



# Local Governing Body Annual Report 2024-25

Welcome to our first annual report!

This report will explain a bit more about the role of governors at Billingshurst Primary Academy and share some of our work across the academic year.



# Governance at Billingshurst Primary Academy

We are part of Sussex Learning Trust and the Board of Trustees is ultimately accountable for all decisions relating to its academies. However, it delegates significant decision-making authority to the Local Governing Body (LGB) of each academy. School governance is an extensive role and we undertake training to ensure we do it well.

## Who are our Governors?

Governors are volunteers who are committed to supporting and improving the school. Some governors are appointed by the Board of Trustees or LGB based on the skills they can bring to the Board. We also have two governors who were elected by parents and one governor elected by staff. The headteacher automatically serves as a governor by virtue of their position. All governors share equal status and responsibilities during their term of office (usually 4 years).

[A bio for each governor is available on the school website.](#)



Early Years Dragon School

## Here are a few examples of the responsibilities that sit with the Local Governing Body:

- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the school's pupils.
- Ensuring effective processes are in place for monitoring the quality assurance of teaching and learning, the curriculum, inclusion and the sharing of best practice.
- Monitoring performance data relating to educational standards.
- Monitoring the financial performance of the school, including proposing an annual budget for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- Ensuring the school has a medium to long term vision for its future and a robust strategy for achieving it.
- Reviewing and updating the policies which are specific to the school.
- Reviewing the school's risk register.
- Ensuring the school receives and reacts to feedback from its stakeholders, with a particular focus on parents, pupils and staff.

If you would like to know more about what school governors do and the key role they play in helping schools to succeed, please watch this short [video clip](#) from the National Governance Association.



Conducting experiments during Science Week

# Governor Monitoring

Across the current academic year, governors have carried out 32 monitoring visits.

## Monitoring visits allow governors to fulfil their responsibilities in these 3 key areas:

- **Academy Development Plan:** ensuring the academy development plan is on track and that the planned actions are having the intended impact.
- **Curriculum:** ensuring pupils receive a broad and balanced education, that the school's curriculum enables pupils to acquire the intended knowledge and skills and that it meets the needs of all learners.
- **Compliance:** ensuring the school is fulfilling its statutory duties, for example in relation to safeguarding, health & safety and Special Educational Needs.

On a monitoring visit, governors meet with the relevant school leader to discuss their area of responsibility. Visits often include hearing from children about their experiences as well. Governors then report back on their monitoring visits at LGB meetings.

The following pages provide an overview of some of the key areas we have monitored this year.

Year 6 enjoying ice lollies after completing their SATs





World Book Day

## English

Annette Calver and Sue Samson

The subject leader's priorities this year have focused on ensuring high standards in reading, writing, spelling and grammar, using adaptive teaching so that every child can flourish and achieve well. Two governors spent time with the English lead, hearing about the teaching of reading fluency in Key Stage 2 then observed it in action in the classrooms, they also observed phonics in Early Years and Key Stage 1. The English leader is passionate about the subject and enthusiastic about leading the further improvements identified by the school to continue to raise standards.

## Maths

Nicola Waters

Maths priorities have focused on fluency and making sure that adaptations to the curriculum (such as through guided support, resources and interventions) allow all pupils to make good progress from their starting points. The maths lead has provided training and support to teachers in developing their subject knowledge, planning and lesson design. I accompanied the subject leader on classroom visits to see what this looked like in practice. We also talked to pupils about how adults support them with their learning and how they know if they are improving.

## Curriculum

All Governors

Across this academic year, governors have met with subject leaders to monitor almost every subject in the curriculum. These visits help governors to learn how the curriculum is being developed and how it is adapted to meet the needs of all learners at Billingshurst Primary Academy. Governors also monitor how the subject is developed as children move through the school so that children can build on the knowledge and skills they have been taught in previous years.

## Early Years

Annette Calver

The Early Years leader's priorities this year have included refining planning for all seven areas of learning and development to ensure they are evident in the indoor and outdoor environment. In addition, there has been a focus on enhancing relationships with parents and carers by providing high-quality information in a weekly newsletter with insights into the curriculum and children's learning. A particular success this year has been the introduction of Drawing Club as an inclusive and engaging way to enable every child to become an enthusiastic and confident writer.



Y6 Immersion Day: WWII topic

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Sue Samson and Richard Runalls

Two governors have visited the school each term to monitor the school's provision to meet the many and varying needs of children with SEND. We have met with the SEND Co-ordinators, the headteacher and other staff to discuss the provision. We have also met with many of the children who have specific needs, looked at their books and explored their progress. It is clear from our visits that the children are proud of their achievements and are making progress from their starting points and that all staff are heavily invested in supporting and improving their educational journey.

## Safeguarding

Yvette Rowe

It is important to us at Billingshurst Primary Academy that everyone feels safe and at the start of our academic year, all governors completed their annual refresher training in this subject. This year we have monitored our policies, procedures and processes. We have also spoken to pupils to hear their views and ensure they feel confident to voice any concerns or worries they may have to a member of staff.

## Health and Safety

David Lowe

Just as with any business, there are a lot of statutory regulations with which we have to conform. We undertake three visits across the year to monitor compliance with these regulations, focusing on a sample of two or three on each occasion and drawing on reports by independent external audits. These have included security risk assessment, review of arrangements for monitoring of legionella and fire risk assessment. Our visits also include a review of the accident report books for any significant trends that merit further investigation.

# 2024-25 Successes

## New Values

A key responsibility of the governing body is ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and the strategic direction of a school. This academic year saw the introduction of our school's new 'ABC' values. These underpin the moral and academic expectations for all pupils at Billingshurst Primary Academy.

- **Ambition:** We will strive for excellence, constantly pushing for personal and collective growth.
- **Belonging:** We will respect the diverse world in which we live, value differences and build an inclusive community where everyone can thrive.
- **Courage:** We will persevere through challenges and have the confidence to take risks in order to achieve our goals.

We embrace, teach, support and live our ABC values every day.



Sports Week - Cross Country

## Attainment

The LGB is responsible for holding leaders to account for the school's educational performance. We are very proud of all our pupils and these achievements are a reflection of their hard work combined with the high quality provision they have received. We would also like to acknowledge and celebrate the impact of the work undertaken by the whole staff team in raising standards.

Please find below a brief summary of the school's performance against the key metrics.

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This year, 64% of our children in Early Years achieved a Good Level of Development. Pupils have made huge progress from their starting points with our youngest learners receiving a very strong foundation so that they are ready for the Year 1 curriculum.

### Phonics

Year 1 performed exceptionally well in the Phonics Screening with an 82% pass rate, a significant improvement on last year's pass rate of 73% and higher than the national average of 80%.

### KS2

This year's KS2 outcomes represent the school's best results since before the pandemic!

Subject	BPA 2023-24	BPA 2024-25	National 2024-25
Reading	71%	<b>79%</b>	75%
Writing	77%	<b>79%</b>	72%
Maths	69%	<b>80%</b>	74%
RWM Combined	60%	<b>74%</b>	62%

We are particularly proud that 74% of pupils achieved the expected standard in all 3 subjects of reading, writing and maths. This is 12% more than the national average and an improvement of 14% compared with last year.

The percentage of pupils achieving the Greater Depth Standard for each subject is either in line with or above the national average (shown in brackets).

Reading: **32%** (33%), Writing: **14%** (12%), Maths: **27%** (26%), RWM Combined: **10%** (8%)

## Attendance

We place great importance on the value of good attendance and this is discussed regularly in LGB meetings. It is also a national focus as effective teaching can only happen when pupils are in school, making attendance crucial for their academic success.

Last year, our whole school attendance was 94.4% compared with 94.8% nationally. This year, our whole school attendance stands at **95.5%**, an improvement of 1.1% and above the current national average of 94.9% for all primary schools.

We will continue our efforts in improving attendance and greatly appreciate your ongoing support in ensuring your child's regular attendance at school.

## Wider Curriculum Opportunities

We are very proud of the vast range of clubs, trips and sporting opportunities available for pupils at Billingshurst Primary Academy. It has been joyful to see these celebrated through the weekly newsletter - here are a few highlights:

- **Trips:** In addition to the whole school trip to watch Jack and the Beanstalk at The Hawth, pupils have enjoyed a range of trips this year. These include a walk around Billingshurst linked to geography (Y1) and visits to Arundel Castle (Y2), Wakehurst Place (Y3), Kew Gardens (Y4), Chichester planetarium (Y5), Lodge Hill residential (Y5) and the Tile Barn residential (Y6).
- **Enrichment:** In addition to trips, pupils have enjoyed immersion days at the start of a new topic. Other enrichment opportunities have included a British Museum workshop (Y3), a visit from the Rainbow Theatre (Y1), bikeability (Y6), clay workshop (Y3), a visit from the author Hannah Peckham, Earth day activities, dressing up for world book day, science week and visiting speakers (such as a cardiac physiologist). Pupils also performed in ukulele concerts, nativity plays, carol concerts, Christmas shows and the Year 6 production of The Pied Piper.
- **Clubs:** Of particular note are the KS2 Choir and country dancing clubs which are both run by staff. The choir has performed at the O2, West Sussex Big Sing, the summer fun day, Derwent Lodge, the Billingshurst Show and St Mary's Church. The country dancers have performed at the summer fun day, Derwent Lodge and at the Billingshurst Show.
- **Sporting Events:** The whole school - staff, parents/carers and preschoolers included - demonstrated their sporting prowess on Sports Day! In addition, pupils have taken part in a swimming gala and other sporting events linked to athletics, street cricket, multi skills, football, hockey, gymnastics, tag rugby, cross country, talented athletes, dance workshops, tri-golf and 'This Girl Can'.

## Sussex Learning Trust

This has been our first full year as part of Sussex Learning Trust. The Trust's mission is 'Stronger Together' and this really has been our experience. Joining the Trust has enabled the school and its staff to take advantage of a huge range of opportunities, including:

- Annual conference where teachers from across the Trust were able to work together in year group teams
- Opportunities to collaborate and share best practice through Trust Networks (for example in writing, maths, Early Years, SEND and safeguarding)
- Introduction of a new system for assessment
- Access to specialist functions such as estate management and digital services

# What did our stakeholders tell us?

Earlier this term we conducted our annual stakeholder surveys and provided feedback to each stakeholder group on the key themes that emerged.

Here are a few quotes from each stakeholder group telling us what they value most about Billingshurst Primary Academy:

## Parents and Carers:

- The desire for constant improvement and the teacher's effort and dedication to help my child flourish.
- How much every member of staff really cares about my children.
- All teachers seem approachable and always smiling, seems like such a happy environment to work in and be a part of for our children.
- Admire the extra activities and events that are on offer.
- Community feel, supportive environment. Fantastic teachers and staff.
- All the opportunities for my children to extend their learning.
- A welcoming and nurturing environment.
- Effective leadership from the headteacher and senior staff that sets a clear vision and maintains high standards.

## Pupils:

- Everyone is kind and supports me and my learning.
- Everyone plays well together.
- I like the help I get from teachers.
- I think that what works well in the school is friendship and knowing the teachers well.
- It is a good place for learning and the teachers are helpful.
- I think the topics we learn are interesting and fun.
- It helps me get smarter and there is always someone to help with my problems.
- Teachers are kind, caring and supportive.
- That everyone helps each other if they're confused or struggling with something.
- That lots of people have lots of friends!
- That teachers help you when you make mistakes or when you fall over.
- The teachers are really nice and help me when I am stuck.

## Staff and volunteers who supported the Y6 residential



## Staff:

- Relationships and community in the school are excellent.
- It is the staff, leadership and children that make this school a pleasure to work in.



# Thank You

The success of a school depends on the combined efforts of all its stakeholders and we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who plays a part in our journey:

- To our dedicated and hardworking **staff** - thank you for consistently going above and beyond to support, inspire and guide our pupils.
- To our wonderful **pupils** - thank you for approaching each day with curiosity, determination and a willingness to learn. A special message to our Year 6 pupils: you are ready to take the next step and we are incredibly proud of all you have achieved. We wish you every success and happiness as you move on to your new school.
- To the **BPA Bees** - thank you for your tireless fundraising efforts. The experiences and resources you help provide truly enrich our pupils' education and create lasting memories.
- And finally, to you, our **parents and carers** - thank you for your ongoing support and for working in partnership with us. Your engagement and support really does make a difference.



KS2 Choir performing with the Kaleidoscope Singers at St Mary's Church