

# Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation'

September 2021

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing boards, the 3 core strategic functions of 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation' Governing Board are:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**
- 2. Holding the Headteacher and Co-headteacher to account for the educational performance of the two schools and their pupils.**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the two schools and making sure their funding used effectively.**

## **Governance arrangements**

The 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation' was formed in September 2015. A maximum of sixteen governors can be members of the Governing Board. The makeup of the Board comprises two parent governors, one staff governor, one Head Teacher governor, one Local Authority governor, one Bishop's appointed governor, two DBE/PCC governors (one for each village) and eight co-opted/associate governors. Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Board and are people who, in the opinion of the governors, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the two schools. There are six co-opted and two associate governors, at present. (Associate governors are people from the community with specific areas of expertise useful to the school.)

It is important that the Governing Board consists of governors with a good range of skills and this is regularly reviewed at our meetings to ensure we have the best possible team for the two schools.

The full Governing Board meets five times throughout the school year – twice in the autumn and spring terms and once in the summer term. There are four sub committees, each with their own specific terms of reference, to cover all the management aspects of the two schools.

Both schools have their own 'Finance & Premises Committee' because the schools have separate budgets. All other committees are joint, Federation committees. The joint committees are:

- 'Steering and Ethos' committee
- 'Pay, Performance and Personnel' committee
- 'Policies, Curriculum & Standards' committee

All committees, in normal circumstances, meet at least once a term. *(See end of report for a list of Governors.)*

**Attendance record of governors**  
**The work that we have done on our committees and in the governing body**

Governors have an excellent attendance record 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*).

Last year (September 2020 to July 2021) was another very busy and successful year, despite the additional pressures associated with COVID 19 and Lockdowns. Both Schools remained open the whole time for children of key workers and specified groups. There were no face-to-face meetings. Both the FGB and committees met via ZOOM with the aim to maintain 'business as usual'. *About the committees.....*

The '**Finance and Premises Committees**', as well as monitoring and managing the finances of the individual schools, also oversee the general maintenance of the sites and buildings. The committees make important decisions about how the budgets are used. The two finance committees have the same Chair and the Head Teacher is also a member of both. This is particularly important as it means we have a consistent system of monitoring. We always aim to put a high priority on ensuring we have good, highly skilled staff with a good pupil/teacher ratio and we are always looking for ways of further improving the facilities we offer.

It is important that regular checks of the premises are made to make sure there are no serious maintenance issues. Our two Health and Safety governors carry out regular checks of the premises with the site manager of the two schools. Both schools buy-in to the Norfolk Property Services Buildings Maintenance Partnership (BMP) and we liaise regularly with our designated surveyor to cover all aspects of repair and maintenance. We also have access to a Help Desk for minor repairs.

The main improvement to the school buildings and grounds at Harpley in 2020/21 was to completely refurbish the school library by purchasing new furniture, shelving and books, making it attractive and inviting to all the children. There was a special opening ceremony in December 2020 to celebrate this success. We continued to improve the school grounds by adding extra, interesting play equipment for the children.

At Great Massingham, improvements were made to storage on site by installing two new sheds – one for gardening/caretaker use and one for Yr 1 / 2 resources. Storage in the main buildings is limited so this additional increase in storage is invaluable. The raised beds for the Gardening Club were also refurbished and additional equipment purchased for the Club. The School hall and corridor off the hall were also decorated.

The '**Steering and Ethos Committee**' spends considerable time evaluating the progress of the two schools and decides on actions for future improvement. The Committee also looks at the vision and ethos for the two schools, the Head Teachers' well-being and helps formulate and monitor the School Self Evaluation Form (SEF) & School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) and the SIAMs SEF.

The '**Pay, Performance and Personnel**' committee is responsible for Head Teachers' Performance Management (HTPM) and for considering other personnel matters linked to management of staff.

The '**Policies/Curriculum and Standards**' committee monitors, evaluates and reviews the implementation of the curriculum and other school policies and the teaching/learning & standards achieved by pupils. The committee also monitors the work of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the SEND policy.

Governor visits are organised to collect evidence and agree judgements for school self-evaluation, to establish processes for

tracking pupils and their performance data and to measure the impact of pupil premium funding and support for children with special educational needs. When collecting this evidence, members of the committee look closely at school data and interview children about their work (pupil voice).

All Governors report back to the Full Governing Board when they have carried out an individual monitoring visit. Monitoring covers all aspects of school life including attendance and behaviour, collective worship, lunchtime, playtime and school clubs. Governors discuss key data giving the results of pupil achievement and progress, so that they can be sure that the schools are on track to fulfil their ambitious targets for all pupils. They also focus on the attainment and progress of 'vulnerable groups' of children and on how the Pupil Premium Grant is being spent by the schools. Governors take safeguarding and safeguarding procedures very seriously. We have three nominated safeguarding governors who are kept informed of any safeguarding matters and who give regular reports to the Governing Body.

Early in the summer term, the 'Finance and Premises' Committees approved the 2021/22 budget plans for the two schools: we are pleased to report that each school has a 3 - year, balanced budget plan in place and all finances are sound.

From the end of March 2020, the restrictions placed on schools as part of the COVID 19 epidemic meant governors had to find a new way of working. Much more reliance was placed on electronic communication with no face-to-face meetings or visits to school. However, governors continued to give strong support and were kept fully updated by the Headteacher and Co-Headteacher. Governors have been impressed with the calm, efficient, caring way the staff of the two schools continued to offer high quality education both to the children attending school and to those working at home. Now, in the Autumn Term 2021, with all the children attending again, the same high level of commitment is being shown. The Governing Body have returned to face-to-face meetings this Autumn term.

We are fortunate to have excellent staff at both schools. Each member of staff takes a curriculum responsibility across the Federation. Staff from both schools combine, on a regular basis, for training, planning, assessment moderation, data analysis, staff meetings and more. Teachers in smaller schools can often feel isolated and working together across the Federation makes a huge difference.

The KS2 science and languages swap afternoons proved very beneficial but, sadly, we were not able to continue this arrangement during the COVID restrictions. At the time of updating this annual statement, we have not been able to reinstate this arrangement.

We are so fortunate to have strong support from parents in both schools. The governors appreciate what parents achieve with fundraising and that so many are prepared to give their time and energy to support their children's schools. Thank you.

We are also grateful to all our other volunteers. People volunteer for many tasks such as Gardening Club, hearing children read and accompanying classes to swimming and gym. We just couldn't achieve all we do without this strong support and really do appreciate it.

The Governing Board appreciates the commitment shown by our Head Teacher (Mrs Kirsten Stibbon) and Co-Head Teacher (Mrs Sophie Stephens) and strongly believes this management structure has proved to be beneficial to the two schools. An additional level of Senior Management was added this year when Mrs Beardall, our previous Head Teacher, took on the role of SENDCO for a day each week, at each school. This has strengthened our senior management even further.

We are proud of our Church of England status as two Voluntary Controlled, Church of England schools. It enables both schools to come together for special occasions such as the Cathedral Days at Norwich Cathedral. We celebrate all Christian festivals, usually at the village Churches of St Mary's and St Lawrence and these occasions are always well attended by parents and friends. Rev'd Judith Pollard, our local vicar, is also a school governor and takes Collective Worship regularly at both schools. This is very much appreciated and considered very important by the whole school community. Rev'd Judith also plays a large part in our special assemblies during the year - Harvest, Christmas, Lent, Easter and end of term/year services. The Governing Board has three foundation governors to ensure that the links with our three local churches and communities are sound. Sadly, most of these activities were put on the hold during the tight restrictions of COVID19 but they have gradually resumed and should be back fully this autumn. Some things, such as the Harvest, did take place in 2020 although with restrictions. The generous donations of food were, in turn, donated to the West Dereham Food bank. Sadly, no parents were able to attend the services. However, the services were recorded on video for parents to borrow and still feel part of everything.

Pupils, parents/carers and staff at school are all important 'stakeholders' and we want everyone to have their say, to express their ideas and to keep on making our learning communities great places to be. Governors wish to thank parents for your feedback via our newsletters. Your comments have been very helpful and assist us in our aim to continue to further improve our schools and take account of everyone's needs. We listen and respond to what our pupils tell us – they play a big part in the decision-making process. Pupils express themselves informally via, for example, 'circle time' sessions and general conversations with staff and, more formally, via the School Council, the annual governor questionnaire and other governor monitoring (pupil voice). There is also an annual parent questionnaire.

If parents have any further questions about the work of the Governing Board, then please contact us.

Minutes of Main Governing Body meetings are public documents and are available from the School offices.

The Governing Board is pleased with the way the Federation, now in its sixth year, is progressing and bringing benefit to all the children. Both schools are graded GOOD by Ofsted. Harpley Primary School had its latest inspection on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and we can report that Ofsted judged that the school continues to be GOOD.

More inspections (Ofsted for Great Massingham and SIAMS for both schools) are possible during the next year. Both schools have regular 'Getting Ready for Inspection' training to ensure we are on track for when the time comes.

2021/22 looks like being yet another busy year. We plan, as always, to offer a good variety of After School Clubs across the Federation and other special events and activities including educational visits. Many of these educational visits are joint visits. Most important of all, we will ensure that the two schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum and that the good standards are maintained and built upon.

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors, via the school office. A list of governors is displayed in the school foyers and on each school website. The list is also included below.

### **Future plans for the governors**

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

**GREAT MASSINGHAM and HARPLEY  
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION  
GOVERNING BOARD 2021 to 2022**

**Chair of Governors: Jane Taylor**

**Vice - Chair: Bev Randall**

**Membership of The Governing Board**

Head Teacher	Kirsten Stibbon
Parent Governor	Ian Castle
Parent Governor	Mim Reeve
Staff Governor	Sophie Stephens
Local Authority Governor	Archie Reid
DBE/PCC Governor representing Great Massingham St Mary & Little Massingham St. Andrew	Alan Frazer
Bishop's Appointed Governor	Rev'd Judith Pollard
DBE/PCC Governor representing Harpley St. Lawrence	Rosemary Mehers
Co-opted Governors	Bev Randall (Community) Ann Beardall (Staff) Jane Taylor (Community) Carly Molyneux (Community) Suzie Allen (Community) Lucy Price (Community) Sarah Bingham (Associate) Susan Wood (Associate)