

WEST HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Annual Statement from the Governors

This year has been extraordinary! Starting back at school last September, when everything was normal, seems a lifetime ago. I fondly remember enjoying the Christmas productions from December 2019! In early March 2020, I met a delightful group of Key Stage 2 pupils to talk about the school and get their views. Who would have thought that two weeks later we would all be facing a pandemic which has impacted on all our lives. All of us have had to adapt to a very different lifestyle approach during this on-going time of uncertainty. School governance remains in place however – we have had to adapt our approach inline with many other organisations. We have all become Zoom experts since March 2020 and we have fulfilled our role using Zoom for our meetings.

We have even managed to recruit a new Governor during lockdown! We warmly welcome Mrs Barbara Boffey as a Co-opted Governor. Mrs Boffey, a retired primary school Headteacher and Education Consultant, brings professional skills from education to the Governing Board and we look forward to working with her.

Committee Reports

Since lockdown the work of the Committees has continued but the priorities changed in accordance with the school situation. We have supported the school and been actively involved with the plans and decision making which has been essential to keep educational provision and health and safety for the whole school community at the forefront of everything. In April 2020 Governors agreed a new Plan for their work which focussed on the revised school priorities. This Plan will be revised for September 2020. We have not lost sight of the three main functions of governance as established by the government:

1. To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and the pupils.
3. To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure the school budget is well-spent.

The Committees have undertaken their statutory duties regardless of lockdown and this will continue next year. Full Governing Board meetings have taken place and we have streamlined our work significantly and, I am proud to say, we have increased our efficiency tremendously! Using Zoom for our meetings have given us an improved focus and this is an approach we will continue to use for some meetings next year.

We completed the Governors Performance self-review process in early March 2020 and we are implementing some improvements to improve our performance. The national Governor Mark work has, unfortunately, been postponed until next year due to lockdown. Attendance at Governor meetings (both face-to-face and virtual) has been good. Please see the website for details.

Future plans for the Governors – to continue to support school especially with the re-opening plan for September 2020. We have consulted with staff and attended virtual staff meetings and fully support the draft plans which are in place. We look forward to being able to come back into school at such time as it is safe to do so. I would like to thank Mrs Hooper and all staff for their exceptional work during the last few months and the planning for next year.

My very best wishes go with Year 6 pupils as they move on to new schools. They have been a credit to West Heath Primary School and, on behalf of all the Governors, I wish them every success for the future.

Keep safe everyone!

Frances Millett, Chair of Governors. July 2020.