

# **Streatley C of C (VC) School**

**Healthy Happy Humans**



**September 2019**

## **Annual Governance Report 2018/19**

## **Chair's Welcome**

Welcome to our annual governance report in which we review our activities for the past year and reflect on our own effectiveness as a governing board. This report covers the key events for the year, the School and Governor Development Plans and our self-evaluation of the quality of governance.

## **Key events for this year**

- SIAMS inspection
- Governor recruitment
- Monitoring by Governors of the School Development Plan
- On-going Governor Development Plan

## **SIAMS inspection**

In June 2019 the school received a one-day SIAMS inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). The inspection was carried out over the course of a day where the inspectors observed various classes and examples of collective worship as well as speaking to staff, pupils, some parents and the Governors.

The report highlighted how the Christian vision underlined all aspects of the school and was positive about the school having an atmosphere of “One happy family” whilst having strong links with the local community. In addition, the report praised the school for helping to develop “every child spiritually, personally and academically”.

The school was once again rated “Good” and the full report can be viewed on the school website through this link: <http://www.streatleyprimary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SIAMS-Report-June-2019.pdf>

## **Governor recruitment**

In the regular skills audit of the Governors it was felt that we needed to deepen the financial and human resources knowledge of the board and we are delighted to have welcomed Mark Richardson and Christine Jones as School Governors who have expertise in these areas. As a board, we constantly review the skills we have within the group and those areas that need more input and so will continue to recruit to the board as required over the coming year.

## **Review of finances**

The financial challenges that schools face are well documented in the media. Streatley School is no exception and careful financial management is therefore key. As a governing board, we carefully scrutinise our budget funding, ensuring money is spent well whilst supporting the school's improvement priorities and securing value for money. We check our schools' financial performance against schools both nationally and locally using annual bench-marking information published by the Department for Education (DfE).

An annual budget is prepared each year which includes a 3-5 year forecast. This year spending has included renewing the canopy over the area behind the school hall and the board will continue to look at how best to use the schools available budget to best effect.

### **School Development Plan monitoring**

The School Development Plan (available on the school website) as the title suggests, provides an overview of how the school is looking to move forward over the forthcoming year and beyond, and also provides a framework for the Governors to monitor activity at the school.

As set out in last year's Governance Report, we have used the SDP to enhance the way we as a board monitor the progress of teaching rather than just having to rely on the results at the end of each Key Stage. To achieve this we have had more of a subject focus with particular emphasis on mathematics. We have seen many improvements over the year in this area as the National Curriculum continues to develop and there is a clear benefit to the Governors in gaining a great depth of understanding in the specifics of the curriculum alongside having a broader knowledge of all areas.

Alongside this, we still have a specific Governor linked to each class which encourages a greater connection with both children and teachers allowing us to triangulate our assessment of how the school is progressing.

Further direct connection to school life has been achieved with the Governor visit day during which all Governors are in for the day and able to visit each classroom. This opportunity to speak to a range of pupils and staff again allows for a deeper knowledge of what is needed at school as well as giving stakeholders at school an opportunity to express their opinions more widely.

Finally, we also continue to enjoy the insight of John Cavill, our West Berkshire School Improvement Adviser, who helps focus the Boards attention on any areas where the school might need further support to achieve its goals.

## **Governor Development Plan**

In addition to the School Development Plan, the Governors continue to have their own Development Plan which sets out how the SDP is monitored alongside how the Board can continue to fulfil its own obligations and targets.

In conjunction with the SIAMS inspection, we carried out a thorough review of the school website suggesting various changes to make information more accessible as well as making sure that it fulfils our statutory obligations both for the school and the Governing Board itself. The Governance section is now much clearer with details of all members of the Board, make ups of each of our committees, meeting attendance records and reports that will be of interest to the wider school community.

As a Board, we continue to seek out training opportunities individually and collectively for our specific areas of responsibility and monitor that individual development to make sure we are providing informed support to the school in all areas. Governor training and the development plan is seen as a vital element of the Board's role and is a fixed item on each meeting alongside other vital areas such as Safeguarding at School and Health and Safety.

## **Review of quality of governance**

The governing board's remit is to provide 'confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance' (DFE Governance Handbook). Our core functions are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Oversee the financial performance of the school making sure its money is well spent

As a board, we take our function and duties very seriously. We work in close partnership with school leaders to create a culture and ethos of continuous improvement placing the best interests of our children at the heart of our work. Our board meetings are conducted in an atmosphere of openness and trust, enabling honest dialogue with plenty of healthy debate as we work towards finding effective solutions.

Dan Lowery

Chair of Governors  
September 2019