

Woodcote Primary School

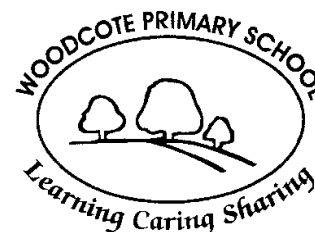
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Chair of Governors: Helen Pearce Harvey



Governor Newsletter – Autumn 2022

Welcome from the Chair

A warm welcome to all our parents, carers and members of the Woodcote Primary School community to the Autumn 2022 Governor Newsletter. Once again we are flying through the academic year at an alarming pace and before we know where we are we will be attending nativity plays and Christmas Fairs at the school, a very busy but much anticipated and enjoyed time of year.

It's been some time since the last Governor newsletter, and we are very aware that many of the newer members of our community may never have had the opportunity to hear directly from the Governors of the school. In this newsletter we aim to provide a little insight into what our role is in supporting the strategic direction of the school and how the Governing body is structured. Looking ahead, we will produce two newsletters a year providing a range of insights into the work the Governors do.

The Governing body is proud to be part of this vibrant school and play our small part in ensuring it continues to thrive. We are incredibly lucky to have a school that offers access to the very best rounded curriculum at the heart of our village, not to mention the outstanding staff group who regularly go above and beyond to make sure our children receive the very best education.

We hope you find this newsletter informative and look forward to seeing many of you at the Christmas Fair on the 16th December.

Our Governing Body Structure

The school Governors have a varied and important role supporting the school's senior leaders in setting the strategic direction of the school. Governors are not involved with the day to day management of the school - this sits firmly with our Head Teacher Mrs Hunt and her Senior Leadership team (SLT). Instead, the Governor role is a strategic one focused on a valuable relationship of support and challenge between the school's leadership team and the Governors - we act as a 'critical friend' to drive school improvement.

Our three core functions focus on a more strategic level:

- Ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school
- Overseeing financial performance of the school and ensuring money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher and school leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.

We have a committee structure to our Governing Board with 4 main committees:

- Resources
- Standard and Achievements
- Pay & Staffing
- Communications

In addition, we have a major project working group that looks specifically at larger scale premises projects. A fifth committee can also be formed as required to handle any complaints we receive that escalate to Governors.

Our Governing Body consists of parent governors, co-opted governors, a staff governor, local authority governor and the head teacher. We also have associate members to the board who provide input on specific areas but have no voting rights.

The Full Governing Body meets three times a year, with three further strategy meetings during the same period. In addition, each committee will hold termly meetings to discuss areas that have been delegated to them by the full governing board.

The below structure chart outlines our committee structure and membership.

Full Governing Body

Helen Pearce Harvey – COG
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Helen Pearson – Staff Governor
Diana Hadaway – Co-opted Governor
Andy Hawley – Co-opted Governor
Chris Butterfield – Co-opted Governor
Helen Coyne – Clerk

Martin Towers – Parent Governor
Phil White – Parent Governor
Georgina Bickerton – Parent Governor
Bryan Urbick – LA Governor
Vacant – Co-opted Governor
Vacant – Parent Governor

Strategy Group (Chairs)

Helen Pearce Harvey – COG
Liz Hunt – Hd Teacher
Andy Hawley – Governor
Martin Towers – Governor
Chris Butterfield – Governor

Resources Committee

Andy Hawley – Chair
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Jane Gillman – School Business Manager
Phil White – Bld & Maintenance & H&S Governor
Helen Pearce Harvey – Governor
Georgina Bickerton – Governor

Standards & Achievement Committee

Martin Towers – Chair
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Helen Pearson – Staff Governor
Marie Wornham – Deputy Head Teacher
Diana Hadaway – Governor
Helen Pearce Harvey – Governor
Chris Butterfield – Governor

Pay & Staffing Committee

Chris Butterfield – Chair
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Helen Pearce Harvey – Governor
Diana Hadaway – Governor

Communications Committee

Helen Pearce Harvey – Chair
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Georgina Bickerton – Governor
Helen Pearson – Governor
Bryan Urbick – Governor

Link Governors

Safeguarding – Helen Pearce Harvey
Finance – Andy Hawley
Early Years – Diana Hadaway
SEN – Martin Towers
Wellbeing – Chris Butterfield
Buildings & Maintenance, H&S – Phil White
GDPR – Chris Butterfield
Major Projects – Helen Pearce Harvey

Associate Members

Marie Wornham – Deputy Head
Anna Bartlett – Major Projects

Major Projects Working Group

Helen Pearce Harvey – Chair
Liz Hunt – Head Teacher
Andy Hawley – Governor
Phil White – Governor
Bryan Urbick – Governor
Anna Bartlett

Resources Committee – Andy Hawley, Chair

Our Resources Committee has responsibility for finances, premises and health and safety and works closely with Mrs Hunt and the School Business Manager Jane Gillman on all these areas.

The committee has a strategic role in the financial management of the school and delegated responsibility for financial planning and detailed budget monitoring on behalf of the Governing Board. The committee also has responsibility for any matter concerning the school's premises including its buildings and associated maintenance requirements and the school's health and safety requirements. However, in this newsletter we will focus on the financial responsibility of the committee.

The finance focus of the committee uses the priorities in the School Improvement Plan, as well as current income and outgoings, to ensure the money is being spent in the right place with the needs of the pupils and staff in view at all times.

We do this in several ways including:

- Regularly monitoring the actual income and expenditure of the school.
- Ensuring a balanced three-year annual budget is submitted to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) each year.
- Reviewing, monitoring and evaluating relevant sections of the School Improvement Plan.

One of the formal meetings each year is used to review, and discuss the annual budget for the school prior to it being presented to the Full Governing Board, approved by the Chair of Governors and submitted to OCC. The budget submitted to OCC must include a three year budget plan and be balanced, and it is put together using information from past performance, future plans and input from key stakeholders.

The committee also reviews a mandatory document called the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS), which provides a framework to ensure our standards of financial health and resource management are strong and robust.

In future newsletters we will update you on our work in the Resources Committee.

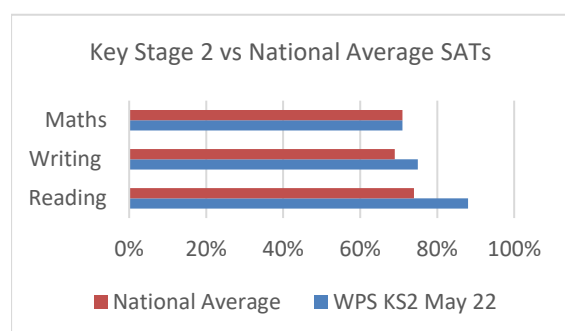
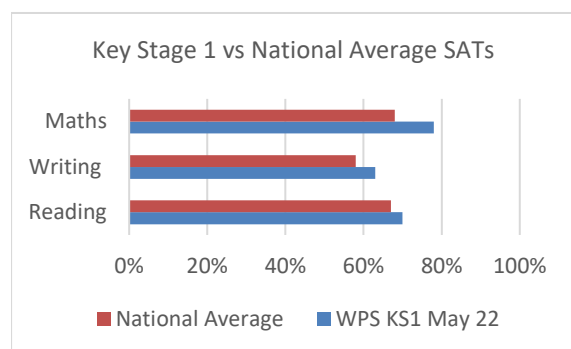


Standards and Achievements Committee – Martin Towers, Chair

This committee is responsible for monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and achievement and for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating key areas of the curriculum offered by the school. We meet 3 times a year in advance of the Full Governing Body meeting, as well as individual link governor meetings with relevant staff members throughout the year.

One important activity for this committee is to review and analyse the SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) that our year 2 and 6 children are required to sit. The 2021/2022 SATs (sat in May 2022) were the first formal assessments undertaken by our pupils since 2019 and as a governing board we are fully aware of the challenging time both pupils, staff and our wider community have had over the last few years.

Despite these challenges we are incredibly proud to report that across the board our pupils achieved outstanding results in these tests:



(The above figures refer to our "expected standard" results, we are still awaiting confirmed national figures for comparison with our greater depth score.)

This demonstrates the crucial job our teachers and support staff did during the pandemic, supporting our pupils and families, ensuring that teaching very much continued at Woodcote Primary School. The results show that whilst there will invariably be some impact from the COVID years, as a school the impact to our pupils has so far been minimised.

SATs, however, only cover a small part of the curriculum we offer at Woodcote Primary and provide a narrow snapshot of the progress and attainment of our pupils. This committee will also discuss and celebrate pupil progress and achievements across the whole curriculum offered at the school providing us with a rounded and full picture of pupil progress at Woodcote Primary.

At our last meeting we discussed the School Improvement Plan for the 2022/2023 year. This is a document all schools have which outlines objectives for the school over the next 12 months along with actions required to achieve those objectives. As a committee our 3 main priorities in the coming months are:

- Monitoring the impact of actions identified in the 2022/23 School Improvement Plan.
- Continuing to ensure the requirements for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) children are met.
- Implementing a series of school monitoring visits which will focus on curriculum development across the school.

As a committee we also schedule regular visits to the school for all governors which is a key tool in our ongoing monitoring responsibilities.



Meet the (New) Governor – Georgina Bickerton

I have two children at school (Lara in Year 3 and Matthew in Year 1), and we have lived in the village for around 5 years. I was Secretary of the Cabin Pre-school committee for 3 years and this year I've made the move to be a Parent Governor for WPS. It has certainly been a step up, with greater complexity and responsibility but I can already tell it will be extremely rewarding.

I am currently working my way through the excellent training that is on offer, as I do not have a background in education except as a participant! I studied Biology and then Computer Science at university, before finding a career and subsequent professional qualification in Human Resources. My substantive work experience has been in senior Human Resources roles, so I hope to bring some transferable skills from industry to support the school and the fantastic team.

Away from school and work, I am a self-confessed 'nerd'! I spend much of my child-free time with history and science books, documentaries and podcasts, and we will take (drag?) the children to museums and interesting sites on a regular basis. I also love to bake and will take any opportunity to practice, despite things never quite turning out looking like I hope! We spend a lot of family time out in the countryside on foot or bike, but we are fair-weather explorers so we tend to find a nice flat towpath is our preferred route.

I'm really looking forward to my time as a Governor and hope to live up to the responsibilities, whilst also adding to my own skillset and making a useful contribution to the community.

Join the board.....our governor vacancies

We currently have 2 vacancies on our board:

- Parent Governor – a letter has been circulated by our Chair regarding this vacancy and Expressions of Interest are welcomed to the below email address from any parent or carer of a Woodcote Primary School pupil.
- Co-opted Community Governor – this position is open to our wider community to anyone who is not a parent at the school.

If you would like to be considered for one of these vacancies (or know somebody who might) please contact the Chair of Governors on:

chairofgovernors@woodcote.oxon.sch.uk.



Finally...thank you

Governors would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for the outstanding job they have continued to do providing an exceptional level of provision to the pupils at Woodcote Primary.

We would also like to thank our pupils for continuing to be simply fabulous and of course you, the families and wider community for continuing to support the school.