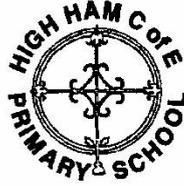


High Ham Church of England Primary School

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5th November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Governance Board Update

I hope you and your families are well and your children are happy and settled in school. I would also extend a very warm welcome to all our new parents who have joined our school community this year.

As most of you will be aware, I take the opportunity to provide regular updates of Governance Board activity throughout the year and I am pleased to provide the following information at this stage of the 2021-2022 academic year:

The Governance Board have held three meetings so far this year. There has been one full meeting to address monitoring, and two sub-committee meetings, one to make decisions on Teachers Pay and one that covered all the key strategic Business needs of the school.

As you will all, no doubt, be aware the three core strategic functions of the Governance Board are:

- 1) Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- 2) Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent; and
- 3) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

The above three areas clearly indicate why Governance Boards are in place and what each governor is there to focus on so that, collectively, we can ensure our obligations and responsibilities to the school are being fulfilled to the benefit of the children. This is why we have a series of meetings throughout the academic year and why great emphasis is placed on monitoring, for instance, to provide an opportunity to look at school data, the quality of teaching and learning and the progress our children are making across the two Key Stages.

Your Governance Board has never been afraid to adjust the way it carries out these obligations and responsibilities as it is important we have flexibility of approach to adjust to changes being introduced. We have, therefore, just introduced a new approach to monitoring which enables two members of staff to join us at each full meeting to look at a range of key areas such as the progress being made in individual classes, a specific focus on school data, how the curriculum is being delivered across the whole school with the curriculum leads providing status updates and how the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is being delivered.

All these things, along with a regular focus on Safeguarding, SEND, Well-being, Health and Safety, our Buildings and the school budget position are clear priorities for the Board. And of course, a very

important part of the Board's role, to enable all these obligations to be met, is to provide regular challenge to the headteacher. We do this as a 'critical friend' and all Governance Board's across the country are expected to do this with evidence of this being available to enable OFSTED Inspectors to see clear evidence that the Board is doing what it is there to do when they visit.

It is also worth clarifying the split in who has responsibility for the 'operational' and 'strategic' direction of the school as sometimes this can be a little confusing. I can confirm that our Headteacher has complete responsibility for all operational matters as Mrs Rosser is the vastly experienced, qualified professional who leads our school. The Governance Board are responsible for the three core areas mentioned above. I hope this helps with how the areas of responsibility are overseen?

Referring back to the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is written each year, this is based on work from all stakeholders (parent survey, pupils, staff, governors as well as our School Evaluation Partner (SEP)). During the SEP's recent visit, the Senior Management Team (SMT) talked through the priorities for this year which include developing:

- Our High Ham curriculum framework
- The subject leadership skills of class teachers
- Our monitoring and assessment systems
- The Mental Health and well-being of pupils and staff (following on from the national training staff will receive later this year)

A copy is on [the website](#).

Each term these priorities are discussed with the SEP as well as being covered at Governance Board meetings, so we can keep track of progress and update priorities as time goes by.

In addition, the Governance Board write a strategic plan which gives a longer term vision for our school and is regularly updated, the latest version of this is being drafted at this time and covers a 3-year period.

As you can see, it has already been a very busy time for the Governance Board with lots of key areas covered. I would take this opportunity to thank my fellow governors who continue to give up their time to undertake this voluntary role for our school community.

Finally, I would take this opportunity to thank the two Parents who have put themselves forward to fill the current Parent Governor vacancy and urge you all to vote.

Kind Regards,

Chris Palmer
Chair of Governance Board