



Annual Governance Statement- March 2021

Governance Arrangements:

The Governors are part of the Leadership of the school. Together with the leadership team they have strategised, planned, monitored and supported every aspect of the school's work. This has happened through termly Full Governing Body meetings, regular committee meetings, and Key Lead Governors with Subject Leaders across Teaching and Learning. Each Governor establishes an understanding of school management, curriculum and learning across Key 2 through individual visits to meet staff and observe lessons and other activities. They have also attended Governance training sessions during the year.

A list of Governors and their roles can be found on the school website.

Attendance record of governors:

Governors have very good attendance at all meetings. To attract new governors, discussions take place in meetings to raise parents' awareness of parent places on the governing body and in considering community leaders who have an interest in supporting their local school. The budget is monitored closely by the governors by those involved in the Finance committee and for all governors in the termly governor meetings. Governors are aware of the excellent practice of the school's business manager. Governors ensure the school achieves value for money by involvement in any staff/environmental changes that may need choice of staff or best value contractors for example

- Governors carefully consider all areas of the School Improvement Plan.
- Governors receive a termly report about staff training/development
- The school is working with other schools in areas of Teaching and Learning

The Work of the Governing Body

Core Functions

Aside from the Full Governing Body, our committees include:

- Finance, Premises, Personnel and H&S
- Curriculum Committee
- Safeguarding
- Attendance

Each committee has a 'Terms of Reference' statement. The minutes of the Full Governing Body are available at the school office. From time to time highly confidential matters are discussed and these happen in Part 2 of the agenda. All Governors sign annually a Code of Conduct.

Effectiveness and Impact

The school has a 'School Development Plan' (SDP). This is reported on to the Governing Body every term. The Governance team constantly ask themselves how the work they are doing helps to develop the quality of learning and progress for the children. They question the school on its

priorities, targets and action plans contained in the SDP. Then governors will ask what impact have these actions achieved and how will any shortfall be corrected to achieve targets set.

In September 2019 the school year began with pupils enjoying a broader approach to the curriculum which involved them in new and interesting topics. Many exciting activities and educational trips were being planned to make the curriculum come alive for pupils and increase their access to a range of experiences. Christmas was celebrated with a wonderful musical which demonstrated the skills and talents of our pupils. At the Christmas Fair pupils sold the products they had made with great entrepreneurial spirit raising a large sum for school funds. All was going well....

February 2020 brought us the warning signs of the pandemic and March brought almost complete shutdown. Only a small number of pupils were in school until the end of May and then slightly larger groups of older pupils returned for a few weeks in June and July. All pupils returned in September and managed to complete a whole term in school although the activities they could undertake were restricted by social distancing etc. January 2021 brought yet another school closure with just a group of pupils physically attending.

This last year has been extremely stressful for the SLT and staff of the school as they have worked hard to navigate their way through the restrictions and dangers of the pandemic. They have managed magnificently providing support for pupils and parents and each other. They have shown great flexibility and resourcefulness in providing for the educational, social and emotional needs of the pupils. Governors have been very proud of them and thank them for their dedication to the school. A great deal of strategic planning for 'catch-up' has been developed and embedded creating evidence based actions to support the lost learning of pupils during lockdown.

The governing body has been in the background providing support and giving approval for the measures taken. The headteacher has provided the chair and board with regular updates about changes to procedures and risk assessments etc.

All governing body meetings since March 2020 have been virtual meetings. Attendance by governors at these meetings has continued to be good. We have managed to recruit two new parent governors and two non-school governors who bring with them finance and safeguarding experience which will be very helpful.

The finance committee has continued to monitor the budget and expenditure and has been keen to ensure the school has the resources to meet the needs of making the school covid- safe especially when pupils returned in September. We were pleased that there was funding available to provide laptops to families that needed them.

Pupil well- being is a key aspect of the Limes Farm Junior School ethos and the attendance , safeguarding and well being committee was very pleased to see measures were in place to support pupils and families during the difficult months of lockdown. Members of the team contacted parents regularly to check on their well -being and offer guidance if needed.

On the return to school in September the chair was able to make a physical visit to the school and was able to witness how pleased pupils were to be back. The school environment was colourful and vibrant and the atmosphere warm and welcoming. The chair and vice chair were able to provide evidence of the work done by the school to promote well-being, to the adjudicator of the award panel.

The curriculum committee has not been able to visit the school to carry out monitoring due to risk assessment measures in place but they meet virtually each term with the DHT and other teachers and discuss progress in different subjects. They have noted how the school has improved the remote

learning programme on offer to pupils in this recent closure compared to last year as daily face to face teaching and learning opportunities are scheduled. All staff have worked hard to make this happen and to develop their own expertise to enable them to provide meaningful learning and support for pupils.

In March pupils will again return to school and the governing body will continue to ensure all measures are being put in place to keep them and the staff safe. The governors will be keen to support plans to help pupils make up lost learning and provide the best future possible for pupils of Limes Farm junior School.

The FGB are due to approve the 2021/22 budget plan for the school. The priority of our budget is to ensure that recovery and catch up learning remains at the forefront as well as ensuring the curriculum provision is rich, broad, balanced, bespoke and relevant.

The FGB are responsible for the renewal of our policies & procedures. Statutory policies are being updated in accordance with legislation. These can be seen on our school website.

Overall effectiveness of the school is a '2' overall. The following areas from the last OFSTED report show how the good rating was maintained. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Enthusiastic leadership and unwavering expectations have ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength. Headteacher leads through the school motto, 'achieving is believing'. Leadership is delegated effectively so that all staff play a pivotal role in the school's performance. Consequently, staff are very proud to work at Limes Farm Junior School. There is a culture of trust and transparency with pupils and parents that help the school to communicate well with them. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their school experience and celebrate the differences that make them each unique. They say that 'the school really helps children to improve their confidence and self-esteem. We are all treated the same and it doesn't matter if you speak a different language or believe in something different, the school thinks we are special no matter what.'

At the previous inspection, the school was asked to improve the difference marking and feedback has on pupils' progress and also to provide more challenging activities for the most able pupils. You have taken appropriate action to address these aspects. Inspection evidence, looking at work in pupils' books and the school's current progress and attainment information, shows that what you are doing is making a difference and, despite some pupils having low starting points, pupils are achieving better outcomes. The school ensured that staff had an early and thorough understanding of the new national curriculum. As a result, the curriculum and assessment systems are now well embedded within the school. Leaders use this assessment information effectively to review the progress being made by different groups of pupils and individuals across a range of subjects. Staff are able to support pupils who are falling behind to catch up quickly. Most notably, this work is contributing to the improving progress of disadvantaged pupils. The school has gone from strength to strength since its previous inspection. The school's resolute belief that teaching is a consistently strong focus is securing effective teaching and learning. It is due to positive, transparent working relationships with the neighbouring infant school and rigorous monitoring and evaluation that the starting points for pupils are meticulously checked and verified as accurate. The progress pupils make is improving and is ensuring that pupils leave the school achieving at least the expected national standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Despite the school having many strengths, the governors and the school team do not stand still but continue to review school development work to provide an even better provision for all pupils. The school environment is attractive, thought-provoking and exudes fun and inspiration Leaders and

governors have nurtured a culture and environment in which safeguarding underpins the school's work and pupils are kept safe. The school ensure that all staff and governors participate in regular training in all aspects of safeguarding, including how to support the prevention of radicalisation and extremism. Staff use this training effectively and make appropriate referrals. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, including their attendance, are monitored meticulously. Timely, suitable action is taken to address any issues or concerns. This includes working with external agencies when necessary. Staff record incidents precisely and leaders act on any issues appropriately. As a result, all potential risks are assessed and minimised, and pupils are well cared for. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Parents and staff agree. Pupils confidently explain what they would do in a range of situations to keep themselves safe. The curriculum plays a positive role in helping pupils learn how to keep safe, for example from cyber bullying or misuse of social media. Pupils knowledgeably talk about staying safe online. Pupils also say that behaviour is good. They feel confident approaching any adult in the school as they know that staff will alleviate their concern. Pupils both acknowledge and value their diversity. They take pride in helping each other to feel comfortable and happy at school. One pupil said, 'It's about caring about each other no matter what year you are in and looking out for each other. Sometimes even we need help even though we are the oldest children here.' Governors are aware of all staff training and make visits to the school to monitor their particular area of responsibility.

Following the 2016 OFSTED report, areas that have been a focus include:

Next steps for the school Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- an increasing number of pupils apply their curriculum knowledge more precisely so that they make even quicker progress to attain the national high standard in reading, writing and mathematics
- they act on the advice from the local authority so that all governors are as effective as the best ones with the support and challenge that they give to leaders. Future Plan for the governors Our School Development Plan will reflect our whole school review. Focus Development areas for Governance:
- Continue to strengthen Governor monitoring roles in line with Ofsted Framework
- Ensure that all Governors have a clear understanding at the beginning of the academic year of where the school is placed in their journey of improvement

How the Governing Body can be contacted

The Governing Body welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents-please contact our Chair of Governors, Mrs M Msallem, via the school office: office@limesfarmjuniorschool.co.uk. If you are interested in becoming a Governor, please contact the Chair of Governors.