

CHESELBOURNE VILLAGE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2017-2018

Committee meetings

The following meetings have taken place:

Full Governing Body - 2 per term; 6 in total (20.09.2017; 23.11.2017; 18.01.2018; 14.03.2018; 25.04.2018; 21.06.2018). Attendance was 84% of the total possible.

Extraordinary meetings of the FGB – 16.05.2018; 13.06.2018; 11.07.2018. Attendance was 92% of the total possible.

Teaching and Learning Committee – 3 meetings per year.

Finance and Strategy Committee – 2 meetings per term (arranged to immediately precede the FGB meetings).

The Clerk to the Governors was present at every committee meeting.

Governor Special Responsibilities allocated for 2017-18

Literacy

Maths

SEN(D)

EYFS

ICT and e safety

RE

Safeguarding /child protection

Health and Safety

Head Teacher Performance Management

Mentor to New Governors

Pre-school

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Staff Welfare

Community Liaison

Membership of the Governing Body 2017-18

Two Governors resigned during the academic year due to pressure of other commitments. Two new members have been recruited and the GB currently has no vacancies. One governor is a member of another school GB and another runs the Bumble Bees child-care and Pre-school which operates in tandem with Cheselbourne's Pre-school.

Sub Committees

Considerable efforts have been made to improve the attendance at the sub-committees reflecting their importance both in the running of the school and to relieving pressure on FGB meetings with the meeting days and times organised to suit the availabilities of committee members.

The Terms of Reference of all the committees are reviewed at the start of each academic year particularly with regard to the authority devolved to each.

Staff Changes during 2017-18

During the year a member of the teaching staff left to take up a post at another school and so we welcomed Jacquie Mowlam to a new teaching post and Amy Gatrill as a new TA to support in the newly folded EYFS/KS1 class. At the end of the Summer Term we also said goodbye to the school's Head Teacher, Bob Duffin, who after 7 years as HT left to take early retirement. Bob leaves with our sincere thanks and good wishes for a happy retirement from Governors Staff and Parents.

Governors will be delighted to welcome Mary See to the post of Acting Head Teacher in September 2018. Mrs See's teaching role will be replaced by a new 0.6 Teacher Mrs Emma Collett from September.

Strategic Changes during 2017-18

During the 2016-17 academic year, an impending budget deficit was forecast for the school along with a drop in the number of children on the roll (see later). For these reasons, rather than replace a third teaching staff post the governing body decided to 'fold' three younger year groups into one class. The relatively small number of pupils at the school has allowed this 'folding' from three year groups to two and the consequent reduction in staffing and costs to be instituted without any detriment to teaching standards. The arrangement actually has some benefits for the children and will be continued until pupil numbers rise at which point it will be reviewed.

During the year 2017-18 , a new Pre-school for Cheselbourne (Caterpillars) opened in November 2017 offering two days for pre-school children to co-ordinate with the three pre-school days offered by the pre-existing 'Bumble Bees' childcare

Policy Documents Reviewed by the GB during 2017-18

Curriculum

Safeguarding

Pay Policy – Teaching and non-teaching Staff

Home Learning

Sex and Relationships

School Uniform

Charging and Remissions

Target Setting

Premises Management

Governors Allowances

Disciplinary Procedure

Use of Reasonable Force

Attendance management

SVCS and Financial Procedures

Governor visits

Code of conduct for Safe Working Practice

Procurement

Gifted and Talented Pupils

Admissions

Collective Worship

Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Managing Medicines

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse (against staff)

Continuous Professional Development

Teacher Appraisal

Data Protection

Governor Training

The following training courses have been attended by Governors (in relation to their special responsibilities) –

WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent)

Introduction to Governance

Head Teacher Performance Review

Chairs' Briefings

Safeguarding Level 2

General Report

Cheselbourne Village School is a small rural school. Smallness brings a number of benefits for pupils and these are exploited to the full at the school. Every child is managed as an individual with teaching carefully matched to their needs and abilities. Everyone is drawn into the school activities and the children gain confidence from learning in a supportive and secure community. 2017-18 has been a busy and successful academic year with pupils enjoying many additional extra-curricular activities from visiting Dippy the Dinosaur to giving interviews to Radio Wessex and finishing with the splendid production of 'Robin Hood' at the end of the summer term. Governors have taken their special responsibilities very seriously and are regularly in school working with Staff. It has been good also to see the enthusiastic support given to the school by the parent body in particular the Parent Association (The Cheselbourne School Friends – CSF) and Governors and staff are, as ever, very grateful to parents for this support and for the various (and very successful) fund raising activities.

However, smallness does have some downsides. Teaching and support Staff are all required to 'wear a number of different hats' – to multi-task while being accommodating and flexible in their outlook. This kind of teaching requires exceptional skills and dedication. The GB recognises the demands that have been made on Cheselbourne's Staff during the past year and is profoundly grateful for their willingness to 'go the extra mile'. Special thanks are also

due to the Clerk to the Governors who is also the Business Manager for the school and who has not missed a single meeting this year.

Budget deficits, particularly in small schools, are currently a common theme nationally and have been caused by a toxic combination of rising costs and chronic central government under-funding for schools. Many other schools in Dorset are also in deficit for the same reasons. Bringing the school back into balance without any detriment to the quality of Teaching and Learning has been a dominant pre-occupation for governors and staff this year. Reviewing contracts for goods and services, setting up the Pre-school, reducing staffing slightly and re-arranging the pupil year groups –have all had some success in reducing costs. In the long term, the crucial factor will be increasing pupil numbers. To this end much effort is being put into marketing the school and to making it more visible in the local community and through rebranding the school logo, website and producing professional flyers.

The 2018-19 Academic Year

Extending the marketing of the school through events and advertising will continue. Parents with professional expertise have already improved the appearance and impact of the website. The Breakfast Club and Pre-school will continue in their current format.

The school is keen to demonstrate day to day teaching in the class room to parents – in the coming year there will be opportunities for parents to come in to the school to view the staff in action as well as gain some more ideas as to how they can best support home learning for their children.

Governors will continue to be alert to the opportunities offered by working with other schools. Currently Cheselbourne is in collaboration with Prince of Wales and Cerne Abbas First Schools. Though not a legally binding arrangement, these three schools have been able to share expertise and best practice decisions and to be mutually supportive. This, currently Head Teacher led collaboration will continue in the new academic year. Opportunities to extend this co-operative relationship to other schools within the DASP community could arise.

Cheselbourne is a Maintained school and during the past year has benefitted from positive support from the County Education Services. Governors will ensure that close links with County are preserved and are particularly appreciative of the excellent training and readily available help offered by the County Governor Services Department. All Governors will continue to attend the training courses and events organised by Governor Services as appropriate.

At the moment, the Governing Body does not consider a legal attachment to other schools such as joining an established Multi-Academic Trust to be advantageous to Cheselbourne. However, this option will be kept under continuous review along with all other co-operative arrangements.

Barbara Southcott, Chair of Governors (August 2018)

