



**THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
GOVERNING BODY ANNUAL STATEMENT 2017/2018  
OCTOBER 2018**

As set out in the Department for Education Governors’ Handbook January 2017 the core functions for the Governing Body are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

**Strategic Plan**

Our strategic goals are focused on the following five areas:

1. Teaching & Learning
2. Outcomes & Progress
3. Inclusion
4. Preparation
5. Partnership

A summary of this strategic plan is on the school’s website.

Furthermore, as governors we also recognise the importance of teacher recruitment and retention, succession planning, effective financial management and effective support in delivering against our strategic plan.

As a result, the governing body highlight and report the following:

<p><b>1. Teaching &amp; Learning</b></p>	<p>The school has talented, hardworking and dedicated staff who often go above and beyond to make sure all pupils are included and have opportunities to progress, develop and showcase their talents.</p> <p>A number of actions were taken during the year in support of this whole school objective but notably structural changes have been very important. The inception of the Assistant Headteacher role in September 2017 has been pivotal in developing and growing the middle leaders in the school, as well as changes to allow phase leaders more time out of the classroom to better prepare and plan, monitor and evaluate.</p> <p>The development of middle leadership is crucial to the progress of children in the school and was identified by Ofsted as an area for development at our last inspection as “not all middle leaders have the monitoring and evaluation skills required to drive up the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility”. The governing body have challenged middle leaders during the year to understand how they use and interpret data to help them plan and develop strategies to promote every child's progress. For example, at our Governors' Day in May 2018, subject leaders for Science and Physical Education explained how progress data is informing their priorities</p>
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	<p>and activities, and how staff ownership of subject leader roles has grown markedly since the Ofsted review.</p>
<p><b>2. Outcomes &amp; Progress</b></p>	<p>In terms of closing the gap for the slowest movers and for the lowest attainers (gaps between in school groups and against national expectations), the governors have seen progress during the year.</p> <p>Regular interventions continue to play a crucial role in bridging identified gaps. Gap analysis provides more detail increasing the rigour of monitoring and better informing pupil progress meetings.</p> <p>As highlighted earlier the development of middle leaders has been an area of particular focus and we have seen how data is being used effectively by staff to improve progress and outcomes for children across the school.</p> <p>Summer 2018 KS2 results were very pleasing, and are the culmination of outstanding efforts not only by Year 6 teachers, but by teaching staff throughout the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thresholds have been raised in Maths.</li> <li>• School has exceeded national percentage for attainment in reading.</li> <li>• School is higher than other Local Authority schools for combined Reading / Writing / Maths.</li> <li>• Exceeded our own targets for Greater Depth in all subjects.</li> </ul> <p>The Local Authority’s School Partnership Adviser wrote to the Headteacher to congratulate the school on “really good improvements”.</p> <p>We have also seen tremendous improvement in Year 1 phonics.</p>
<p><b>3. Inclusion</b></p>	<p>We are a truly inclusive school and have 12 children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) on roll that have risen to 15 from September 2018. This means that the percentage of children with EHCPs (if the school is full) will rise to 3.6%, which puts the school into the top quintile for children with EHCPs nationally. Given that nationally, 1.3% pupils have an EHCP, we are significantly higher at almost three times that. We are also in the top quintile for children with SEND with 21% compared to 14.1% nationally.</p> <p>Participation in sporting activities both in school (with the introduction of the ‘daily mile’ initiative) and outside of school in tournaments and other activities has seen engagement in inclusion in practice as well as school trips made accessible for all.</p> <p>Mention should also be made for the introduction of the free breakfast club, maths and reading clubs as well as a boys’ lunchtime reading</p>



	<p>club, paired reading and the teaching of maths mastery this year. We are particularly proud of all the staff who make Thameside such an inclusive school. It would be remiss not to highlight the exceptional and tireless work of Miss Rollinson our Inclusion Manager in this regard.</p>
<b>4. Preparation</b>	<p>Our aim here is to see that all children are equally prepared for the next stage of their education.</p> <p>It is therefore pleasing to see that strong progress has been achieved as highlighted earlier, but just as importantly is to see that the school's values are firmly embedded and recognised throughout the school.</p> <p>Having strong values will help equip the pupils, preparing them for the next stage of their education.</p>
<b>5. Partnership</b>	<p>It is important to the ongoing development of the school that we work and share best practices with other schools and to collaborate to drive improvement.</p> <p>We are part of the North Reading Schools Partnership launched in 2017 (comprising The Hill, Emmer Green, Caversham Primary, Caversham Park Primary and Micklands schools).</p> <p>The focus of this nascent partnership has been around mutual support and challenge including learning walks which target different aspects of each school.</p> <p>There is also a link with Reading Blue Coat school where they come and share their time and sporting skills with our children.</p> <p>We have also seen a number of schools visit Thameside to learn about programmes that the school has embedded including Maths mastery and Accelerated Reader as well as enabling our staff to learn and develop by seeing other programmes in action elsewhere. The school was asked to show how reading is taught at as part of a Local Authority course, another way that the school is sharing good practice with other schools</p>
<b>Other areas</b>	
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<p>This area continues to underpin work throughout the school. An annual in-depth safeguarding audit was undertaken following the framework set out by Reading Borough Council looking at all areas of safeguarding including process and systems around bullying, staff recruitment, health &amp; safety, e-safety, children's health, attendance, how the curriculum supports safeguarding, how parents and children know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns, record keeping, the school environment, the responsibility of the governing body among other areas.</p> <p>As governors we also undertook a survey with pupils from across the year groups in the school, at our annual governor day in school, to hear from the children themselves and to understand how safe they feel and importantly that they know what to do and who they can go to if they have any issues or concerns.</p>



	<p>The safeguarding governor’s responsibility is to verify that statutory obligations are being met and that a culture of awareness and alertness covers all aspects of safeguarding provision so that we maintain our very high standards in this regard and there is no room for complacency.</p> <p>In addition to Keeping Children Safe in Education, this year has seen the introduction of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which has impacted us all. As governors we have overseen compliance with this and at the end of the year an external audit was undertaken which shows that the school has met or is on way to meeting our obligations.</p>
<p><b>Attendance</b></p>	<p>Attendance continues to be good. Attendance is crucial to enable children to maximise their learning. Our final attendance figure for the year is 95.4% which is slightly down on the previous year of 95.9% but in line with the school year 2016 – 2017.</p> <p>We regularly review attendance and the steps being taken to address the small number of children who have a low attendance level and have been supporting the school in the efforts to improve the attendance of these children in conjunction with the local authority. The governors have overseen a range of targeted interventions to help improve attendance at school and engagement in lessons of targeted pupils</p> <p>During the year 22 children left the school and 28 arrived into the school, a majority of these children were either from abroad arriving into this country or returning home or were moving from or to other schools in Reading.</p>
<p><b>Finance</b></p>	<p>School funding has come to prominence across the country resulting from proposals around a new national funding formula as well as central government seeking to manage school budgets in relation to a growing budget deficit. As governors we continue to maintain a tight overview of spend in relation to the school's development plan and longer term strategic plan.</p> <p>As governors, our focus has been on ensuring value for money and effectiveness in helping to drive school improvement.</p> <p>While the school’s budget is managed prudently, the school is likely to face some difficult choices in the coming years as costs continue to outpace funding.</p>
<p><b>Headteacher</b></p>	<p>It would be remiss not to include mention of Mrs Wallace’s intention to retire at Christmas 2018. Mrs Wallace has been Headteacher of Thameside for over ten years. She has nurtured a culture of inclusivity and continuous development to improve the opportunities and progress for all the children, and a climate of support for the continuing professional development of teachers and other staff.</p> <p>Under her leadership the school has grown in size from teaching 270 pupils to 411 pupils today. She has also seen the school move from ‘Requires Improvement’ Ofsted rating to ‘Good’ today as well as assembling a dedicated and talented staff team.</p>



	<p>The buildings and school site have also developed and the new extension has been firmly embedded.</p> <p>It goes without saying that she will be truly missed while also recognising that she moves on to a well-earned retirement.</p>
<b>Contacting the Governing Body</b>	<p>We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas – please contact the Chair of Governors, Mr Mark Harper, via the school office. You can see the full list of governors and more information on the Governors’ page of the school website.</p>