

Trinity Road Primary School

Governing Body Annual Report

School Year September 2016 – July 2017



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Introduction

As governors of Trinity Road Primary School, we take our roles and responsibilities extremely seriously.

The work that we do is focused on the following areas:

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent

Strategic direction

The strategic direction of our school is determined on an annual basis in the School Development Plan (SDP) which this year has had the following areas of focus:

- Communication
- Maths
- Mental health
- Reading and spelling

The SDP is an important document for governors and we have been very closely involved in the implementation and measurement of the plan, involving:

- Detailed discussion and an update on the progress of the SDP at every governor meeting
- Monitoring in school – each time we have come into school for monitoring activities we have looked at one of the themes from the plan and how it has been implemented in practice
- Working closely with the Headteacher and senior management team on an ongoing basis to ensure that the themes of the plan are being robustly managed, progressed and measured

The governing body was also involved in the successful process to redesign the school logo this year. The change to the school's branding reflects a closer alignment with our priorities which are encapsulated in the words Respect, Achieve and Belong.

Educational performance

The government continues to put a great deal of emphasis on the educational performance of children at school. Although this is not the be all and end all of school life and educational experience, it is important that all schools help children to reach their full potential.

As governors we have continued to look very closely at the quantitative and qualitative information which tells us how well our children are doing. Measurement falls into two main areas – attainment and progress.

The way we have scrutinised the information this year has been through:

- Detailed analysis of data at meetings to see how well children have been doing at every stage throughout the school
- Using a wide range of different cuts of the data to look at specific groups of children such as those in receipt of Pupil Premium, children with Special Educational Needs and other analyses such as how boys are doing and how girls are doing
- Close questioning of the Headteacher on both progress and educational attainment
- Following up with reassessments of data to check progress

Teaching and learning

In addition to our focus on pupils' performance, we also have a responsibility for monitoring all aspects of teaching and learning at school. At our meetings this year we have discussed lots of different aspects of teaching and learning including the curriculum, outdoor learning and enrichment activities, teaching strategies and ensuring inclusion for all children, regardless of ability or special need.

Another area of focus this year has been the changes to school premises to create a new EYFS area for children beginning their school journey with us.

Special Educational Needs and inclusion

Trinity Road prides itself on being a fully inclusive school and as governors, this is an area of keen interest for us.

The school has made a number of changes over the last two years to our specialist Speech and Language Hub in order to provide the most effective support to children who access this provision. This has included six days of speech therapy delivered by two therapists which has proved to be highly effective.

This year we have received regular updates at our meetings on inclusion within the school and have had detailed discussion with the Headteacher and senior leadership team on the ongoing efficacy of the SEN strategy for our children.

We have a dedicated SEN governor who is responsible for monitoring and communication with the senior leadership team in this area.

School finances

As governors we are responsible for oversight of the financial management of the school. It is very important that our school spends its monies efficiently and effectively and that our budget is focused on the particular needs and positive outcomes of our children.

This year we have done this this by:

- Receiving detailed reports and in-person feedback from the school's Finance Officer and our Local Authority Finance Officer at each committee meeting
- Asking detailed questions about expenditure on every aspect of the school including staffing, equipment, premises and catering
- Reviewing and agreeing any virements to the school's budget
- Carrying out monitoring of finance practices in the school office
- Looking at benchmarking data to assess how our school's financial strategy compares with other similar schools
- Holding a dedicated meeting to scrutinise and approve the school budget for next year
- Requesting a forward-thinking three year plan to think about future expenditure
- Discussing and approving major expenditure. The most important aspect this year was agreeing the Head teacher's plan to relocate the EYFS area within the school which required expenditure on building and refurbishment work. We also authorised expenditure on vital IT equipment to support teaching and learning in the classroom

Pupil Premium funding

A particular area of focus for all governing bodies is Pupil Premium funding. Pupil Premium refers to the additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close the gaps between them and their peers.

At Trinity Road the additional Pupil Premium funding that we received for this year was £147,312.00. We are very aware that this is a large amount of money so we have had a particular focus on making sure that this money is spent well.

This year we have done this by:

- Discussing the Pupil Premium strategy at every meeting of the governing body
- Questioning the Headteacher on the strategy, how this is implemented at school and how it is working in practice
- Analysing the financial expenditure and how the money is being used

- Closely monitoring performance data to measure the educational performance of our children who are in receipt of pupil premium funding – particularly in comparison with their peers
- Continuing to set extremely high standards for all children by believing that every one of our children has the right to achieve their very best at our school

An overview of the school’s Pupil Premium strategy can be found in the ‘About Us’ section of the school web site.

Sports Premium funding

Sports Premium is the additional money provided by central government to increase the uptake of sport in primary schools. Our funding for this year was £9,204.00. One of the main focuses of expenditure has been the new gym equipment in the playground. The funding has also been used to fund access to sports clubs for all children at school.

As a governing body we review Sports Premium expenditure at our meetings to ensure that the school is identifying and spending money on the right activities to encourage participation in sport for all pupils.

Organisation of the school governing body

The governors at Trinity Road are always looking for ways to improve how we work and how we are organised in order to make us more effective in our roles.

There has been a national move in recent years to make governing bodies smaller and more focused so we have responded to this by reducing the number of governors that we have and ensuring that every member of the governing body is highly focused and ready and willing to fully contribute to the success of our school.

Committee structure

Partly as a result of being smaller we have also changed our organisation to move away from a two committee structure (Finance Committee/ Curriculum and Learning Committee) so that we now have a single combined committee which oversees all aspects of our committee responsibilities.

This structure has now been in place for all of this school year and is judged by the governing body to be working well. Our meetings have been generally more focused, concentrated on issues which really matter and free of duplication. We have also benefited from the fact that all governors now attend all meetings and therefore have a good overview of all areas of responsibility.

Our Chair of Governors also instituted a governor day this year when all governors came into school for the full day to discuss strategy, view school activities in person, carry out monitoring and spend time with pupils and staff.

Key phase focus

This year we have also embedded a new approach of having two governors dedicated to each phase in school so that they can regularly monitor the activity of a specific group of children. This has continued to work well and governors carry out regular monitoring of lessons, marking, and activities in school.

Governing body membership

We have been delighted to welcome two new governors to the school governing body this year:

- James Hooper is a community governor who lives in the local area
- Mark Atuheire was voted onto the governing body as a new parent governor

Both new governors have hit the ground running and made a great contribution during the year.

A full list of all of our governors can be found on the 'About Us' section of the school web site.

Additional statutory duties

In addition to our three main areas of focus, there are a number of statutory areas which we are required to manage on an annual basis. This includes a list of policies which must be reviewed as well as our responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding.

All governors have received training in safeguarding and have undertaken a DBS check for the work that we do in school. We have a managed list of policies which are brought to the relevant meeting and discussed and approved as required.

We have a dedicated safeguarding governor who is responsible for monitoring and communication with the senior leadership team in this area.

Any questions?

We are more than happy to answer any questions from parents and other stakeholders. Please contact our Chair, Christine Smith, for further information:

chrs-smith@talktalk.net