

Governor Impact Report 2023-2024

The West Bridgford Junior School Governing Body exists to support and challenge the school and its leadership team. We are accountable to the school's stakeholders, so at the end of every year we write an Impact Report which sets out how we have carried out our responsibilities. In addition to our usual schedule of meetings and monitoring, this year we made the decision to form a collaboration with West Bridgford Infant School, which will start in September. The report will look at this decision as well as what we have done overall. 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, Deputy Head and Assistant 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 one new parent governor, Jo Elbourn, and one new co-opted governor, Claire Wheeler. We access administrative support through Nottinghamshire County Council's Governor Services; our clerk is Caspia Baird.

Name	Type of Governor	Specific Monitoring Roles
Beth Arnold	Assistant Head Teacher, Associate member of the governing body	
Catherine Bancroft	Deputy Head Teacher, Associate member of the governing body	
Kate Boxall	Parent governor	English subject link, GDPR link, Complaints governor
Jo Elbourn	Parent governor	
Lis Gibbon	Co-opted governor	Safeguarding, Headteacher appraisal, Science and DT subject link
Jat Hanspal	Co-opted governor	Website, Arts and computing subject link, Governor Training coordinator, appraisal quality assurance, Pay Committee
Claire Hughes	Co-opted governor	English subject link, Health and Safety
Lucy James	Chair of governors, Local Authority governor	Headteacher appraisal, SEND, MFL subject link
Dominic Judge	Co-opted governor	Headteacher appraisal, Geography subject link
Craig Martin	Staff governor	
Emma Nixon	Vice-Chair of governors (Strategy), parent governor	Music and History subject link, Wellbeing
Clare Shawcross	Parent governor	Maths and PE subject link, Pay Committee
James Willis	Headteacher	
Claire Wheeler	Co-opted governor	Pay Committee
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. We do this through reading and discussing reports from Senior Leadership 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:

At West Bridgford Junior School, we believe that our core purpose as educators is to be a nurturing community which inspires children to develop a love of learning and discover their full potential.

We endeavour to produce a happy, caring atmosphere in which our children can learn. We are keen to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their education, not just intellectually, but also socially, physically, and creatively. Our school encourages positive relationships between our children, teachers and parents. We value our children and the contributions that they make, and we encourage them to value themselves and others.

WBJS is a place where diversity and equality are embraced. We aim to provide a safe and caring environment within which children enjoy challenges and feel safe to make mistakes. We believe that all children have talents which can be developed, and that everyone can succeed. We provide a wide range of learning experiences through which children will gain a positive self-image to help them on their path as confident and motivated life-long learners.

A year ago we met with governors from West Bridgford Infant School to look at ways in which we could increase our collaborative and joint work, and to explore the overlapping nature of the schools' vision and values. Following Ms Stevens's decision to stand down as Head Teacher of WBIS, we have had the opportunity to take this further, and decided to establish a collaboration with the Infant School. Mr Willis will be taking on the role as Executive Head Teacher across both schools, and a key part of this role will be to establish a consistent, shared vision and ethos from EYFS to Y6.

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 quality of teaching and learning in maths resulting in better outcomes for children

- To develop a high quality CPD offer for all staff in order to further improve teaching and learning across school.
- To develop and embed a consistent whole school approach to behaviour and culture which promotes our school ethos.
- To become more ‘outward facing’ by collaborating with and learning from other educational settings, the local community and external experts.

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. This year we presented the School Improvement Plan at a parent forum, to set out the school’s objectives to the year to a wider set of stakeholders. This was helpful for both senior leadership and governors, and we really appreciated the feedback from the parents and carers who attended.

The School Improvement Plan is always set out with clear objectives, specific actions and success criteria to measure outcomes. The SATs data is one of the ways in which we measure these outcomes, alongside the school’s internal data. 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. As mentioned above, we were able to carry out our Talk Day in the autumn term and our Walk Day in the summer term. 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.

- 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.

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. 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.

- Most subject link governors have met with their subject leads to discuss the subject impact report and Self Evaluation Framework.

- 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 an annual Quality Assurance visit. This builds on from the school's November 2021 Ofsted visit, and was fed back to governors, providing a strong evidence base to help us improve our understanding and ability to challenge.

Continual professional development opportunities for staff have been a particular priority for the school this year, and a wide range of focused training has been offered. In addition, the school's Inset days have focused on meta-cognition and understanding how children learn best. The impact of this is that we ensure that our children receive the best possible learning experience and outcomes at school

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.
- The Governing Body approved the capital project of new fencing at Cottages.
- Every year governors scrutinise and approve the school pay award and carry out the Head Teacher appraisal.
- 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 Claire Hughes and 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. 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 Mrs Myring 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 further collaboration with the Infant School, staff development and improving writing at greater depth across the school.
- 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.
- Governors are involved in staff appointments, including the appointment of two new teachers starting September 2024.

Partnership arrangements

For much of this year, we have been working through a process of due diligence in exploring the establishment of a formal collaboration agreement with West Bridgford Infant School. We set up a joint working group made up of governors from both governing bodies to look at the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration; and in January both governing bodies attended a presentation from the Local Authority looking at the structure in more detail. We followed advice from the Local Authority's HR, finance and governor services teams and discussed the proposal across several governing body meetings. We also discussed the proposal with school stakeholders, including staff, parents and carers. All leadership appointments across both schools were made internally, and at WBJS Mr Willis will be Executive Head Teacher, Mrs Bancroft Head of School and Mrs Arnold Deputy Head Teacher. The collaboration will be for two years in the first instance, and we are hopeful that it will be of considerable benefit to both schools. For the duration of the collaboration we will continue with both schools having their own Governing Body meetings; in addition, we will have a Joint Collaboration Committee (JCC) consisting of Mr Willis and two governors from each school, to ensure that the collaboration is meeting its goals, which are:

- To further improve the transition process from Y2 to Y3.
- To enhance teaching and learning through shared expertise and training.
- To improve coordination and consistency across the two schools.
- To look for possible financial efficiencies; strengthen strategic leadership capacity across the two schools.
- To improve outcomes for all children by sharing our resources and developing a better understanding of the community we are part of. We will be carefully monitoring the

performance of the collaboration through a range of methods, including stakeholder feedback and assessment data.

Alongside the collaboration with WBIS, the school will continue to work closely within a group of other non-academised schools in Rushcliffe, developing leadership and subject leadership networks. We remain open to the opportunities available to the school for informal collaboration to help further school improvement.

The future and continuous development

Governors continue to evaluate our impact on the school, and look for ways to improve our knowledge and understanding. The Local Authority provides a CPD programme which we have accessed throughout the year as well as governor support. All the minutes of our Full Governing Body meetings are available to read on the school website - >About Us >Governing Body. The most recent approved minutes are also available from the school office.

We are excited at the prospect of working much more closely with the Infant School, as we believe the Collaboration will provide greater consistency in terms of what both schools offer the children in terms of teaching, learning and curriculum development. It will also help provide us with a better strategic overview of how best to improve the outcomes for the children in our school. Thank you for all the support you give the school as parents and carers, and I hope you have a good summer break.

Lucy James

Chair of Governors, West Bridgford Junior School