

Governor Impact Report 2022-2023

At the end of every school year the Governing Body writes an Impact Report, looking at the ways in which we have supported and challenged the school and its leadership team. Governors are described as "critical friends": we support the school in achieving the best possible outcomes for the children in its care, while ensuring that it remains financially sound and reflects a positive ethos and clear set of values. We are accountable to the school stakeholders and this report will set out how we have carried out our responsibilities over the past year. Firstly, however, we will explain who we are.

WBJS Governors: who we are and how we work

WBJS Governing Body currently consists of 12 people along with the Head and Deputy Head Teachers; we are a mix of staff, parents, ex-parents and members of the local community. Our role is to support and challenge school leadership. While Mr Willis is responsible for the operational management of the school, governors help provide strategic vision and leadership support. We hold two meetings per term: one has a focus on Strategy, the other focuses on Finance.

This year we have welcomed three new parent governors, Kate Boxall, Emma Nixon and Clare Shawcross. For the first time since 2019 all our governing body meetings have been held in school. We access administrative support through Nottinghamshire County Council's Governor Services; our clerk is Caspia Baird.

Name	Type of Governor	Specific Monitoring Roles
Catherine Bancroft	Deputy Head Teacher, Associate member of the governing body	
Kate Boxall	Parent governor	English subject link
Lis Gibbon	Vice-Chair of governors (Strategy), co-opted governor	Safeguarding, Pay committee, Science and DT subject link
Jat Hanspal	Parent governor	Website, Arts and computing subject link, Governor Training coordinator, appraisal quality assurance
Adam Hendry	Local Authority governor	Headteacher appraisal, Wellbeing, PSHE subject link
Claire Hughes	Parent governor	English subject link, Health and Safety, Pay Committee
Lucy James	Chair of governors, co-opted governor	Headteacher appraisal, SEND, MFL subject link
Dominic Judge	Parent governor	Headteacher appraisal, Geography subject link
Leah Kimuyu-Stewart	Vice-Chair of governors (Finance), co-opted governor	Pay committee, History and RE subject link
Craig Martin	Staff governor	
Emma Nixon	Parent governor	Music subject link
Clare Shawcross	Parent governor	Maths and PE subject link
James Willis	Headteacher	
Shaarna Whitton	Parent governor	Maths subject link, Pupil Voice

Strategic Function

The Governing Body acts as a key strategic decision-maker within the school, holding the leadership team to account and upholding the school's central ethos and values, while seeking to help improve educational outcomes for all children. This role is fulfilled through regular communication in our governor meetings, as well as monitoring and evaluation through visits to the school and data analysis. Twice a year we spend a day in school on our Talk and Walk Days. On Talk Days we look at and discuss specific objectives within the School improvement plan with the senior leadership team; on Walk Days we sit in on lessons in every year group, which gives us a really good insight into day

to day life in school. On both days we discuss staff wellbeing with members of staff; we listen to children telling us about their experiences of school; and we carry out subject link and other monitoring. We also continued to carry out our strategic function in other ways:

- through twice-termly governor meetings;
- our link monitors worked with subject leads to monitor curriculum development;
- the Head and Chair talk regularly to discuss any ongoing concerns;
- we review and approve school policies in every Governing Body meeting.

Vision, Ethos and Values

The school's vision and ethos is set out on the website and includes the following:

West Bridgford Junior School is a vibrant, happy and exciting place where we very much see the development of your child as a partnership between us; a place where we learn together. We want all our school community to feel valued, strive to do their best and love learning.

The whole ethos of the school is one of high achievement, co-operation and awareness of others and their needs.

Last year the school set out a long term vision and strategy: *Our aim is to develop a nurturing community which inspires children to develop a love of learning and discover their full potential.* Our long term priorities include:

- Continue to develop and improve our broad and balanced curriculum, providing a wide range of rich learning opportunities to enhance children's 'cultural capital.'
- Return to and exceed pre-pandemic levels of attainment, in terms of the percentage of children at and above age related expectations in reading, writing and maths by the end of KS2.
- Become a beacon of excellence in our local community, having a positive impact and allowing our children to develop as caring and compassionate citizens.
- Support pupils and staff to be happy and healthy, providing tools and strategies for them to take care of their emotional wellbeing.
- Improve our physical learning environment both at Main School and at Cottages.

Over the past two years the school has made considerable progress in working towards these goals: there has been extensive investment in the school's physical environment; the curriculum is now well developed; levels of attainment are improving; and we have had several successful community events, such as the summer Food Festival. The Governing Body and senior leadership team will revisit these priorities next year and look at new ways in which the school can improve and make progress.

As governors we were involved in the development of the school ethos and long term vision, and as part of the school community we helped to determine the School Values which are:

Equality, Teamwork, Perseverance, Creativity, Respect and Fun

The school continues to use its Learning Champions to help develop and embed these values:

Professor Perseverance, Creative Cat, Have a Go Hero, Captain Curiosity, The Collaboration Kids, The Get Better Guys, Respectful Ranger

School Improvement Plan

Governors work with the Headteacher and senior leadership team to agree priorities and targets for annual school improvement. Our key priorities are identified from data and evaluation by staff and governors. Four governors, including the Chair and Vice Chair for Strategy, closely scrutinised the plan at the beginning of the school year; it is then further scrutinised and challenged by the Governing Body as a whole. It is regularly monitored throughout the year at Strategy meetings.

This year's priorities were:

- To improve the standard of writing across school, increasing the percentage of children working at and above age-related expectations.
- To improve the quality of provision for children with SEND across school.
- To embed our knowledge based curriculum across school and provide children with opportunities to know more and remember more.

These priorities are regularly referred to throughout the year during our Full Governing Body meetings. They are rag rated, to check that objectives are being met or on the way to being met.

The School Improvement Plan is always set out with clear objectives, specific actions and success criteria to measure outcomes. We are still seeing the impact of the pandemic on children's learning outcomes and continue to explore ways of mitigating the effects of the disruption of the past few years. This year's SATs data is very positive and suggests that the measures we have had in place to close the gap as much as possible are working. However, there remain considerable challenges for a wide range of children in terms of catching up to where they would otherwise be. As a school, we are committed to closing the gap as much as possible and to return to pre-pandemic levels of attainment. As a Governing Body, we closely monitor children's progress throughout the school and ensure that the necessary resources are available to allow for the best outcomes for all children.

Governor Monitoring and Evaluation

It is very important to us that we monitor and evaluate effectively. One of the ways in which we do this is via formal, Full Governing Body meetings. At these meetings we scrutinise school policies; we ask questions that relate to the termly Head Teacher's report which covers all aspects of the school; and we monitor appraisal, assessment, SEND, safeguarding and other key matters. The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that attainment and progress in key areas will continue to improve and, in areas where attainment is already high, that this will be maintained.

As mentioned above, we were able to carry out our Talk Day in the autumn term and our Walk Day in the summer term: we were able to talk to staff and pupils, observe lessons, undertake link monitoring visits and experience school life in general:

- Our Safeguarding link governor carries out termly Safeguarding audits as well as termly checks of the Single Central Record.
- Our SEND link governor carries out an annual SEND monitoring and review.
- We have held discussions with staff around their wellbeing.
- Our GDPR link governor meets regularly with the Head Teacher and Data Protection Officer to ensure that our digital data is safe and not in breach of any guidelines.
- The Health and Safety governor carries out monitoring visits twice a year and works with the School Business Manager and school caretaker to ensure that the school environment is safe.

The impact of this monitoring is that by gathering first-hand knowledge, our understanding of school improvement priorities is enhanced. This in turn helps us to challenge school leaders and make better-informed decisions regarding future school priorities. Safeguarding is central to our strategic function and was a key part of the Ofsted inspection; as governors we undergo regular Safeguarding training, and it is raised as an issue throughout our meetings and monitoring visits.

Curriculum Provision, Teaching and Learning, Assessment

The school seeks to provide a broad and balanced curriculum across all year groups. In addition to the core academic areas, our pupils enjoy regular science lessons, music, art and a range of sports activities. The new Ofsted framework, introduced in 2019, focuses less on data than the previous framework and more on the curriculum and its intention, implementation and impact. Inevitably the prolonged period of online learning 2020-2021 had an impact on the breadth of subjects that were covered; one of our priorities continues to be that the school has a clear curriculum map for all subjects and a thorough system to monitor and deliver an up-to-date, inclusive curriculum.

This year the Governing Body has contributed to Teaching and Learning:

- Most subject link governors have met with their subject leads to discuss the subject impact report and Self Evaluation Framework. This was helpful as it enabled us to ask each subject lead about the time and support given and the consistency of implementation across the school. It also helps us to ensure that subject planning is of a high level across the curriculum. This is recorded in a monitoring report.
- As part of the school appraisal system, governors ensure that all members of staff have a robust and regular system of appraisal, aligned with school outcomes and the system of performance management.
- We closely monitor the learning outcomes of the most vulnerable children in the school, including those with pupil premium funding, children for whom English is an additional language, and children with additional needs. Although these children constitute a small proportion of the whole school, we recognise the particular impact that good practice can have on their educational, social and emotional well-being. Our SEND governor monitors provision for children with additional needs, in the form of an annual monitoring visit as well as working closely with the Head, SENCO and SEN manager.
- We ensure that all children, including the most academically able, are challenged and stretched by what they are taught in school.
- A group of governors monitored SATs provision, sitting in on tests and ensuring that they were carried out correctly.
- An external provider carried out a Quality Assurance visit in April, to evaluate the work done since the school's Ofsted visit in Nov 2021. This was fed back to governors, providing a strong evidence base to help us improve our understanding and ability to challenge, especially around school leadership, curriculum, and Teaching and Learning

Our senior leadership team monitor the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observations and work scrutiny. Governors receive feedback from the leadership team, which allows Governors to monitor how teaching and learning is continually reviewed, developed and improved. The impact of this is that we ensure that our children receive the best possible learning experience and outcomes at school.

Continual professional development opportunities for staff are offered where appropriate. Our children are supported by caring, enthusiastic and highly motivated staff, and the impact of this is that our children are enthusiastic to learn and achieve their potential.

Financial performance and management

Governors are responsible for ensuring that the school's budget is managed effectively to benefit the learning of our pupils and that financial management systems are robust and secure. Mrs Eadie, our new School Business Manager, presents the budget and ensures effective financial management and planning, with support from Nottinghamshire County Council.

- Governors carry out financial and budget monitoring with termly scrutiny of the budget and longer term financial plan.
- In the Autumn term a financial audit was carried out by the Local Authority's finance team, who made a number of recommendations for improvement. This is done every four years and provides a helpful oversight of school financial processes. As governors we ensure that the recommendations are carried through.
- The Governing Body approved several significant capital projects:
 - Redecorating the corridors in the main school building
 - Installing LED lighting across the school
 - Re-fitting of Y6 toilets and washroom
- Every year governors scrutinise and approve the school pay award and carry out the Head Teacher appraisal.
- We use a Risk Register which we use to assess levels of financial risk and how best to mitigate them.
- We review the asset management plan and inventory regularly to ensure that the school building and assets are kept in as good a condition as possible.

- Governors have discussions around financial benchmarking and regularly scrutinise and challenge decisions around expenditure and supply costs.

While the school is in a reasonable financial position, increasing costs have had an impact on the budget and will continue to do so. An overview of our financial position can be found here: <https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/school?urn=122600> . As you are probably aware, all schools are facing considerable pressures in terms of increased costs and diminishing resources. We are fortunate in having the support of a very experienced School Business Manager in Mrs Eadie, along with the Nottinghamshire County Council finance team; we have also been able to raise some extra funds through a very dynamic and creative HSA team. We are very grateful to all the parents and carers who have been able to contribute to events through the school year, and the staff who have given up their time to support the film nights, discos and school fairs. There is no immediate end in sight to the current financial situation, as costs continue to rise; as a Governing Body, we work to ensure that the school is in a financially robust position, in order to improve the school environment, keep children safe and to have a positive impact on children's learning.

Leadership and management

The Governing Body works closely with the school's Senior Leadership Team. As well as Mr Willis and Mrs Bancroft, the Assistant Head Teacher Mrs Arnold, the SENCO Mr Martin and the School Business Manager Mrs Eadie all regularly attend the Governing Body meetings to present and discuss their areas of responsibility. As governors we support and challenge the leadership team in specific ways:

- Three governors constitute the Head Teacher appraisal committee; with the aid of an external appraiser we set objectives and regularly met throughout the year with Mr Willis to monitor how he is meeting these objectives. This year the focus has been on preparing a long term strategic vision for the school, curriculum development and improving the standard of writing across the school, in line with the School Improvement Plan. The impact of this is that the governors understand, through their assessment of the leadership and performance of the Headteacher, the areas of strength and development needs within the school as a whole.
- We continually seek to prioritise the wellbeing of all staff in the school, including school leadership. The school has a Wellbeing Policy, reflecting the Governing Body's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of school staff and acknowledging the impact of stress on mental and physical health. We have regular discussions on wellbeing between staff and governors at Talk and Walk days, in order to promote staff wellbeing as far as is reasonably practicable.
- As "critical friends" we ask questions of the termly Head Teacher report; the answers are recorded and discussed at governor meetings, with the objective of monitoring attainment, curriculum coverage, safeguarding and other key strategic issues.

Partnership arrangements

We continue to work closely with West Bridgford Infant School. Two of our governors are also governors at the Infant School, which helps provide insight into how best to support children moving from Y2 to Y3, and how best to ensure continuity of provision. In June we set up a working group across the two governing bodies, looking at how to ensure that the schools could work together in the best interests of the wider school community, and how to ensure consistency in ethos, values and vision. There is a great deal of alignment between the two schools' visions, in particular: community; emotional wellbeing; high expectations; and high quality teaching and learning.

In last year's Impact Report I discussed how the Government White Paper on Education had set out an expectation for all schools to be part of a Multi Academy Trust by 2030. However, this legislation has now been shelved and there is no longer any such requirement. However, we remain open minded to the different options available to the school and will continue to research and explore the opportunities available for further collaboration to help further school improvement. Over the past year the school has begun to collaborate more closely as part of a group of ten non-academised schools in Rushcliffe: this has been very useful for the school leadership team, as well as the SBM, and the network is looking to increase the levels of collaboration to subject leaders as well. Academisation remains an option, even though it is no longer compulsory; if it is clear that it is in the best interests of the school to join a MAT,

then the Governing Body will exercise due diligence by carefully researching and discussing every Trust that we think might be a good match. However, we recognise that this is a huge decision for the school community and will be sure to follow due process, involve stakeholders and ensure that the school's ethos and values remain central at every stage. Our priority is to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for the children at our school.

The future and continuous development

Governors continue to evaluate our impact on the school, and look for ways to learn and improve our knowledge and understanding. The Local Authority provides a CPD programme which we have accessed throughout the year as well as excellent governor support. Our new governors have accessed Induction training, while others of us have attended a range of sessions, including Pupil and Staff Well-Being, How to Support and Challenge, the Monitoring role of the Link Governor and Safeguarding for Governors. We are members of the National Governance Association, which provides support through conferences as well as regular guidance and updates. All the minutes of our Full Governing Body meetings are available to read on the school website: <https://www.wbjs.com/school-governors/>

We feel fortunate to have such a strong staff team and supportive school community at WBJS. We take part in regular parent forums – this year two were held, on curriculum and enrichment, which were really good ways of engaging with parents and hearing about their experiences of the school. As governors, the best interests of the school, its staff and pupils are at the very centre of everything that we do, and it is a privilege to be able to support the school as best we can. We hope you all are able to enjoy a break over the summer holidays, and we look forward to continuing to work with you next year.

Lucy James

Chair of Governors, West Bridgford Junior School