

Annual Governors' Report to Parents 2023

Welcome to our Annual Report to parents for 2023. The purpose of this report is to let you know about the work of the Governing Board.

It is hard to believe another year has gone by, and what an amazing year it has been for our School. As I'm sure you know, Ofsted carried out an inspection of the school at the beginning of the year, and Wrenbury Primary School continues to be a 'Good School'. There was so much positive feedback from the inspectors, both in their written report and also in their commentary to myself and the Governing Board when we met them after their inspection on 12th January. I must congratulate Mrs Cador and thank both her and all the staff who contribute to making our School so good and ensuring pupils "*are proud to belong to a school where everyone matters*".

As a Governing Board, we made a conscious decision to invest in creating time for subject leaders to develop the curriculum, time away from the classroom to really plan their subjects and be as prepared as they can be to deliver this in a way that meets the need of every child. I'm delighted that this investment has been so effective, with so much fantastic feedback from Ofsted inspectors in their report. This, despite the difficulties associated with teaching mixed age classes, shows the work undertaken to create the curriculum has been good. I would encourage you to read Ofsted's report if you haven't already.

I believe this time has also benefitted the wellbeing of teaching staff during what continues to be a very challenging time for everyone. Challenging in the sense of continuing to feel the after effects of the Covid pandemic, but also due to the Cost-of-Living crisis that has affected so many of us. The Governing Board has tried very hard to support families by holding the cost of school meals and the Little Wrens and Nest provisions, but I'm sorry to say that we have little choice but to raise these costs for 2024 given the worsening financial forecasts for the school. Full details will be shared shortly.

It's not just the academic subjects that the school is excelling at. The school has achieved the Platinum Sports Award for the first time, was awarded the 'School of the North' trophy by the LSC Group at their recent Northwest awards ceremony and was part of the nomination in the Global Green Gown awards for its work with Reaseheath College.

The Governing Board

The Governing Board said farewell to Mrs Lesley Midwinter who served first as a Parent Governor and then as a co-opted Governor since 2017. During this time, 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 stable pupil numbers and healthy finances. Mrs Midwinter will be greatly missed, and we all wish her the very best.

I am delighted to say that we have seen Mrs Debbie Rowlands join the Governing Board as a co-opted Governor. I'm sure you will all know that Debbie was a hugely valuable member of school staff for many, many years in her capacity as school administrator and bursar and continues to provide much in the way of voluntary support to Mrs Cador and the teaching staff. I'm confident that Debbie will bring a fresh energy and perspective to the Wrenbury School as we enter 2024.

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 8 Co-opted governors, 2 Parent Governors, 1 Local Authority Governor, 1 Staff Governor and the Headteacher. We currently have 1 vacancy (Local Authority Governor). 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 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 two committees to consider the different aspects of the school in detail: 'Teaching & Learning' and 'Leadership and Management'. 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 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 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.

The Teaching & Learning Committee have reviewed in detail the recent assessment of pupil's attainment data, looking at achievement against 'expected' and 'exceeded' targets for all children in all year groups.

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 23/24 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 22/23 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 'Good' rating on the last SFVS Return, (the highest grading possible!) demonstrating the rigour of oversight provided by the Governors.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Wellbeing

This committee has had 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.

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.

Attendance continues to be good for most children, with attendance this autumn consistently over 96%, above the national school average.

The Governors were very thankful to Mr Colin Eaton who worked tirelessly during the summer to liaise with contractors and oversee the installation of LED lighting throughout school, the replacement of the fire panel and all detectors, installation of a fire door, legionella works and some internal and external painting as well the cleaning of all areas in school, all of which had to be managed and coordinated around 4 weeks of HAF (Holiday Activity Funded) club for disadvantaged pupils. He remained on call for these 4 weeks and the school has benefitted hugely from all these works.

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. Mrs Cador's outstanding leadership securing our Ofsted 'Good' rating was recognised together with other aspects of the development of our rich curriculum.

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. Important policies

such as Child Protection and Safeguarding, e-Safety, Attendance, Complaints, Grievance, and our Accessibility Plan for 2022-25 have also been reviewed.

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.

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. This additional money makes a huge difference to the experience and enrichment the children are offered in school.

Looking Ahead

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

The Governors held a strategic planning session in September. We reviewed progress on our 2022/23 priorities and agreed the following priorities to work on in 2024.

- To embed the school's ambitious curriculum planning model to ensure equity for all groups.
- To further improve outcomes for all children in English (reading, writing and oracy) through prioritising basic skills.
- To sustain attendance rates overall and especially for those children / families with lower or poor attendance to support better outcomes.
- To develop teaching practices which will enable all children to understand what they need to do to learn effectively.
- Governing Body / Senior Leadership Team development and succession planning
- Environmental Sustainability
- Capacity (physical space), including consideration of School House.

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

Mr Terry Whalley

Chair of Governing Board