

Horningsham School Governors Annual Statement to Parents



Horningsham School is a flourishing rural primary school on the Longleat Estate with an excellent record of academic achievement, enhanced by the availability of a wide range of educational experiences, many developed in partnership with Longleat. This report aims to describe the work of the Governing Body in the academic year 2015 /16.

Who we are

Horningsham School is a maintained school within the Wiltshire Local Authority. The Governing Body consists of two parent governors elected by the parents, a staff governor, six governors from the local community and the Headteacher. We also have two associate governors who can be called on to contribute particular skills and knowledge as and when required. More about the governors can be found on the school's website.

What we do

The Governors' job is to be a critical friend to the school, providing support and sometimes challenge to ensure that the children's educational experience and achievements are the best that they can be. In performing this role we recognise that the success of the school rests with the Headteacher and staff. We are very fortunate at Horningsham in having an experienced, dedicated and enthusiastic staff team, who not only provide an excellent education for our children but are also a pleasure for the Governors to work with.

How we organise our work

The Full Governing Body (FGB) meets four times a year. In between there are four sub-committees who meet as often as necessary to cover the tasks the governors are expected to do and report back on their work to the FGB.

- **Finance and Premises.** Works with the Headteacher and the School Administrator to draw up the budget and monitor the finances throughout the year. The Sub-committee also keeps an eye on the school's premises ensuring that improvements and maintenance are completed efficiently and cost-effectively
- **Curriculum.** Monitors the content of the school's curriculum and the attainment and progress of the pupils
- **Staffing.** Oversees the recruitment of staff and any issues relating to pay and conditions
- **Communications.** Supports the Headteacher and staff in communicating with parents and the outside world. This sub-committee keeps an eye on the website and organises the annual parent survey

In addition most governors undertake individual responsibility for particular areas of the schools work – special educational needs, safeguarding, health and safety and curriculum areas of maths and English. This work involves visiting the school and spending time with staff and pupils to understand more fully how these important areas are being managed. All governors are volunteers and give willingly of their time to support the school. Attendance at both FGB and the Sub-committees is good and reported on the school website

Review of the year 2014 / 15

- **School Development Plan.** Central to the work of the school and the governors is the School Development Plan (SDP) setting out the strategic aims and objectives for the year. Our SDP looks at four key areas of Outcomes for Pupils, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare and Leadership and Management and ensures all the plans have clear objectives and targets. All activities within the plan are fully costed and included in the budget.
- **Participation by the children.** Each year the children complete a Self Evaluation Form (SEF) in which they review the school to ensure that there is continuous improvement in all areas. This feeds into the school's development plan. This year the children were involved in the appointment of our new Assistant Headteacher, identifying a person specification and then a set of questions they used to interview the candidates. Also, they have identified charities they have wanted to support and chose to adopt endangered animals through the WWF this year. The children reviewed the attendance policy reward system and worked with staff to create a new system with new rewards based on outstanding punctuality and attendance throughout the year.
- **Achievement.** The Governors look regularly and closely at the data which covers the educational attainment and progress of our pupils. The latest results are well above the national and local averages in reading and writing at the end of KS2 with 100% meeting the expected standard in Maths.
- Despite these good results we are always looking for improvements. We will be monitoring this year's progress to see if we have improved our already very good performance in maths up to the level of our outstanding performance in literacy following a focus on maths this year.
- **A rich educational experience.** Scores in tests are important, but not everything. We are delighted by the range of activities, visits and projects undertaken by our children and in particular by our on-going collaboration with Longleat – not only a great supporter of the school but also the provider of a rich range of educational experiences and opportunities.
- **Finances.** At the moment the school's finances are healthy, remaining within budget and having a small surplus to meet contingencies. One of the key decisions which this state of affair permitted has been the freeing up of the Headteacher from regular teaching duties. This has enabled her to undertake crucial development work, work closely with staff on their own classroom practice and offer mentoring and support to other headteachers as a National Leader of Education and School Improvement Advisor. This not only brings in extra money to the school but enables us to learn from the best of what is being done elsewhere. The health of the finances is down mainly to good management but our school also benefits in a significant way from the generosity of the Longleat Estate, also our landlord. Recent developments to the playground have been largely due to Longleat and for many years the school has received a generous annual grant for which we are most grateful.

The future

Horningsham is a popular school as evidenced by the numbers of parents keen to get places and it is very good to see an increasing number of pupils from families living in the village. This year 98% of parents answering the parent questionnaire said their child enjoys their education and that the teaching and learning is good at our school. All schools are facing budgetary pressures so we will of course be keeping a very close eye on how we deploy our resources to ensure that the school and its unique qualities remain available to our community and neighbourhood and that it continues to provide the best possible standard of education.

Information about the use of Pupil Premium and Sports Grant can be found on our website.

