



## Governors Annual Statement 2023-24

**Our Vision is of an inclusive, happy and successful school at the heart of the local community. Together, our families and staff help our children to become confident, independent learners that care for themselves, each other, and the surrounding environment. Be brilliant, be bold, be kind, and together we will believe, learn and achieve.**

Our strategic long-term priorities are:

- **Quality of Education (including academic achievement)**

4 main drivers

Communication and  
Language  
'Talk'

Vocabulary and  
Phonics  
'Read'

Self regulation and  
self-worth  
'Pride'

Sense of community  
and belonging  
'Marlborough'

- **Attendance**
- **Meeting increased SEND needs**
- **Morale and Wellbeing**
- **Reputation**
- **Balanced budget**

## Overview of the Year

We started the year receiving our SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools) inspection – this turned out to be an excellent opportunity to showcase how our shared values of **Respect, Friendship, Courage, Perseverance, Fairness** and **Love** permeate our school life at every level. This proved to be a very positive experience for both staff and leaders. The report can be read on the inspection page of the school website.

Early Reading was a big focus in school last year with big gains in the phonics results. Governors are delighted that this gain has been sustained this year, with a 90% pass rate again in the year 1 phonics check. Across the school there is a picture of improved outcomes as the impact of initiatives on middle leadership, assessment & curriculum reviews come to fruition. In Early Years, the Danish Hygge principals have been introduced to make a more homely and harmonious atmosphere – this in turn has had an excellent impact on our reception children with results for Good Level of Development (End of early years measure for achieving the 7 main areas of development) of 76%, well above National average for the first time. The Key Stage 2 SATs results likewise have also shown significant improvement this year. These brilliant results are due to our skilled and dedicated staff who are always looking for ways to improve the school experience and environment.

Governors visit school regularly and continue to embed our understanding of the Intent, Implementation and Impact of the MSM Curriculum through subject leader discussions and chatting to the children in pupil voice.

Attendance has become a real concern at Marlborough St Mary's as our data showed that our attendance levels were well below national. Good attendance is not only important for improved educational outcomes, impacting those from more disadvantaged backgrounds the most, but it also has a serious effect on pupil well-being and resilience. Building well-being and resilience through shared everyday experiences and strong friendships are especially important, particularly in preparation for the transition to secondary school where these are areas of real concern for our young people. This is why we have taken on the ethos that all our children be **HEROES – Here, Everyday, Ready and On-time**. To be a success and see our children flourish, we will need the support of all our parents and carers.

To help meet the increased needs of our children, this year we have been working hard to get planning permission and put together the infrastructure for a forest school. The aim is that this will get fully up and running over the next academic year, run by our highly skilled Mr O'Reilly.

The finances continue to be well run, but with a national declining birth rate the budget is continuing to be squeezed, causing additional pressures for staff. Governors monitor staff morale and well-being closely and understand that school life is a busy and stressful place that can also be rewarding and fun and aim to offer their support to maintain as good a work/life balance as possible.

Parent – Governor communication. Thank you for responding to our parent/carer survey on equality & diversity earlier in the year. Mindful that we did not want to over-survey parents we decided not to send out our annual parent survey this summer but offer parents the opportunity to meet governors face to face on the gate at regular intervals. We will let you know via Dojo when we are on the gate and will aim to cover both front and back. We would welcome any feedback you have about this initiative or anything else you would like to know about us and the role we do.

## Governance

Governors are volunteers who give up their free time to benefit the school. The role of Governor 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.*
- *To consult with all stakeholders (staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and the wider community) about the vision, plans, progress and the impact of changes*

## Our Governing Body

This year there has been change on the governing board welcoming and saying goodbye to a number of governors.

Iryna Dmytrienko, Marcus Sharrad and associate member Mandy Cook all stood down during the year due to time commitments.

This prompted a parent election in January, and we welcomed Louise Barry onto the board in February. Louise is parent to a son in the Resource Base and has many years experience in corporate and marketing strategy, she has been part of our initiative to raise the governor profile to parents.

At the same time, we welcomed Dan Knight, father to a son in year 6 who after several children going through Marlborough St Mary's and a successful career in the Navy decided that the time was right to offer his skills as a governor. Both Louise & Dan sit on our Finances and Resources Committee.

As we approach the end of the year, we will be saying goodbye to some long serving governors who have reached the end of their terms of office.

Gill Macdonald, who taught for many years at both the infant and primary school before becoming a governor after her retirement. She was our Chair of Governors for several years and successfully ran our headteacher recruitment process before ill health meant she had to step back. Fortunately, her health recovered, and Gill has been invaluable as our Curriculum Lead on the Teaching and Learning committee over the last year or two.

Dawn Steele, has been the chair of the Teaching and Learning committee for as long as she cares to remember at both the infant school and Marlborough St Mary's. She calculates she has been a governor for 13-14 years! Dawn also has been Co-Chair and vice chair and has played an invaluable role on the governing board.

Jenny Fryer has been one of our Foundation governors and was SEND governor for several years. She was an immense help in our preparations for our successful SIAMS inspection back in the Autumn.

This term Harriet Jackson will be joining the board, Harriet has a varied background both academic, as well as working as a civil servant and in accounting. She will be starting her role properly next term when we hope to have several other new governors joining the board to replace Gill, Dawn & Jenny.

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 & curriculum respectively.

A list of current Governors and their responsibilities can be found on the school website which is updated regularly.

The role of school Governor offers an interesting opportunity to share your experiences & knowledge to the benefit of the school. Our friendly and welcoming Governing Body is made up of volunteers from the parent body, the staff, the church and the wider community. We bring experience from a variety of educational, business, professional and community backgrounds with many of us either currently or previously having children at the school.

Governors attend six full governing body meetings each year which meet in the evenings and serve on one of two committees which also meet six times a year during the school day. These are the Finances and Resources (FRC) or Teaching and Learning (TLC) committees which cover the following:

The FRC monitors finance, health & safety, staffing and the school premises.

The TLC monitors the curriculum, pupil progress, attendance, safeguarding, Disadvantaged Learners, SEND and behaviour.

Governors also visit school on a regular basis undertaking pupil voice, curriculum visits, attending collective worship, helping out at social events or school outings, speaking to staff and in general getting to know the school.

An experienced professional Clerk supports the Governing Body, ensuring all relevant topics are covered.

*Marlborough St Mary's recognises the benefits of having a diverse governing board to mirror the community we serve and welcomes applications from all ages, gender, ethnic backgrounds, social standing, disabilities, religion, faith or sexual orientation.*