

## Annual Governors' Report to Parents 2021/22

Welcome to our Annual Report to parents for 2021/22. The purpose of this report is to let you know about the work of the Governing Board.

### The Governing Board

I should start by acknowledging the amazing work done by our previous Chair of Governors, Mrs Jenny Davies, who served first as a governor and then for around 6 years as Chair of Governors. The Governing Board also said farewell to Mr Andrew Taylor who served the Governing Body for 6 years.

During the time Mr Taylor and Mrs Davies served, Wrenbury Primary School has achieved an Ofsted 'Good' rating with 'Outstanding' for personal development, behaviour, and welfare for all of its pupils. From being a school with reducing pupil numbers and struggling finances, we are now a School with increasing pupil numbers and healthy finances. We've also seen the establishment of Little Wrens and The Nest as part of the school's offer to the Wrenbury Community.

Like all the Governing Board, Mrs Davies and Mr Taylor truly believed in our Vision

*"We thrive as a forward-thinking, rural community school that nurtures happy, healthy, and hopeful children prepared for tomorrow."*

They will be greatly missed, and we all wish them both the very best.

I am delighted to say that we have seen Becky Barber (Local Authority Governor) and Rev Amanda Pike (Co-opted Governor) join the Governing Board. We've also seen two new Parent Governors join the Board: Kate Ramscar and Rebecca Young. Finally, after the recent staff election Colin Eaton has agreed to become the new Staff Governor. I'm sure you will all know that Colin has been a hugely valuable member of school staff for many, many years in his capacity as school site manager. I'm confident that Becky, Amanda, Kate, Rebecca, and Colin will bring a fresh energy and perspective to the Wrenbury School as we enter the new academic year.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the four core strategic functions of the Governing Board are:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
2. Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
3. Oversee the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.
4. Promote the highest possible standards for safeguarding.

The Governing Board of Wrenbury Primary School is now made up of 7 co-opted governors, 2 parent governors, 1 local authority governor, 1 staff governor and the Headteacher. We currently have 2 vacancies. Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Board and are people who, in the opinion of the Governing Board, have the skills and experience required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the schools; areas of which are identified via a skills matrix produced by the National Governance Association.

Governors have risen to the challenge by taking new roles and responsibilities so that the Governing Board has continued to provide rigorous governance and scrutiny of the school. They are all volunteers and have commitments in their personal lives and responsibilities to their families. And yet the time and hard work governors have generously committed to contributing to the work and achievements of the Governing Board has been phenomenal. I'd like to thank all governors, who give their time freely to the schools, for their continued hard work and support, it is much appreciated.

Information has been updated on the school website to include the pecuniary and personal interests of Governors, the Governors' Code of Conduct, and the attendance records.

### **Governor Meetings**

The Full Governing Board (FGB) meets once each term, and we also have three committees to consider the different aspects of the school in detail. 'Teaching & Learning', 'Leadership and Management', and 'Personal Development Behaviour and Wellbeing'.

Minutes of the Part 1 Governing Board and Committee meetings are public documents once they have been approved and signed by the relevant chairs. You can ask at the school office if you would like to see Part 1 minutes of any of our meetings. Full Board meetings for 2021-22 are available on the school website. At the end of every meeting, governors consider and record the positive impact they have had on pupils and the school.

### **Teaching & Learning (T&L) Committee**

This committee spends time considering the ambitious curriculum offer provided to the children at Wrenbury and the key data around pupil's achievement and attainment so that we can be sure that the school is on track to fulfil its ambitious targets for all pupils. We focus on the progress and wellbeing of pupils and ensure vulnerable groups of children are effectively supported by the Pupil Premium Grant. There is a designated governor who monitors how this is being spent by the school and reflects on the positive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. All areas of the curriculum, special educational needs and arrangements for assessments are also discussed at these meetings.

The Governors have kept abreast of the school's remote education provision from the Remote Learning Offer (home schooling) published on the website, updates in the school Newsletters to parents and Mrs Cador's updates to the Teaching & Learning Committee and to the Full Governing Board meetings. Our Parent Governors have also provided insightful feedback on their experience.

It was not always possible to collect performance data during the pandemic. However, the Teaching & Learning Committee have reviewed in detail the recent internal assessment of pupil's attainment data, looking at achievement against 'expected' and 'exceeded' targets for all children in all year groups. The impact of Covid interventions has been monitored carefully by Governors.

Mrs Cador and Mrs Charlesworth have continued to work on the new curriculum planning format, working with T&L Governors to ensure prior learning is built upon.

### **Leadership and Management (L&M) Committee**

This committee considers all staffing matters including recruitment, HR, staff development and appraisals. It looks at the maintenance and development of the school premises and makes decisions about how the schools should use its delegated budget. The impact of the Sports Funding and the Pupil Premium is also covered by this committee. Our Health & Safety and Building Compliance inspections are carried out by Cheshire East Local Authority alongside our Site Manager and our Health & Safety Governor.

Governors are always vigilant with safeguarding and receive regular reports about safeguarding matters from Mrs Cador. The governors set the budget in the summer term. The budget for 22/23 allows us to maintain staffing levels and the high standard of provision for all pupils. Governors are aware that school funding is a national issue and will monitor this closely for the future.

The L&M Committee have been able to scrutinise services and agree on service providers based on proven value for money. It is this kind of scrutiny, and constant benchmarking of the school against comparable schools that has helped to improve the financial health of the school, leading

to surpluses that Governors have been able to approve use of to support Mrs Cador's plans to improve the school.

Focus on the Pupil Premium has continued to ensure that the grant is spent appropriately and effectively. The 21/22 Funding report has been published on the school website.

Both delegated budgets and unofficial school fund are subject to external audit and Governors are required to complete an annual Schools Financial Values Statement Return (SFVS). Wrenbury Primary School received an 'excellent' rating on the last SFVS Return, demonstrating the rigour of oversight provided by the Governors.

### **Personal Development, Behaviour and Wellbeing (PDBW) Committee**

This committee has responsibility for the health, safety and development of pupils and staff. This last 12 months has been a particularly challenging period once again. Ensuring that all are kept physically and mentally well has been the focus of this committee.

The committee receives regular updates from Mrs Cador on the well-being clubs that continue to give pupils the opportunity to share concerns with staff in a relaxed atmosphere. The committee also receive regular 'Pupil's voice' updates.

The school's curriculum has been enriched with our Health and Wellbeing Week, by our Sports Day and sporting competitions, by a visit to Beeston Castle for Base 2 and the year-long 'Field to Fork' project led by Reaseheath College alongside our Base 5.

Behaviour in school remains very good. Low level behaviour issues are being appropriately addressed, and importantly, staff in the school recognise that the important thing is to understand 'what the behaviour is saying'. Most times, what can be deemed as 'difficult behaviour' is a symptom; it's distressed behaviour that we find challenging to manage. Our children's wellbeing is better improved by providing school support plans to help children better self-regulate.

Governors were very pleased to hear that the 'my happy mind' programme has been delivered for all classes including Little Wrens this year. This is fully funded to continue next year.

I'm sure you will agree that what makes Wrenbury Primary School so special is the ethos 'we all matter'. Governors and Staff are proud that this was recognised by Ofsted, demonstrating that the school excels in supporting pupils' well-being. Children feel happy and secure in school, and this of course leads to great learning.

Attendance continues to be good for most children, with attendance from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 running at 93.6%, and all defined groups well over 90%. Although good, this is not good enough. There has of course been an impact due to Covid, Chickenpox, Measles, and other sickness bugs. But some of this (around 1%) has been because of unauthorised holidays and for a few children greater absence than expected. These will be an area of focus for the school in 22-23, with a revised Attendance Policy having been approved by Governors and working alongside the LA to improve attendance.

This September we will see 20 children start with us while 21 children are moving to high school.

### **Pay Committee**

The Pay Committee has supported Mrs Cador in the recruitment of new members of staff. Governors have reviewed staff performance appraisals with Mrs Cador and have set and reviewed targets in conjunction with the school's improvement partner (SIP) for the headteacher's annual performance review. An interim review was made with the SIP. Mrs Cador's outstanding leadership during the pandemic and her significant impact on the school's development priorities to increase pupil numbers and balance education outcomes with the experience of school was recognised and recorded.

## **School Policies**

Governors have reviewed several important documents such as school policies. Some of the items reviewed and approved by the FGB include:

- The school's excellent School Recovery and Continuity Plans, Risk Assessment, and the Safeguarding Section 175 audit.
- School Financial Value Statement (SFVS) with the accompanying documents including the benchmarking report and the school's contingency plan.
- The school's budget for 2022/23 and the 3-year school budget plan submitted to Cheshire East.
- Important policies such as Child Protection and Safeguarding, eSafety, Attendance, Complaints, Grievance, and our accessibility plan for 2022-25.

All statutory policies are published on the school website.

Governors also contribute to the school's self-evaluation document which covers quality of education, personal development, behaviour and attitudes, leadership, and management. All underpinned by intent, implementation, and impact in line with the Ofsted framework.

## **Covid19**

Covid19 continues to disrupt school like. Governors are very aware of how stressful and challenging this situation has been for staff. In addition, many of our pupils and their families have encountered difficulties, especially during the lockdown from December to early March.

Our headteacher, Mrs Cador, and the staff have done everything possible to continue the provision of high-quality education, both at school and at home; each child's well-being is at the heart of everything they do; I know how passionately Mrs Cador and her colleagues live and breathe the ethos 'we all matter'. The level of commitment to pupils and their families has been truly inspiring and I believe this has been every much appreciated by parents as well as by Governors. On behalf of Wrenbury Primary School Governing Board, I would like to offer sincere thanks to everyone for such an outstanding achievement.

The Governing Board continues to hold most committee and all full governing body meetings via the Teams platform. In general, this works well. However, at times there is no substitute for meeting in person, especially for Governors who are part of Teaching & Learning committee who really do benefit from spending time in the school, seeing the quality of the children's work and examples of the curriculum in practice.

One of the roles of Governors is to develop strong links with Subject Leads. Governors suspended virtual monitoring meetings with the School Subject Leads during the pandemic and due to teachers' high workload. These have resumed in the summer term following the end of pandemic restrictions in spring time, but only when staff workloads allowed. Governors feel that it is important every subject lead can meet with their Link Governor to ensure that they feel supported and have all they need to deliver the curriculum in the way they wish to.

## **Friends of Wrenbury School**

Once again, we have been very lucky to have Sarah Goodwin continuing to raise money for the Friends of Wrenbury School through the selling of donations. The fantastic summer fair hosted by FOWS in July, raised more than £3,000, which is a remarkable achievement in the current economic climate. I know this additional money will make a huge difference to the experience the children have in school.

## **Looking Ahead**

As I hope you can see, the Governing Board is committed to future development of Wrenbury Primary School.

The Governors evaluated progress against the SDP priorities in the spring and summer terms. Despite the impact of Covid19, staff continue to make good progress in many of the priorities including Pupil's learning outcomes and their well-being.

Governors agreed to establish a strategy group prior to the pandemic. While there was a natural focus on dealing with Pandemic that restricted the development of additional projects, Governors are planning to hold a school development strategy session in autumn term to review the school's vision, strategy, and the SDP. The strategy group will also look at specific projects that go across all the committees such as preparing for a likely Ofsted inspection, considering how we best support Mrs Cador and school staff as we learn to live safely with Covid19, and plans to develop the school for the benefit of our community.

Governors recognise the important of developing the school's vision with staff, parents, and pupils, including ensuring we hear pupil's voice at Governors' meetings, and on increasing governor visibility to parents whenever possible.

Subject Leadership will be a high priority this coming academic year. Governors have committed to developing the roles of Link Governors and have supported the provision of additional time each week to each Subject Lead for the autumn term.

I do hope you've enjoyed reading a little about the work of the Governing Board, if there is anything you'd like to know more about our work, please do feel free to write to me at [chair@wrenbury.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:chair@wrenbury.cheshire.sch.uk)

**Mr Terry Whalley**

**Chair of Governing Board**