

# St Andrew's CE VA Primary School Governors' Annual Review Statement for 2020-21



*Do Everything in Love* 1 Corinthians 16:14

## *Who are we?*

- Colin Allen                      Foundation Governor Vice Chair
- Alison Bailey                    Foundation Governor
- Pam Bassindale                 LEA Governor      Chair
- Liz Bunting                        Foundation Governor
- Jennifer Dolman                 Foundation Governor
- Jane Burton                        Foundation Governor
- Julia Edwards                    Parent Governor
- Donna Fagan                      Associate Governor
- Andy Hall                          Foundation Governor
- David Hazelton                  Foundation Governor
- Laura Hazelton                  Clerk
- Amanda Hodgson                Staff Governor
- David Lupton                     Parent Governor
- Kim Perree                        Co-opted Governor
- Revd Diane Roberts            Foundation Governor Ex Officio
- Karen Walker                     Headteacher

## *What do Governors do?*

In order to support the continued development of St Andrew's School, the governors are expected to fulfil the following key roles:

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- To hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school's pupils and staff.
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure its budget is well spent.

Apart from attending full Governing Body meetings, governors also attend committee meetings which focus on the following specific areas:

- Teaching and Learning
- Finance
- Premises
- Ethos
- Pay and Performance

## How did we plan to fulfil our roles in 2020-21?

- By keeping a clear focus on the following **strategic aims of the school** and supporting and promoting the caring Christian ethos of the school

Strategic Aims	
<b>Quality of Education</b>	Develop confident and successful individuals who enjoy learning, make good progress and achieve well. Develop potential for each child through the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum which is well planned, well resourced and stimulating. Any external inspection to confirm that all teaching, assessment and outcomes are at least good.
<b>Personal development</b>	Value each child as a unique individual. Help all children to become happy and confident individuals, with a sense of self-respect and self-reliance, who can live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives in the school and the community.
<b>School environment/ethos</b>	Create a secure and caring environment and a centre of faith and trust – a place of Christian values where children learn respect for God, themselves and others as well as for our core values of love, honesty and respect.

- By closely monitoring and evaluating the progress of the **School Improvement Plan** in the following key areas:

SIP Priorities for 2020 -2021	
<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>	Maintain the focus on the Ofsted target of providing challenge to meet Age Related Expectations, especially for the more able. Provide focused CPD which leads to improvements to teaching, learning and assessment in Maths. Ensure a 'Covid recovery' curriculum is in place to meet the needs of all pupils Maintain a consistent and effective level of support and challenge to secure improved pupil outcomes. Ensure that all learners, including those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable to underachievement are supported to achieve in line with others nationally. Ensure that safeguarding of children remains a top priority
<b>Quality of Education</b>	Ensure that all pupils, particularly boys, are supported to improve reading and spelling skills in all subjects. Ensure that the whole school curriculum meets the needs of our children and meets Ofsted criteria. Ensure that pupil progress in foundation subjects is secured through effective planning and assessment. Ensure that Quality First teaching is secured across the whole school
<b>Behaviour &amp; Attitudes/ Personal Development</b>	To monitor attendance closely and continue to improve attendance of PP and SEND pupils
<b>Early Years Provision</b>	Ensure that children's needs are identified and they are challenged to achieve expected levels of development.

- By keeping **support and challenge** as the driving force of our work.
- By undertaking **self evaluation and training** to further our knowledge and understanding of how to improve our effectiveness

## *Training completed by Governors in 2020-21*

Pam Bassindale	Children in Care - The role of the governing body
Pam Bassindale	Focus on Attendance
Pam Bassindale	Governors' briefings Term 1 ,2, 3, 5,& 6
Jennifer Dolman	Governors' briefing Term 2 & 3
David Lupton	Governors' briefing Term 1
Pam Bassindale	Governors' Staffing Panels
Jennifer Dolman	Governors' Finance overview - maintained schools
Karen Walker	Health and Safety Management for Headteachers & Senior Managers
Laura Hazelton	Induction training for clerks to governors
Julia Edwards	Induction training for new governors
David Hazelton	Induction training for new governors
David Lupton	Induction training for new governors
Alison Bailey	Induction training for new governors
Kim Perree	Link Safeguarding governor training
Pam Bassindale	Managing Exclusions
Pam Bassindale	Managing Staff wellbeing for Governors
Pam Bassindale	Monitoring & Reviewing Impact
Jennifer Dolman	Ofsted Preparation for Governors
Kim Perree	Promoting Health and Wellbeing at school
Amanda Hodgson	Reactivating mathematics! Prioritising the mathematics curriculum
Jennifer Dolman	Safeguarding training for all Governors
Kim Perree	Safeguarding training for all Governors
Laura Hazelton	Wiltshire Clerks' Conference: Being an Effective Clerk

## *What have we been doing and what impact have we had?*

The following reports from committees and individual governors give you a flavour of our work this year:

### *Teaching and Learning Committee: Pam Bassindale*

The key function of this committee is to consider how well children in St Andrew's are learning. We recognise what the school does well and what could improve.

The School Improvement Plan details the actions the school needs to take to improve outcomes for children and Governors use a range of data and observations to monitor how effective those actions have been. Normally we would base our monitoring on a detailed analysis of the outcomes of statutory tests to compare our children's achievement against others nationally and locally. However, this has obviously not been possible due to the cancellation of all tests because of Covid 19, so we have had to focus more closely on internal data and reports.

For example, this year we have

- Ensured that the School Improvement Plan detailed how any weaknesses were to be addressed and regularly monitored its progress.
- Monitored the school's provision for remote learning during lockdown.
- Ensured that a recovery curriculum was in place, any gaps in learning were identified and additional catch-up support was quickly put in place.

- Regularly examined school data to determine how well children across the school are progressing in literacy and numeracy.
- Attended Pupil Progress Meetings to ensure that subject leaders and class teachers are taking appropriate steps to support children who are not meeting their progress targets.
- Carried out scrutinies of children's books to monitor curriculum coverage, standards of presentation and the impact of teachers' marking on writing across the curriculum.
- Where possible, met with groups of children to monitor their attitudes to learning in school and the impact of the new curriculum on foundation subjects (History, Geography etc).
- Met with the Subject Leaders for Maths, Literacy, RE and EYFS to discuss standards in their subjects and what they are doing to improve them.
- Closely monitored the provision for disadvantaged learners and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

We also carried out a survey of all staff to monitor their wellbeing, particularly in the light of the extra pressures created by the pandemic. The results were overwhelmingly positive but did provide some useful pointers to where we could improve our practice to support the development of all staff in the school. For example, the Pay & Performance panel will in future receive reports on the appraisal process for all staff, not just teachers.

### *Provision for pupils with SEND: Donna Fagan*

I am the SEND Governor. It is my responsibility to ensure that pupils with SEND have the same opportunities to access the curriculum as other pupils and to monitor their progress. Here is her summary:

Covid has continued to present a unique set of challenges during the 2020/2021 school year.

I have had regular meetings with the SENCo to discuss SEND provision at St. Andrew's. We have also reviewed SEN progress at the Pupil Progress meetings which take place three times a year. Due to the lockdown, recommendations from the December meeting were delayed until the children returned in March.

The number of children on the SEN register totals 28 of which 6 have an Education Healthcare Plan (EHCP). An EHCP is a legal document which describes a child's specific needs above a certain threshold and explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs. Some children have very complex needs, which present a unique challenge. In the SENCO's opinion the number of EHCP children for the size of school is high, although this is based on anecdotal evidence.

A range of interventions is used to support children, depending on the specific needs identified. The impact of these interventions is monitored by the SENCO. The Ofsted Report (2019) confirmed that children with SEND make good progress.

I have also taken part the training sessions that the SENCo has organised throughout the year for both teaching staff and Teaching Assistants. The Teaching Assistants recently attended a full day training session for supporting disadvantaged learners. These sessions have minimised the impact that Covid restrictions have had on the availability of external training. The SENCo and I will attend training in July which will outline the changes to the SEN Code of Practice is booked.

In May, the SENCo and I met to complete an SEN Audit.

The audit highlighted the strengths of SEN provision at St. Andrew's and identified recommendations to ensure provision is consistent across the school. The audit covered:

- Leadership and management
- Identification, assessment & monitoring
- Ambitious curriculum & high-quality teaching
- Additional provision & partnership
- Outcomes

As a result of the audit we will work towards meeting the following three specific recommendations

- Encourage parental involvement in shaping provision at a strategic level
- Ensure Quality First Teaching (QFT) is delivered consistently in all year groups across the school
- Invite parents for a working party to update the Information Report in line with the new Code of Practice

### *Provision for Disadvantaged Learners: Donna Fagan*

I am also the governor responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of progress, outcomes and learning behaviours of children in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding (PP).

The Pupil Premium Strategy gives details of how the school proactively supports the needs of disadvantaged learners. Progress and attainment are closely monitored and there is an expectation across the school that all children should reach the required standard regardless of any barriers to learning.

Children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding read to an adult daily and are supported to complete their maths passports. A Governor visit in March revealed all staff viewed this as high priority.

All Pupil Premium families were telephoned at the start of the latest lockdown and encouraged to attend school and assured a place was available.

Pupil conferencing has been carried out to evaluate the impact/benefit of the Book in a Box subscription. Outcomes were varied and changes to this provision will be considered so that PP children will get maximum benefit from it.

Learner Outcome questionnaires are completed with children to monitor attitudes to working.

### *Safeguarding and Child Protection: Kim Perree*

I took on the role of Nominated Governor for Safeguarding in September 2020 and have spent much of this school year attending training courses to better understand the issues and responsibilities within my new role.

I am responsible for ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, especially with reference to Child Protection. This year has been unusual, to say the least, so we have had to ensure that our culture of safeguarding extends to home learning.

This year I have

- ensured that all Child Protection training is appropriate and up to date.
- followed rigorous selection procedures to ensure that all new appointments are suitable and safe.
- circulated parental guidance on County lines and exploitation.
- carried out a review of our child protection policies, procedures to ensure that policies on peer on peer abuse are clear, current and relevant.

### *The Pay and Performance Committee: Jane Burton*

The focus of this panel's work has been to ensure that leadership of teaching and learning continues to be strong.

This year we have:

- Taken part in the formal procedures for appraisal and monitoring of teachers' performance, including that of the Headteacher.
- Made recommendations for pay awards where appropriate.
- Received reports from the LA on the Headteacher peer review outcomes.

The Local Authority Representative who attended the Head Teacher Performance Management Review commended Mrs Walker and the staff for the inspirational way that they rose to the challenges of the pandemic. St Andrew's fared much better than many similar schools due to the strong leadership of the Headteacher and, through her, the positive attitude of our dedicated staff.

Because of the pandemic the targets of both the headteacher and the teaching staff for pupil progress and attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 were reviewed with flexibility in view of the loss of learning caused by lockdown.

### *Ethos Committee: Amanda Hodgson, Liz Bunting, Rev. Diane Roberts*

As governors whose key responsibility is the ethos of the school and the element that collective worship plays in this, it has been uplifting to see the way that the school community has pulled together through challenging times in order to create a sense of normality and togetherness for everyone. Conditions have been continually changing, but the dedication and hard work of the school has meant that there is still has a strong and positive sense of development and caring for each other.

Collective worship, which was recognised as a strength in our previous SIAMs report, has had to change significantly in order to be compliant with government guidelines. The school has met these expectations at all times and has continually developed systems to allow collective worship to have as much impact as possible.

In our role as foundation governors, we have been happy to be invited to some of the whole school worship sessions through Zoom and are more recently it has been a joy to be able to come back into school and observe class collective worship once again. Having commenced later in the year than usual, these observations will be completed by the end of the summer term, alongside a review of class reflection areas.

The RE subject leader reported to the Teaching & Learning Committee that the development of the RE curriculum has also been embedded over the past year, with staff developing their

teaching using 'Understanding Christianity' as a resource. Lessons have been matched to children's needs and a visit from the Diocesan Adviser highlighted the strong development of deep understanding in RE facilitated by the range of approaches and experiences provided by teaching staff.

Despite the challenges of the year, we can see that the school has supported its learners and community in every way possible through difficult times, and that this has had a positive impact.

### *Premises Committee: Colin Allen*

The governing board is responsible for ensuring the school premises are well maintained and suitable for a positive and safe learning environment. Among the actions completed recently are:

- Supporting the submission of a School Condition Application to the Diocese. As a result, the canopy outside of Reception and Class 1 was completed, as well as the playground re-surfacing. New playground markings are due to be applied in the 2021 summer holidays.
- New fencing installed and removal of old fir tree and hedging.
- As the Hobbit house installation has proved a great success for the children, a repair to a part of this is due in the summer of 2021.
- Monitoring of the ongoing maintenance of the external areas. ie, play apparatus, tree survey, pest control, waste management etc.

This committee is also responsible for Health & Safety. The governing body aims to provide a safe and healthy working and learning environment for staff, pupils and visitors. Regular audits are undertaken to ensure the following areas are compliant and in line with the agreed health and safety guidelines.

- External areas and play equipment
- Fire alarms and evacuation procedures
- Condition of flooring and furniture
- Temperature, lighting and ventilation within the school
- Electricity and water (legionella) checks
- First aid and medical provisions
- Parking and the car park

As well as the regular compliance checks undertaken, the last year has seen the introduction of a COVID-19 risk assessment. This has been regularly reviewed and updated by the Headteacher and signed off by the Chair of Governors.

### *Finance Committee: Andy Hall*

It is a responsibility of the Governors and Headteacher to monitor and budget the spending of the school finances.

The income for the school is primarily based on the number of pupils on the register on a selected day in January each year. The school is responsible for all general expenditure such as staff salaries, educational supplies (including computers etc), property maintenance and the utilities.

This past year has been a difficult one with Covid restrictions resulting in extra costs although some financial help has now been received for this, and "catch-up" education.

The school applied for grants which enabled the playground to be resurfaced and a canopy erected for Class 1. Arrangements are also in hand for the reception playground to be resurfaced and then this and the main playground will be marked out with various games e.g., Hopscotch.

With ongoing pressures on school budgets, it is imperative that close monitoring continues and forward planned spending is carefully considered.

### *Communication with Parents: Julia Edwards*

With Covid restrictions making it impossible for parents to visit the school during the past year as they usually would, the governors have been working to support both the school and the parents to make communications as effective as possible.

In the autumn, the governing body sent out a survey to parents to collect feedback on the arrangements for the parents' evenings held over Zoom. Analysis of the responses helped to improve the experience of parents attending the spring parents' evenings by Zoom, and will continue to be taken into consideration when face-to-face meetings are possible again.

Similarly, the governors also analysed the results of the feedback requested from specific parents by the teachers early in January. Whilst the teachers were able to (and did) respond immediately with changes to their approach to home-learning (such as the inclusion of more live lessons), a broader analysis revealed a number of general trends:

- The vast majority of comments from parents were positive, including positive comments from some parents who had been critical of the school's approach to home-learning during the first lockdown. Several parents commented without prompting that home-learning was much better this time round in a variety of ways.
- Parents were broadly satisfied with both the amount and the nature of the work.
- Parents found Google Classrooms to be a good platform, and those who were using Tapestry with a YR child as well as Google Classrooms with an older child commented that Google Classrooms was more intuitive to use.

Similarly, when a discussion of this analysis at a Full Governing Body meeting found that teachers had noted the lack of response by children and parents to the marking they were doing, the parent governors were able to shed light on why this might be, and suggest ways to improve on this should online learning need to be used in the future.

On a separate note, as a parent as well as a governor, I was so cross about Gavin Williamson's suggestion that parents complain to Ofsted about their school's inadequate online provision that I wrote to Ofsted in praise of the efforts St. Andrew's was making to support pupils. Ofsted eventually replied, having received approximately 50,000 emails of this nature from parents across the UK, to say they had added these comments to their file on St. Andrew's.

## *School Website: David Hazelton*

As a governing body part of our role is to help make sure that the school is complying with its statutory obligations. The government set standards for information that schools must publish on their web site and Ofsted check this as part of their inspections.

This year I conducted the website audit for the school which involved checking the site for statutory compliance and best practice. As a new governor with no experience of the website I was the perfect person to try to find everything we were meant to have available!

I was surprised by how much information there is - as well as the necessary content such as policies and performance information there is a wealth of information for parents such as newsletters, curriculum information and common forms you might need to fill in. But those things also need to be easy to find, so as well as the audit, I also looked at the usability and functionality of the website, and how it compared to that of similar schools.

The audit uncovered a few areas where the information could be improved, and the school has been able to make these changes very swiftly to bring us in line with best practice and statutory obligations.

I also discussed some potential usability improvements with the website provider and presented a range of ideas and options to the governing body. As a result, we are looking at including some of these improvements, or possibly even a more significant overhaul of the site, to make it even easier for all of us to find what we need.

## *Reflections from two new governors:*

### *David Lupton*

Joining the board of Governors in September 2020 as Parent Governor has involved a mixture of zoom meetings and socially distanced meetings at the school. The Covid 19 pandemic has been a challenging experience for our school, and I have observed the calm and professional manner the school staff and Governors have conducted themselves during this period despite numerous additional requirements being placed on the school. I have seen first-hand how Mrs Walker and the leadership team have developed working methods to comply with Covid restrictions within very tight deadlines and an ever-changing background of regulations from the DfE.

I am a member of the Finance and Premises committee and have assisted in a bench marking exercise comparing the income and expenditure of our school with other local and national schools, and I can say we compared very favourably, spending in areas that are core to our role in educating children.

In my first year I have tried to provide support and assistance where possible by using my own skills and knowledge in Engineering and Health and Safety. I wrote to Wiltshire Council in November 2020 requesting regular Covid 19 testing for staff which was eventually introduced earlier this year. I am also pleased to have assisted in reviewing a Legionella report conducted by a specialist company by identifying priorities; and raising some technical questions for potential suppliers.

The induction training I received, via Zoom link, was useful, but as many of us would agree, I am looking forward to a return to more normal contact soon.

### *Alison Bailey (who has previously been a governor in another school)*

From my own perspective, I have been really grateful for the welcome to what is clearly an effective school governance and leadership team. On the council training course, I saw the change in emphasis from 'critical friend' to 'strategic leadership' – and it seems to me that Governors all together do have a clear vision for the school. Monitoring is also clearly evidenced. I am especially grateful for the induction process, for the friendly mentoring, and for the time taken to explain topics, like data and assessment, that vary between schools and so weren't immediately clear to me.

Impact is, perhaps, harder to assess this year than in other years, and I am still new and don't really see the day-to-day school just yet, but the ability of Governors to work well as a team appears to me to have bolstered a resilience that has helped the school to achieve strategic aims like providing a safe and loving environment so that children can feel confident and valued. When premises and finances are well-managed, the teaching and learning get the attention they deserve. A wide skill-set has meant that tasks (such as H&S and web audit, for example) could be confidently delegated. Also I have been very impressed with how open school leaders have been to feedback. Change is not feared, but calmly assessed and embedded where appropriate, with the focus on what is best for the child.

### *Reflections from a new clerk: Laura Hazelton*

I started this role in February 2020, excited at the prospect of some comprehensive training, including conferences hosted by the Local Authority and mentoring by clerks of other schools. The pandemic obviously put a halt to this and also allowing me to meet this Governing Body face to face, but everyone went above and beyond in terms of welcoming and supporting me in the new role.

With my son having just started in reception, I was keen to give something back to the school and having always enjoyed organisation and administration, this opportunity seemed the perfect fit. I hadn't appreciated however, how much I would also gain, both in knowledge of how the teaching, learning, finance and premises are managed, but also in appreciating how much time, thought, prayer and commitment goes into the decisions made by each of the governors.

It has been really interesting to learn and see first hand how the governing body works to support the school and manage the challenges that come alongside this. They are a knowledgeable and experienced team and I look forward to learning more from them in the future, hopefully with fewer covid challenges!

### *How well did we do?*

Although we have not had an Ofsted inspection this year, we have had two external evaluations which have had a focus on the effectiveness of governance.

The Diocesan Adviser reported that, "Governor evaluations were thorough and detailed and acknowledged a strong and well-structured worship offer, including gathering, engaging, responding and sending."

The Local Authority School Improvement Adviser reported at length on the role of governors and all comments were positive! Here are a few examples:

“There is a high level of commitment to supporting and monitoring They provide detailed reports which are evidenced. This ensures they are an effective team focused on promoting learning to raise pupils 'achievement.”

“Governors attend the Pupil Progress Meetings to ask key questions. Professional dialogue is embedded and as a result, pupil progress meetings are highly valued by all staff.”

“Governors' effectiveness enables them to gauge first-hand how Pupil Premium Children are progressing. For example, the SEND governor had a conference with pupil premium children to evaluate the impact/benefit of the Book in a Box subscription. The evaluation is balanced and clearly identifies strengths but also raises searching questions for the school to consider.”

### *Overall Impact*

In summary, the Board of Governors has done its best to support the staff and children of St. Andrew's in what has been an unprecedentedly difficult year for many families. Monitoring of the well-being of both staff and children has been a priority for the governors. Keeping track of the school's progress in teaching and learning, as well as the finances and leadership of the school has also been of paramount importance, so that the challenges arising from this past year can continue to be tackled as effectively as possible in the next school year.

Priorities identified by school staff and governors will be incorporated into next year's School Improvement Plan.

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*Thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Statement.*

*We would welcome any questions or suggestions. Please feel free to contact us at school or by e-mail to [pbassindale@st-andrews-laverstock.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:pbassindale@st-andrews-laverstock.wilts.sch.uk)*