



Annual Statement of the Governing Body 2021-2022

Introduction

At Bardsey Primary School, we have a team of Governors who work closely with the Head Teacher and the school leadership team in order to continue to drive excellence in the achievements of our children, ensuring they all fulfil their potential. Through positive challenge, bringing our outside experiences in, and supporting the strategy of the school we look to help all the children at Bardsey be responsible, determined and successful.

Role of the Governing Body

The role of the Governing Body is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Governing Body at Bardsey Primary School is committed to ensuring that students receive a rounded education of the very highest standard.

Every Governing Body has three core functions: -

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding school leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure money is spent effectively to maximise the quality of education students receive.

How we organise ourselves

The Governing body meets, in full, 3 times a year with an additional full Governors' training meeting once a year.

There are various Governors' committees which monitor and support the schools work including the Resources Committee, School Improvement Committee and the Pastoral Committee. These committees meet at least 3 times a year to ensure the school is running effectively with the support of the various committees in line with the School Development Plan and staff.

The Chairs of the Committees and the Chair of Governors make up the Strategic Governors committee which meet as and when required to discuss the overall progress of the School Development plan. Committees report on their work before the full Governor meetings and significant issues are discussed in more detail at the meetings.

Each Governor has specific responsibility for certain aspects of school life – subjects, classes, safeguarding etc. and meet with staff responsible for these remits in school to keep fully abreast of

developments and provide appropriate advice and challenge. Notes of these visits are recorded and key aspects shared with the full Governing body, as necessary.

Some Governors represent the school on external bodies – WVLP, JCC, EPOSS, etc – and report back as necessary via email or at Governing Body meetings.

Governors are encouraged to visit school frequently – whether for special events such as Sports Day, Christmas Lunch or school shows, or on ‘normal’ days to get a better feel for ‘the day-to-day life of Bardsey Primary School’. These visits are logged, and any key messages fed back to committees or the full governing body as necessary.

2021

- 2021 was another challenging year for the school for various reasons. From January, school was closed to all apart from vulnerable pupils and children of key workers, due to the Covid 19 pandemic. For those children not attending school, learning was delivered online. We commend the efforts of parents for home schooling their children for the second time within a year. When school re-opened at Easter, the task of implementing and managing the regulations and restrictions fell to Mr Knight and the staff who did an amazing job in making sure that school life was as normal as possible, while ensuring that children who needed to catch up on lost learning were given support and opportunities to do so.
- Governors were pro-active in supporting the school during the Covid 19 pandemic. The safety measures and risk assessments continued to be monitored and signed off by the governors. Meetings of the full governing body and the committees continued to be held on Zoom. The Chair and Vice Chair were on hand throughout to give support to Mr Knight.
- Following the retirement of the former headteacher, Mrs Clark, the governing body recruitment panel of five governors, ably supported by two representatives of the local authority (HR and School Improvement) set about the enormous task of recruiting a new permanent headteacher who would ideally have taken up their post in April or September 2021. However, as the lockdown continued, governors felt reluctant to hold a selection process when we would not have been able to meet potential candidates or observe their interactions with the staff and children. It would simply not be enough to interview them on Zoom. The decision was therefore made to advertise in September for a January or April 2022 start. Consequently, we extended the temporary contracts of Mr Knight and Miss Morrison to continue as acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Thankfully, they were both willing and able to continue in these roles. This gave much needed stability for the children, staff and parents.
- In September, the recruitment panel re-convened and advertised the post. We were sorry to learn that Mr Knight had, for his own health and well-being, decided not to apply and also, he stated his intention to resign at the end of term. From a disappointingly low number of applications (this is par for the course for headships at

this current time), we got as far as shortlisting and assessing two candidates through a rigorous process in school. Although both candidates had strengths, and will make good headteachers in time, it was unanimously agreed that neither was right for Bardsey School at this stage in its journey. We therefore made the difficult decision not to appoint. We asked the local authority for help in finding a temporary headteacher from another school to plug the gap until the headteacher post could be re-advertised and the selection process run again.

- By the end of October, no solution had been found. TGAT (The Gorse Academy Trust) approached the governors (after being contacted by a third party) to arrange a meeting. At the meeting TGAT made an unconditional offer to second, for up to one year, one of his vice principals who was deemed to be 'principal ready'. After many meetings and lots of discussions between senior leaders, governors and TGAT, it was decided to accept this offer which has resulted in Mr Parry joining the school as acting headteacher. Over the next year, the governors will have many important decisions to make about the school's future and we can assure parents that children will always be put at the forefront of this process.
- In the summer, we received the good news that the school has been chosen by the local authority for a decarbonisation project. This will be a lot of work but will eventually improve our heating and energy consumption at no cost to the school budget. The work will continue throughout 2022.
- The Resources Committee are pleased to announce that at the end of the financial year, the budget was showing a acceptable balance, which will enable us to finance the school development plans for 2022.
- For two years there have been no formal statutory assessments (SATs) so it has been challenging for the governors to carry out their mandatory core function of monitoring the school's academic performance. We are pleased to inform you that the teachers carried out assessments in Years 2 and 6, in the same way as the SATs would have been carried out. In early years, children were assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and in Year 1 a mock phonics screening was carried out and then this was repeated in the autumn term in Year 2. In Years 3 – 5, internal assessments were carried out, as is the norm. We are pleased to say that in key stage 1, if the statutory tests had taken place, the results would have been slightly above the 2019 national averages and in key stage 2 the results would have been in line with or above 2019 national averages. This is despite lost learning due to the pandemic. In Year 1, the mock phonics screening test results were below the 2019 national average. This is most likely because these children have missed two terms of schooling in their first two years of education. Now that they are in Year 2, they are subject to intense interventions where needed and are catching up quickly.
- In the summer holidays we were delighted to learn that two of our senior staff had got married. Congratulations to Miss Morrison and Mr Hackworth, henceforth known as Mr

and Mrs Hackworth. We were also pleased to hear that Miss Gaynor was safely delivered of a baby girl.

- Governors agreed at the start of this academic year that the priorities for the school development plan for 2021/2022 should be: phonics, improving writing, subject leadership, and pupil and staff well-being. These targets will sit alongside the governors' target to secure stable, long term leadership for the school.
- In November, Jane Ambrose, who has been associated with the school for over 30 years, stood down as Chair of Governors. Jane has done an amazing job supporting the strategic leadership of the school and we thank her on behalf of the governing body. Jane was presented with a gift at the end of term by staff and governors. Gordon Milne has now taken on the role of Chair with Julia Norton as Vice Chair.
- At the end of the year the sudden and unexpected death of former headteacher, Mrs Sally Clark, shocked and saddened the whole school community. The children who remembered Mrs Clark celebrated her life in many lovely ways and there was a strong Bardsey presence at her funeral.
- We would like to thank Mr Knight for steering the ship so competently for the past 18 months and we are delighted that he is staying on to teach Year 5. Thanks also to Mrs Hackworth for agreeing to continue as acting deputy to Mr Parry.
- We welcomed Mr Parry in January and hope that he will enjoy his time at Bardsey as the school continues to move forward.