavoidable changes of staff over the last year have been unsettling. Leaders must continue to work closely with parents, and further improve communication, to secure parents' confidence in the school.

Area 1 - continues to be included in the 2020/21 School Development Plan. See priority 2 above. As stated above staff have work determinedly on schemes of work based on prior learning but the impact for children is difficult to ascertain due to pandemic school/bubble closures but hopefully in the next academic year impact will be easier to determine. Our governors Learning and Standards sub-committee continue to monitor this area and report back to the Full Governing Body.

Area 2 - is an aspect that as governors we believe has been successful. A permanent senior leadership team is in place Mrs Bond, Head Teacher, Mrs Lugg, Deputy Head Teacher, Mrs Johnstone, Infant lead. This senior leadership is support by newly appointed permanent Maths leader Miss Griffiths, and SENCo, Mrs Keeping, as well as a dedicated English Team Mrs Byrne, Mrs Haley and Mrs Johnstone.

Effective communication between school and parents has continued throughout the pandemic and governors have been delighted at the positive feedback from parents on

the home learning offer. Staffing and Communication Governors sub-committee will continue to monitor this area and seek your views at relevant times.

Priorities for 2021/22

Currently the school leadership are assessing school priorities, and these will be finalised early in the Autumn Term. Early indications are that writing will be a key priority together with a catch-up action plan to address any other gaps in children's learning because of lockdowns/bubble closures. Alongside these priorities key actions from Ofsted 2019 will continue.

Our support for children with SEND

To fulfil our legal requirement a designated governor, Mrs Sandra Allen is assigned to ensure the needs of children with Special Educational Needs are met. This duty is achieved by regular meetings with the SENCo, together with information provided to the Full Governing Body (FGB) by the school. During the pandemic, this role has not been compromised. Virtual conversations with the newly appointed SENCo Mrs Keeping and comprehensive reports given at virtual FGB has assured governors the needs of this group of children have been met during this challenging time.

Elm Park believe a key role in removing barriers to learning is a trusting and supportive partnership with parents and children. If you believe that your child may have additional needs, please contact your class teacher in the first instance. The SEND Policy can be found on the school website alongside the School's SEND's Information Report. These two documents are useful if you believe your child has an additional need as it will explain the process to remove barriers to learning by following the **Graduated Response**. This is a four-part cycle, **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**.

Attendance

At Elm Park, governors take attendance seriously and monitor closely as there is a strong link between good attendance and making excellent progress. A nominated governor, Mrs Sandra Allen monitors this area. The governors are delighted that despite these difficulties time attendance is good at 96.1%. We appreciate these have been challenging times and that many holidays have been cancelled. When re-booking we ask that these are taken during school holiday as every day in school counts for your child's academic progress and well-being.

The Attendance Policy can be found on the school website. This is in line with all local schools and is currently being updated with them. The new policy will be on the website in September.

As governors we are proud of the partnership between families and senior leadership ensuring good attendance of all its children.

Working with parents and the community

The governors value the contributions of parents and carers in all aspect of the school including the PTA and your views. We are looking forward to reigniting our partnership in September with the PTA after these strange times. Your feedback to the school regarding home learning during the pandemic has been invaluable. Governors aim in the next year is to plan a cycle of collecting your views and will be contacting you in the Autumn Term.

Contact details

The Governing Body welcomes suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents/carers. Please contact the **Chair of Governors Mrs Sandra Allen c/o the school office**.