



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds



Mill View School

Good things grow here

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Mill View Primary School Governors Annual Impact Statement 2020-21.

September 2021.

Governance.

The LGB met monthly during term time. All meetings during the year were held using Microsoft Teams as were the link meetings between governors and school leaders with lead responsibilities including Finance, Safeguarding & Health & Safety, SEN and GDPR. The Chair of Governors held monthly meetings with the Head Teacher to discuss current and future matters relating to the school's strategic direction and development. These discussions enabled both parties to explore priorities for the forthcoming monthly meeting and to work with the Clerk to ensure the members of the LGB received a relevant agenda and associated papers in advance of the meeting.

When necessary, the Head Teacher consulted the Chair of Governors on matters requiring urgent action. Decisions taken by the Chair at such meetings were subsequently reported to the full LGB at the next meeting.

The members of the LGB are committed people who prepare for each meeting by reading papers and preparing related questions; consequently, meetings involved a high level of participation from all LGB and staff members. [ref. Monthly minutes of LGB meetings]

Governors' attendance was consistently high during the year, as was their involvement with training events presented by the Cheshire Academy Trust CEO and Clerk to the LGB's.

Themes for training covered included:

- Scheme of Delegation
- Triangulation of pupil progress/attainment data
- Preparation for an OFSTED inspection.

A wider impact of the training events was gained through the attending members reporting back on key learning points at subsequent meetings of the LGB.

Training, both NGA online units and the Trust training sessions were recorded and reported at the monthly by the LGB Training governor.

Governors take a lead role & responsibility for key areas of school performance and governance including:

- Finance
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- SEN
- PPG & LAC
- GDPR

- Training
- Well-being

Due to Covid restrictions, these governors arranged individual Teams meetings online with relevant school leaders to discuss the leader's role and responsibilities and how they fulfil these. Subsequently, the governor presented their report to the next LGB and findings from the meeting were discussed, and where relevant procedures changed.

Example:

Following a meeting between the school's SENDCo and the lead SEN governor, the LGB agreed the recommendation that the SENDCo should submit an additional report to the termly whole school report on pupil progress and attainment [SDP targets 2 & 3]. This would present progress and attainment information for pupil groups requiring additional support and intervention based upon their needs which were documented by the SENDCo. This change will be implemented from the Autumn term 2021.

Vision & Strategy

Vision

"Good Things Grow Here"

At the July meeting the Head Teacher and the LGB agreed that it was appropriate to review the existing school vision and mission statements. Both statements continue to have relevance but were written before the current Head Teacher, and majority of LGB, teaching staff and pupils were involved with the school. It was agreed that as a priority, an INSET session in September 2021 would focus upon this and involve representatives from all adult stakeholder groups.

Strategic School Development Plan 2020-23 [SDP].

A reviewed and revised version of this document was presented to the LGB at the September 2020 meeting. It formed the basis for the strategic planning for the coming school year.

Key targets were:

- 1. A clear, defined school vision.***
- 2. Raise academic standards in reading, writing and maths to pre-Covid levels.***
- 3. Continued quality development of teaching, learning and assessment for all groups inc disadvantaged & SEND.***
- 4. Refinement of whole school curriculum.***
- 5. Completion of Nursery consultation & subsequent opening in the following school year. Priorities are shown in red.****

Members of the LGB were guided by the Head Teacher through the key goals and the strategic actions which would deliver these goals. This document was revisited on a termly basis.

The termly presentations to & discussions with the LGB focussed upon:

- The current challenges and impact of COVID on pupils, staff and families including the emotional dimension.
- How progress against the SDP targets for teaching & learning would be achieved in the current circumstances.
- Pupil progress and attainment of EYFS, KS1 & KS2 pupils.
- The risks and benefits of the proposed Nursery/Pre-school Provision.
- Finance – was the planned budget still fit for purpose?

Educational Performance.

During the year, in line with the SDP 2020-21 **priorities***, presentations were made to the LGB by school leaders responsible for:

- English Curriculum [SDP target 2]
- SEN [SDP target 3]
- The work of the Learning Mentor. [SDP target 3]

Covid restrictions excluded members of the LGB from visiting the school to gain a full picture of the teaching and learning systems and processes. To address this limitation, it was agreed by the SLT & LGB, that members of the teaching staff would be invited to attend a meeting of the LGB. School leaders of teaching & learning presented a summary of how they fulfil their roles and responsibilities and exemplified the impact this had upon the pupils' learning. Members of the LGB asked questions for clarification and to gain a wider understanding of how the priorities in the current SDP were being implemented by school leaders.

On a termly basis, the Head Teacher [KS1 & KS2] and Assistant Head Teacher [EYFS] presented detailed data reports on pupil progress and attainment for each year group in the school. [SDP Targets 2 & 3]

These were published to the LGB prior to the last meeting in the term and formed the basis for a discussion at the subsequent LGB meeting. Questioning from LGB members covered a range of areas including:

- The impact of Covid arrangements on pupils educated at home and in school including vulnerable pupil groups
- The impact of Covid on pupils' emotional development and subsequently their progress and attainment.
- Progress in SDP target 2 for improvement in identified curriculum areas across all pupil groups –
 - Groups on track/performing above expectations
 - Groups under-achieving/causing concern
 - Proposed strategies to address under-achievement and concerns.

Behaviour & Attendance.

Attendance.

Termly reports on attendance were normally reported to the LGB by the Head Teacher. The exceptional circumstances due to Covid precluded this from happening.

However, the LGB did receive information during school closure due to Covid on the arrangements for:

- The DfE & Trust guidance on key worker attendance/home school provision being implemented
- the attendance of Key Worker pupils/vulnerable pupils
- phased return for pupil group in year group 'bubbles'
- staffing arrangements for home schooling and in-school teaching
- staff infection levels and the consequential impact on staffing of teaching groups

The board also received feedback on the level of engagement with home schooling across the school year groups and the commitment given by all school leaders and staff to support all families during this challenging period.

Behaviour.

The school's approach to behaviour management – Conscious Discipline – was the focus of a significant presentation to the LGB by the Assistant Head Teacher during the 2019-20 school year. Documented evidence reported by the Head Teacher in the previous school year, demonstrated that this aspect of education was a real strength of the school.

Covid 19 resulted in the majority of pupils being home-schooled for a significant part of the 2020-21 school year. The Head and Assistant Head Teacher reported to the LGB on the emotional impact Covid was having upon pupils, evidenced during their phased return to school. Behaviour changes in some pupils were reported anonymously to the LGB by both school leaders, to exemplify the need for additional staffing support in school during this period. This

minuted evidence justified the approval by the LGB for the allocation of additional funds in the budget to appoint the temporary staffing required for this support.

Finance and HR.

At the start of the school year the Trust delegated greater financial management responsibility to individual school's by creating the role of School Business Manager in each school. This change was received very positively by the LGB, as it allowed a more personalised reporting of all financial information and a simpler access for the Finance Governor and SBM to work in partnership. The SBM received very positive feedback when she presented her first termly report which was deemed to be in a much more accessible and understandable format for members of the LGB.

The SBM, Head Teacher and Finance Governor collaboratively provided detailed termly reports on expenditure, savings and financial projections for the remainder of the school/financial year. Each report was cross referenced to the agreed priorities in the SDP 2020-23. Their work was also supported by the Trust Finance Director ensuring compliancy with Trust policies/procedures as well as providing guidance and support when necessary.

The challenges of Covid 19 and the demands of researching, planning, costing and delivering Pre-school/Nursery provision both had significant impact upon the initial budget planned for the academic year. Members of the LGB sought clarification and validation of any proposed changes to the budget during the year before any approval was given to changes to the approved budget.

Staffing was another area where plans and actualities were different from projected costs due to the impact of Covid 19. The Head Teacher and SBM reported the ongoing changes in staffing, including both temporary appointments to cover staff absence as well as improving provision for the most vulnerable pupils. The impact of these changes was reported and discussed at the monthly meetings, governors affirming the decisions as well as approving the temporary increases in staffing levels in response to needs justified by the Head Teacher & SBM.

Finance governor annual statement:

"Every year we agree a budget based on the funding we receive and allocate spend in line with the priorities in the School Development Plan. The budget is reviewed termly by the School Business Manager, the Principal, and the Finance Governor, in agreement with the Governing Board. We review and discuss spend against budget to ensure that priorities are being focused on and that the financial sustainability of our school is maintained. PPG, Sports premium, and in the last academic year Covid Catch up, finances are closely monitored and reviewed.

*In the school year 2020 – 2021 we centred spend on the top **3 strategic priorities of the school***, in addition to this we ensured that the requirements brought by Covid-19 were prioritised to maintain consistent learning for our children and so that Teachers had the tools necessary to continue to deliver a high-quality education. Investment was made in IT, initially to enable learning at home and now within the classroom. Staff and children have full access to devices and platforms that are embedded into daily sessions to enhance teaching and learning. We will continue to invest strategically to complement and enhance current resources. Investment was made in the outdoor environment of the school with completion of a new and improved outdoor area for KS1. The improvements have enhanced learning in the EYFS curriculum for all pupils, most noticeably in physical development. Forest school and Kitchen Garden have also seen improvements made to allow the children an enhanced outdoor experience. The outdoor environment will continue to be an area in which we will invest.*

We monitor capital investment in the infrastructure of the school. In the last academic year, we consulted on the opening of a pre-school provision at Mill View. In the year ahead budget will be allocated to move this project forward.

Looking ahead, our 3-year forecast is robust allowing the Principle and the School Business Manager to continue to invest and drive forward the strategic improvement plans for the school."

Equality & Diversity [including wellbeing].

Previously, the LGB had discussed these areas of governance within the existing agenda structure of monthly meetings. However, during the school year, the LGB requested that due to the impact of Covid 19, the importance of the well-being of all staff and pupils, it was decided that it required a stronger LGB focus and this was achieved by:

- Appointing a governor to lead and report on well-being
- Include it as a distinct item on the monthly agenda of the LGB.

This resulted in the LGB gaining a greater understanding of the on-going impact of Covid 19 on the physical and emotional well-being of the whole school community. It also enabled them to be more informed when responding to temporary changes in staffing as well as supporting proposals from the Head Teacher, regarding the allocation of additional financial resources when required.

The LGB welcomed the school taking a lead role within the Trust on Diversity & Equality. The Head Teacher's appointment of an Equality & Diversity Leader on the teaching staff received very positive response from the LGB and she is to be invited to present to them in the next school year.

Compliance & Safeguarding.

The Trust has a rigorous system in place to ensure all statutory policies and procedures are complied with by each Trust school. Monthly meetings formally receive copies of updated policies & procedures from the Trust and the school's leaders.

The Head or Assistant Head Teacher and the Clerk to the LGB, when required by members of the board, were called upon to indicate changes/impact of policy or procedural changes when relevant. They expanded the key aspects of the policy which had changed and how these changes would impact upon the leadership and management of the school. Subsequently these documents were formally received. Lead governors also informed the LGB of best practice based upon policy.

Example:

All members of the LGB were advised by the GDPR Lead governor that best practice based upon statutory policy required all members of the LGB to securely dispose of hard copies of LGB documentation. It was agreed that the school would provide shredding facilities should members require this.

Safeguarding is a critical area of governance. All LGB members had completed the required NGA training during the 2019-20. The Safeguarding governor is appropriately trained and has held to post for a considerable number of years. She works in partnership with the school's Assistant Head Teacher, Safeguarding Lead for the school, who is extremely experienced and knowledgeable in this area. The Safeguarding Governor annually audits all statutory Safeguarding paperwork held in school including the external [Local Authority] and internal [Trust] audits of registers, procedures, and documentation. During the year, the LGB received reports from the Safeguarding governor, the school and the Trust and were affirmed that the school is fully compliant in this important area.