



Local Governing Body Annual Report 2025-26

2025-26 has been another fantastic year at Billingshurst Primary Academy! Through this report, we hope to provide an insight into some of the Governing Body's work over the past year.



Billingshurst Primary Academy

Local Governing Body

Introducing our Governors

The local governing body (LGB) comprises:

- two parent/carers-nominated Governors
- a staff-nominated Governor
- Governors appointed by the Board of Trustees
- Governors appointed by the LGB

The Headteacher sits on the LGB in an *ex officio* role by virtue of their position.

Governors are volunteers. Regardless of their appointment route, all Governors share equal status during their term of office.

If you would like to find out more about who the governors are at Billingshurst Primary Academy, there is a photo and bio for each governor on the school [website](#).

What is the role of the Governing Body?

The Governing Body provides strategic leadership, accountability and oversight to ensure the academy operates effectively and complies with statutory guidance.

The core functions of all governing bodies include ensuring:

- that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the academy are clearly defined
- that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the academy
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

Key responsibilities include:

- **Compliance:** Ensuring the academy adheres to statutory duties, including safeguarding, health and safety and equality legislation.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Listening to the views of pupils, parents/carers, staff and the community that the academy serves.
- **Support and Challenge:** Acting as a "critical friend" to the Leadership team, i.e. supporting their work while robustly challenging performance.



Young Voices

What do we do?

The Board of Trustees of Sussex Learning Trust is ultimately accountable for all decisions relating to its academies. Some Trust-wide legal and governance matters are handled by the central Trust Board. However, the Board of Trustees delegates significant decision-making authority to the Local Governing Body allowing Governors to focus specifically on our academy's pupils and community.

School governance is an extensive role and we undertake training to ensure that we do it well.

We carry out our work through attending meetings, reviewing reports and data and undertaking regular monitoring visits.

Each governor brings their knowledge, experience and expertise from various sectors and community roles that can be applied to school governance.

Here are just a few examples of the responsibilities that sit with the Billingshurst Primary Academy LGB:

- 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 academy and proposing an annual budget for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- Ensuring the academy has a clear vision for its future and a robust strategy and policies for achieving it.
- Ensuring the academy receives and reacts to feedback from its stakeholders, with a particular focus on parents/carers, students and staff.
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the academy's pupils and staff.

Year 2 English



Governor Monitoring

Monitoring visits provide governors with valuable insight into school life and allow the Board to monitor the Academy Development Plan, see how policies are working in practice and triangulate information presented in Governing Body meetings. 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.

Here is an overview of some of the key areas we have monitored this year.

English: Annette Calver

Each English monitoring visit has had a different focus: phonics, reading and writing. Teachers refresh their plans each year to inspire children to write through creative experiences such as drama, outdoor walks, high-quality texts, song lyrics and poetry. Writing is divided into transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (structuring ideas into speech and writing). A new whole-school handwriting approach is developing well, with positive impact evident. Reading and phonics are also progressing well, with the school's 'Year of Reading' keeping books high-profile.

Maths: Nicola Waters

Improving maths fluency has been a key priority this year, with a strong focus on helping every child to build secure number sense and confidence in calculation and counting. Daily fluency practice has been introduced across the school and staff have received training linked to this. Monitoring visits included pupil voice which showed that most children enjoy maths and value the support they receive such as practical resources, partner work and regular practice. Older pupils especially appreciated being challenged and could talk confidently about their progress.

Curriculum: David Bertwistle

This year I met with the deputy headteacher to get an overview on how the curriculum at Billingshurst Primary Academy has been devised and how it is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is mapped out carefully so that knowledge can be built on through the school year and also from year to year. I was particularly impressed by the way the curriculum is enriched by the trips and visits that year groups make - these enhancements bring learning alive for the pupils and have become a real feature of teaching at Billingshurst.





Year 4 Lodge Hill

Inclusion: Sue Samson

Inclusion is a word that we use to describe the things that the school does to support more vulnerable pupils. This includes the 145 pupils who have Special Needs and Disabilities as well as the 83 pupils who are identified under government criteria as having fewer opportunities due to family circumstances. The school outlines the provision for these pupils in the SEND Policy and the Pupil Premium strategy. Governors visit the school each term to monitor that the school is delivering these policies. On these visits, we speak to staff and pupils about their learning, we observe in classrooms and explore the data to see how well these children are progressing. We have been impressed by how well the staff know these children, the care they show for them and the opportunities they provide for them to learn and achieve.

Learning Behaviour: Phil Bellas

How children understand themselves and develop as learners is central to each child's development and progress. Leaders have introduced an initiative that enables children to recognise different learning behaviours: Thinking and Questioning, Self Managers, TEAM and Reflecting on Learning. This has had a positive impact in the classroom, enabling children to review what they have learnt and providing firm foundations for new learning. In addition, children are taking ownership of their learning, forming meaningful relationships and applying their knowledge creatively and collaboratively.

Early Years: Annette Calver

Children are making strong progress from their starting points. Monitoring visits have shown that the children in Early Years are settled, purposeful and enthusiastic learners. Provision both in the classroom and the outside area offers a rich variety of activities. The outdoor environment has been carefully designed and resourced so that children benefit from a rich variety of opportunities. Adults interact with pupils to extend their learning and language. The Early Years leader has built a cohesive, confident team with high expectations and a shared vision.

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, 66% of our children in Early Years achieved a Good Level of Development, an increase on last year (64%). 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

The school achieved exceptional results in the Year 1 Phonics Screening with 89% of children passing the phonics screening. This is a significant improvement on last year (82%) and higher than the national average of 82%.

At this stage, we are unable to report on the KS2 SATs results as this data has been delayed for all schools due to technical issues.

Attendance - Melissa Galea-Holmes

We are committed to promoting positive attendance at school and the importance of attendance for learning and development. The LGB monitors patterns of attendance and absence and works closely with senior leadership to ensure the school takes a sustainable, data-driven and supportive approach that enables and encourages good attendance and punctuality. This includes minimising barriers, providing an exciting curriculum and prioritising well-being and positive relationships amongst pupils. This year, whole school attendance is at 94.8%, sitting just below the national average of 95.1%. We will continue to work with the school's senior leadership to ensure that high expectations for attendance are maintained and that support is provided to improve attendance where it is most needed.

Personal Development

We are very proud of the vast range of extra-curricular opportunities available for pupils at Billingshurst Primary Academy. These are celebrated in the weekly newsletter and through social media.

The curriculum is enriched through trips, immersion days and visiting speakers. Children also have many opportunities to perform for their parents and carers, for example through assemblies, plays and concerts.

We are proud to offer a significant number of clubs throughout the week to cover a broad and varied range of activities. These include sport, the arts, wellbeing and STEM so that every child can find something they enjoy and feel confident taking part in.



Year 5 and Year 6 Tag Rugby

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 is just a small selection of quotes from each stakeholder group telling us what they value most about Billingshurst Primary Academy:

Parents and Carers:

- The relationship between pupil and class teacher, the knowledge of individual pupils by the class teacher, the communication from the school about events and trips.
- Nurturing and caring attitude towards the children.
- The wide variety of choice they have especially in sports.
- The friendliness of staff and support they give the children.
- Teaching staff treat pupils as individuals and tailor support to their needs
- The incredible support given to our SEN child.
- The amazing staff and their tireless dedication to ensuring our children get the best education they can!
- My child always comes out of school happy.
- Being inclusive.
- Staff are incredibly welcoming and approachable. I know that if I ever had any concerns, I would be listened to and supported.
- Inclusivity, friendliness and warmth. Good communication between school and parents.
- It has improved its position and role within the community. My children love attending school.
- Lovely community feel to the school, the children are always put first.

Pupils:

- The amazing trips and the clubs in the school.
- Our school has great teachers.
- The support because we need help sometimes.
- Lessons because there are a lot of nice teachers and the lessons are really calm.
- Teachers treat everyone equally.
- The learning we do for the future.
- No bullying happens because the teachers help to stop it.
- The way the school deals with children who have additional needs is really helpful.
- The rules.
- The clubs and residential work well because clubs help us learn new skills and the residential because they help us build confidence in being away from home.
- All the extra help like morning maths, homework club, arithmetic boosters, etc.
- The big field, my friends, nurture, my teachers.
- Friends you make.
- The teacher makes lessons fun and exciting.
- Teachers help with learning and give us breaks.
- That teachers always help you when you are stuck on something.
- How hard the teachers work.
- We help other people, we are kind.



Staff Team 2025/26

Staff:

- Senior leaders are very approachable and happy to answer or resolve problems and are quick to support when needed.
- The school is a happy working environment and the children are thriving.
- Warm sense of belonging, extra curricular activities, support from leadership.
- Cohesion among staff and the positive vibe of the school.

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 incredible **staff**: Every classroom and corner of this school reflects your passion and dedication. You do more than teach our children; you listen, encourage and believe in every child. Thank you.
- To our brilliant **pupils**: You have truly embodied the school's values of ambition, belonging and courage and have filled this school with life.
Year 6: it probably feels like a very long time since you arrived in Reception, no doubt nervous about starting school. Look at you now! You leave as confident, kind and capable young people who are ready for secondary school. We couldn't be prouder!
- To the **BPA Bees**: where would we be without you? Your enthusiasm and hard work behind the scenes make the extraordinary possible. The trips, the treats, the memories - none of it happens without you. You are fabulous!
- To our **parents and carers**: school works best when home and school work in partnership. Thank you for trusting us with your children and for your ongoing support.



Join Us

Could you be a school governor?

We are seeking new governors
to join **Billingshurst Primary
Academy's Governing Body.**



Make a real
difference to our
school and
children's futures.



Meetings held
every half term.



No prior
educational
experience
required.



To find out more,
please email

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clerk@billingshurstprimary.org.uk

