



Governors' Annual Report 2021-22

Introduction

The Governors of Ferndale Primary School oversee the work of the school from a strategic perspective seeking assurance that the day to day activities reflect the commitments of the school. Governors have a variety of skills and experience and it is important to acknowledge and thank them for the time they give so freely in the role.

A major aspect of the Governors' role is to ensure that pupils progress well in their education, and appreciate that for this to happen, all pupils must be supported by a well lead, professional and motivated team, all working together to provide a stimulating learning environment for pupils.

Governors also appreciate the requirements of children's parents and carers, and their need to be satisfied about the overall leadership and management of the school, and how it affects safety, learning and the enjoyment of their children.

To achieve their objectives, Governors too must continually evaluate the role they have played within the life of the school, and publish relevant information to all interested parties. This statement to parents is part of that evaluation and publication process.

This statement will focus on the successes during the year and the progress made.

What have we achieved this year?

We started the year with a strong team ethos, supporting our school through our continued journey and working together collaboratively with colleagues across and beyond Sandwell. Finishing the school year with Ofsted gave us an opportunity to demonstrate the hard work, effort and resilience towards achieving a successful inspection, which was duly awarded with a **"Good"** with **"Outstanding Personal Development"** from Ofsted.

We sought to strengthen our learning environment and enhance the pupil experience but our progress was hindered somewhat by the pandemic repeated cases of COVID. We adapted our working practices in order to deal with the pandemic, whilst ensuring all pupils would be kept safe and be able to continue with their learning through our quality online learning package if isolating with COVID. School staff worked hard to continue our well-being offer and to ensure safeguarding continues to be effective, further developing meaningful relationships with families. Our staff continue to develop their own CPD (Continued professional development) and the school improvement plan continues to be a focus for the work of SLT. Governors acknowledge the significant level of effort by pupils, parents, carers, teachers, and others to ensure school life continued. Governors fully recognise that we could not have achieved all that we have if it were not for all your support during these challenging times.

Through the year, we have:

- Continued to work co-operatively with the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team to monitor progress with the Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP). This considers feedback from staff, parents, children and other agencies. The plan then sets out the priorities for the school in the forthcoming year.
- The 2021/22 SIP was based on priorities identified from data, school self-evaluation and our previous OFSTED priorities. The SIP is set out with clear aims, the key tasks which will be completed in order to achieve these aims, and success criteria in order to measure Quality of Education, Environment and Inclusion priorities. The SIP is monitored and reviewed at termly governors' meetings and through termly School Improvement Advisor visits, using a traffic light system to evaluate progress. The SIP was underpinned throughout by well-being for all stakeholders and the school's key drivers of inspiration, aspiration and inclusion. The plan focused on what makes Ferndale unique and our top priorities reflect the needs of our school, in terms of our amazing environment, inclusion for all and ultimately, the quality education we want for our pupils. We are extremely proud of the well-being and personal development offer we provide and this is at the heart of all we do.
- In 2021/22 we were inspected by Ofsted, and we were proud to announce the school has received a **"Good"** with **"Outstanding Personal Development"** from Ofsted. They stated the leaders at Ferndale have high expectations of **all** pupils, pupils feel safe and happy and develop a deep respect for others. They also stated that the curriculum ambitious, pupils receive a rich set of learning experiences and subsequently the pupils are **extremely well prepared** for secondary school. It is also noted that the leaders and governors are continuing to be ambitious to improve the school further.

Governance

The Governors nominate a Chair and two Vice-Chairs. The Chair leads the Full Governing Body Meetings and the Vice-Chairs each take the lead on either Quality of Education Committee or Finance and Wellbeing Committee.

The Quality of Education Committee focuses on the educational Quality of Education of pupils against targets, how Pupil Premium and Sports Premium is spent against targets. The application of curriculum is also reviewed. Given the focus of this Committee, all Governors are invited to attend.

The Finance and Wellbeing Committee focuses on Health and Safety, the resources of the school, for example the budgets, the physical environment, wellbeing, personal development, and the deployment of staff. It links with Quality of Education Committee to make sure school is using all of its resources in the best way possible to advance our children's learning.

Governors also provide oversight in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Leadership and Management and the Equality Duty.

The Full Governing Board meetings include all governors and considers all strategic matters as well as matters escalated by the Outcomes and Finance and Wellbeing Committees. The focus of the full governing body includes:

- Agreeing the values, aims and objectives of the school,
- Setting challenging targets for school leadership,
- Agreeing the school improvement plan and approving policies to inform the basis of day to day decisions.
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy, which includes approving the budget and agreeing the staffing structure.

Since March 2020, all meetings have been held virtually in order to comply with Government guidance and to support the work life balance for members.

Governors visit the school as part of their monitoring of the School Improvement Plan; named governors had a responsibility for reporting on the progress of specific priorities in the SIP. Some of these meetings have again been held virtually.

The areas Governors reported back on for 2021/22 were:

- English
- Maths
- Arts
- Behaviour
- Well Being
- PE
- Pupil Premium
- Sports Premium
- Premises, Health & Safety
- Send & Equality Act
- Safeguarding
- EYFS and Little Stars

The Chair and Vice-Chairs have regular meetings with the Headteacher, which are at least termly, and Governors with specific curriculum responsibilities meet with lead teaching staff and leadership team, at least twice a year.

Data Analysis

In 2021/22 normal statutory assessments resumed and as prior to the pandemic predicted data and current assessment data was monitored, analysed and discussed as an agenda item at Governor Meetings. Governors have previously received training in analysing performance data. In this way, Governors are able to benchmark their data against similar schools, the Local Authority and schools nationally (based on 2019 National Data), to ensure the school's standards and expectations are high and are able to be closely scrutinised to ensure good progress is made. It is this level of data analysis, which informs and leads school improvement planning.

Governors particularly scrutinise pupil progress across all ability groups, including vulnerable groups, and the effective use of pupil premium.

It is the governors' current view that school data systems are strong, school leadership and teaching staff know their cohorts and individual student's data, using it effectively for interventions. Regular discussion takes place between governors and staff on the data. As the data has been collected over a sustained period, Governors are now able to review trends and consider if changes to operations have had a good impact on improvements to children's development.

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies on a programmed basis, to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Policies which are required to be published publically can be found on the school website.

Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department for Education mandatory policy list.

Financial Management

Our Governing Body contains Governors with significant expertise in financial management. Working with the Finance and Wellbeing Committee, they drive the financial management of the school. In recent years, the Governors have worked with school staff on an annual basis to achieve the School's Financial Value Standard (SFVS).

The impact of the Governors' role in school ensures that the school's budget is managed well; improvements are effective and contribute to pupil Quality of Education. The School's finances are scrutinised, and an audit report is provided to the governors on a termly basis. The Governor responsible for finances undertakes regular meetings with the School Business Manager including viewing in year transactions.

Staff

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers, School Business Manager, Chair and Vice Chair are trained in 'Safer Recruitment'. Governors are involved in the recruitment and selection of all teaching staff and use the appointment process to ensure that high quality staff, who share the schools' ethos and aims, are appointed.

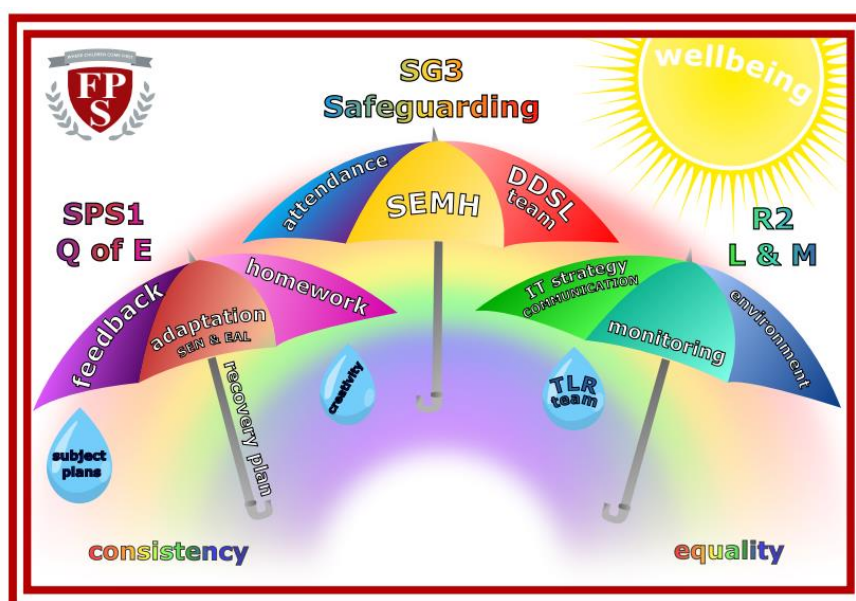
Governors are confident in the leadership team and the governors undertake the Headteacher's appraisal using external advice in the form of a school improvement advisor.

Governors have ensured that staffing is deployed effectively and as a result of children's needs by measuring the impact of interventions linked to Quality of Education.

School Performance

Governors ensure school leaders are accountable for Quality of Education for all children. Since school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2018, leaders have worked tirelessly to improve Quality of Education for all children across school resulting in the improved inspection grade of **Good** from Ofsted (Report on our website [here](#)). The last set of National data released in 2019 showed a rise in this area, with improvement, especially in Year 2 and year 6 SATS. 2022 results, at time of writing have

not yet been validated, but have taken a dip, particularly in Maths, affecting the combined results. The School Improvement Plan for 2022-2023 takes steps to address this.



Governor Meeting Attendance

Governor attendance has continued to be monitored, with all absences being fully explained, accepted and approved by the Governing Body. Below are details of all Governing Body Meetings held in 2020/21. These were held virtually.

- Three Full Governing Body Meetings
- Three Finance and Wellbeing Committee Meetings
- Three Quality of Education Committee Meetings
- One Annual Pay Committee Meeting
- One Headteacher Appraisal Meeting

These meetings are complimented by informal school visits with school leads, meetings on specific topics/issues and attending school meetings such as the school improvement advisor visits. Some of these have also been held virtually.

Complaints

We have duty to report to parents about complaints made to the school. In 2021-22 there were no formal complaints made to the Governing Body. Any other complaints were dealt with according to policy and made to school staff.

Governor Training

Governors undertake mandatory and optional training both online and in person. This includes safeguarding, prevent, understanding school finances, effective governance. Records of training are kept by school and regularly checked to make sure no gaps are evident.

Transparency

Governors have listened to parents/carers and have ensured that the school offers high quality, timely information through its school website, and that communication is improved, e.g. SLT presence on the gates in the mornings, SIMS app and the online parent portal.

We would urge parents/carers to make sure they are actively receiving communications from school and that they take every opportunity to engage in two way communication as this feedback will help school in making positive change for the children.

Governors are working hard to ensure that Pupil Premium funding is deployed effectively, the pupil premium plan and reports can be found on the website [here](#). Equally information about Sports Premium can be found [here](#).

Future & Continuous Improvement

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are constantly striving to improve and develop the school. The priority areas for 2022-23 (below) address and the recent Ofsted report allow further development of our Good with Outstanding features Ofsted grade aspiring for Outstanding in all areas.

Thank you for taking time to read this statement. As always should there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Governing Body or the Chair of Governors, Mr Sparkes, via the School Office. Should you wish to see more details on the targets and achievements of school, then the school website has many documents, some of which I have linked to in this report.

Mr J. Ellis
Governor
Autumn2022