

# Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

This document gives a brief overview of the activities of the local governing body for Perryfields Infants School for the academic year – September 2023 to August 2024. It is organised around the three primary objectives of the local governing body:

- to set the strategic direction of the school
- to hold the school's leaders to account; and
- to ensure the financial well-being of the school

The academic year 2023/24 is the sixth year that the school has formed part of a multi-school Academy Trust (MAT) - the Chelmsford Learning Partnership (CLP).

The schools in the CLP are: Barnes Farm Infant School, Barnes Farm Junior School, Lakelands Primary School, Perryfields Infant School, Roding Valley High School, The Beaulieu Park School, The Boswells School, The Tyrrells Primary School and William de Ferrers School.

## Setting the strategic direction of the school

As a part of a Multi-school Academy Trust, our overall strategic direction is considered and planned in the wider context of the Trust. A clear scheme of delegation allows the school to operate effectively within the overall supporting framework of the Trust. This has brought benefits through financial economies of scale, capacity building and resilience, training and learning for our staff, sharing of best practice and comparative work between Trust schools and access to a wide range of professional advice when required.

With the support of the Trust, the Perryfields Infants school's ethos and character have been maintained. All decisions by the Trust's Board and the School's local governing body have been made with the interests of the children being the priority and with consideration for the long-term viability and improvement of the school.

During this year, the school also instigated subject leaders' meetings with their colleagues at the Perryfields Junior school (who are not part of the Trust) to share curriculum plans and understand the progression of lessons, thus enhancing the smooth transition of pupils from Year 2 to Year 3.

## Holding the school to account

The local governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the headteacher and staff adhere to the school's policies and deliver the best possible outcomes for all children and that the work of the school in the Trust is given appropriate recognition. As part of its role the governing body holds a Curriculum, Attainment and Progress Committee that meets once each half term to focus solely on these topics.

Links between the School and the Trust have been strengthened, with more communication and reporting back between our local Governors and MAT Trustees.

Using relevant data, school staff have developed predictions to inform curriculum planning for future years and to identify areas for educational improvement. The governing body has continued to work extensively with staff to analyse, test and challenge the results from the development of the curriculum.

Governors have always undertaken visits and walks around the school to ensure familiarity and understanding of school life, to provide additional conversations with the children and ask questions of the teaching staff.

The school has all the relevant statutory policies in place and a system for regular review. Safeguarding arrangements are in place, and reviewed regularly and remain strong.

The governing body is also responsible for monitoring progress against objectives highlighted in the school's improvement plan, which has been well supported by those resources within the Trust's central team that lead on schools' improvement.

## **Ensuring the financial well-being of the school**

Pressure on school budgets grew during last year, particularly for small schools and, given the external challenges of funding and spending, all staff at the school take credit for ensuring the school's budget is spent wisely.

Updated financial systems and procedures have been improved by the Trust's central finance team, who take responsibility for maintaining these systems. The school's local governing body has a responsibility for ensuring that the annual budget and longer-term financial plan are viable and that all spending is focused on helping to deliver the best outcomes for the children.

## **Perryfields Infant School governors**

Our local Governing body comprises 11 members and we have several recently elected Governors. Vacancies are filled by matching willing volunteers to our skills audit lists.

The governing body comprises of:

- 2 Parent governors - elected by parents of the pupils
- 2 Staff governors - elected from the school staff including the headteacher
- 7 Community Governors

The Governing Body helps fulfil the school's mission to provide the best education possible for our pupils by:

- helping the school to set high standards by planning for the school's future and setting targets for school improvement;
- being a true friend to the school, in good times and bad times, offering the school its support and advice;
- helping the school to be responsive to the needs of the community and makes the school more accountable to the public for what it does.

The full Governing Body meets twice each term and we also have a number of committees which meet to consider different aspects of school such as a Pay and Performance Committee. We also have committees that meet if required to consider pupil discipline and staffing matters.

The Governing Body appoints a professional clerk who is responsible for arranging meetings, taking minutes and following up on all actions. The clerk also advises on procedural matters and plays a key role in the working of the Governing Body. In September 2015, rules were introduced requiring governing bodies to publish information about their membership, attendance and their business interests.

Local Governing Body (LGB) Terms of Reference for the Perryfields Infant School, Governors' attendance records and their business interests (if any) can all be found on the school website.

### **Attendance record of governors**

Governors have very good attendance at meetings and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not "quorate" (the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made). Details of individual governors' attendance at meetings are published on the school website.

### **Training**

To effectively fulfil its role, the Governing Body must ensure that all its governors have the required skills and knowledge to support the achievement of the school's priority objectives. All members of Governing Body have undertaken mandatory training such as Safeguarding and Child Protection by attending either the school staff INSET day in September or training by the designated safeguarding lead at the September governor meeting.

### **How you can contact the governing body**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors, Dr Stephen Hill, via the school office. You can see the full list of governors; their attendance at meetings; and more information on the Governors pages of the school website.