

Governor's Annual Statement **2022-2023**

In partnership with Mr Crossman, Mr Goodman, all the senior leaders & staff our ambition is to achieve the best outcomes for all our children.

Our strategic long-term priorities are: -

Quality of Education (including academic achievement)
Collaboration (with families, the wider community, local schools, the LA & the church)
Morale and Wellbeing
Communication
Reputation

After a review of what our children need, the School Development Plan will be focused around 4 areas:

Communication & Language – Talk
Vocabulary & Phonics – Read
Self-Worth – Pride
Sense of Community and belonging - Marlborough

Overview of the Year

There have been many changes in school this year, particularly with the Orchard resource base with the two classes (Oak & Acorn) being successfully realigned based on the children's level of need rather than age.

Early Reading has been a big focus in school this year since it is a fundamental building block for children to access the wider curriculum. Governors are delighted by the impact this initiative has had, reflected in a significant improvement in this year's phonics screening results (91% passed). This is testament to the ambition and teamwork of all the staff driven by the leadership of Mr Crossman and Mrs Palmer, the Phonics Lead.

A big focus of the Governors' work this year has been to put in place a more impactful system of Governor monitoring of the curriculum. This will be through a combination of one-to-one discussions with subject leaders, classroom observations and chatting with the children themselves to find out what they have learnt. We have focussed our attention on areas highlighted as priorities in the School Development Plan.

We have continued to monitor wellbeing and communication. Governors have noted that staff morale has improved despite the pressures of school

life and the difficulties of maintaining a work/life balance. Supporting pupil well-being, exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic, continues to be a priority for staff. According to feedback from parents and staff, ClassDojo has overwhelmingly been seen as a really positive step forward in improving communication between school and home. The school leadership team recognises this is still not the 'finished product' and further refinements will be implemented to ensure communication continues to improve.

In common with all schools, the budget is coming under increased pressure, which has forced some difficult decisions regarding the cost of school lunches and the after-school club. Through a process of good management, however, the school is in a better position than many other schools that face going into deficit in the coming year.

Governors are aware of the pressures that the cost-of-living crisis is having on our families and try to minimise any price increases where possible. This was an area of focus of our recent parent survey and your responses will be taken on board, particularly in the planning of fundraisers.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who completed this survey which feeds into our discussions with school leaders. An overview of the results and feedback received will be sent out at the start of next term.

Finally, the governors would like to thank all the staff, who continue to put the children's well-being at the forefront of everything they do, and all our families for your continued support, especially in light of the need to close many year groups on strike days. We recognise that this might not be easy for many of you.

Additionally, this year we would like to single out The Friends of St Mary's, who are fantastic ambassadors of our school and whose incredible fundraising has enabled so many amazing projects, including £30k for the new Key Stage 1 play equipment. This of course reflects the brilliant support we get from families, staff and the wider community.

Governance

Governors are volunteers who give up their free time to benefit their school. The role of Governors is to be "a critical friend" to the Head Teacher and school leadership team who are responsible for the day-to-day operational running of the school.

Key Functions of the Governing Body

- *Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.*

- *Hold leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.*
- *Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and make sure its money is well spent.*

Governing Body

This year we have welcomed several new governors and an associate member.

Amy Adderley joined us a Co-opted Governor in October. Amy is also a parent and brings a wealth of skills from her work as a teacher and Housemistress at Marlborough College.

David Williams joined as a Parent Governor in November and comes from a business/finance background and has been a welcome addition to the Finances and Resources Committee.

Celia Dunne joined as an Associate Member at the end of January. Celia comes from a primary education background and has been a Maths advisor to schools in London.

Sadly, in January, Ben Ferris decided after many years loyal service to stand down as a Governor and Vanessa Minchin too decided she had to stand down due to extra commitments at home. We would like to thank them both for giving up their time to support the school.

This triggered a parent election with 2 candidates putting themselves forward. Since we had a co-opted vacancy, it was decided to take both Marcus Sharrad, a senior leader at Marlborough College, and Iryna Dmytriienko, from one of our Ukrainian families, to join the board.

In March, Sue Kieran joined the board as our new Foundation Governor.

Our Governing Body is currently made up of 15 Governors and 2 Associate Members, appointed as follows:

- Two Staff Governors (including the Head Teacher = ex officio);
- Three Foundation Governors, appointed by Salisbury Diocese, in consultation with St Mary's Church, Marlborough (including the Rector of St Mary's Church = ex officio);
- Two Parent Governors;

- One Local Authority Governor, nominated by the Governing Board who can bring a range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the Governing Board;
- Seven Governors co-opted by the Governing Body who can bring a range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the Governing Board;
- Two Associate Members (no voting rights) appointed to support the oversight of financial matters and curriculum monitoring.

The Full Governing Body (FGB) meets 6 times a year once every term. Governors also normally sit on one or both of two committees which meet in advance of each FGB for more detailed discussions and to review policy documents. The Finance and Resource Committee monitors finance, health & safety, staffing and property. The Teaching and Learning Committee monitors the curriculum, pupil progress, attendance, safeguarding and behaviour. Governors also visit school on a regular basis for support and monitoring purposes.

An experienced professional Clerk supports the Governing Body, ensuring all relevant topics are covered. A list of current Governors and their responsibilities can be found on the school website.