

# Governing Body Review of the Year 2022/23



Greenway Primary  
& Nursery School

Governing Bodies exist in every school to direct and monitor strategic development and to act as a 'critical friend' to the Headteacher and staff to whom operational responsibility is delegated. Governors are made up of individuals with a huge range of skills from private and public sector (some of whom are also parents/carers and staff at Greenway). They are not involved in the day-to-day running of the school but are tasked with the voluntary role of supporting and challenging the school to ensure that it continues to meet the ethos and planning priorities that have been established. Fundamentally, it is this Governing Body's ambition to ensure that Greenway is delivering the very best it can for your child/ren and for you in the circumstances in which the school finds itself at any given time.

As we are approaching the end of the summer term, we would like to report to you on the key pieces of work we have undertaken in meeting our obligations set out above. Here is a summary and review of the last academic year.



**Governing Body Membership Changes:** We have had a change in our Governing Body membership during the year. Our Local Authority Governor Ian McCaul decided to step away from his position – his experience and support was valued by us all during his time in the role. Some of you may recall that following elections in 2019, Pam Campbell, Rich Millar, Nicola Reid and Tim Winmill became parent governors. After 4 years, their terms of office are all ending and sadly none of them has decided to put themselves forward again due to their personal circumstances changing. They hit the ground running but after only a few months in their roles the first lockdown took place, and they were not allowed into school – not an easy time to be a governor! We are very grateful to all of them for their support and input.

We have however welcomed Janet English to the Governing Body as a Co-opted Governor and are very pleased to have recently started working with our new clerk, Claire Snell. You can find Janet's biography, and one for all school governors, on the school website.

As a Governing Body we have agreed to reduce our size slightly from 15 to 12 governors to reflect the fact that Greenway is now a fully-fledged one form entry Primary school. We hope to be able to introduce you to a new Co-opted and a new Local Authority appointed governor in the Autumn term. We will also be holding elections for 2 new parent governors and would ask that anyone interested in this role contact me through the school office. Time and enthusiasm are essential for those interested in the role! A summary of all of the key things that parents/carers might want to think about are covered in this helpful [short guide](#).

## Actions taken by the Governing Body throughout 2022/23

**Vision and Values:** As a Governing Body we have remained focussed on our Vision and Values for the school which you can see on the school website. It is clear that whatever steps staff, governors and parents take for Greenway, the children are at the centre of everything. This was recognised and reported on incredibly favourably in the school's most recent Ofsted inspection in March, the report from which you can find on the school website.

**School Plan for 2022/23:** With so many challenges since the pandemic we have ensured that the school's focus has been on priorities linked to the Quality of Education (and specifically writing) and to Behaviours, Attitudes and Personal Development. We have had a particular focus this year on the impact of the delivery of the curriculum in Art and Design & Technology and have been so impressed by all the different experiences given to your children in this field and the enthusiasm with which they have embraced new challenges. Again, this was recognised and praised in the most recent Ofsted inspection report. If you had not had a previous chance to do so we hope that you enjoyed looking at your children's work and the displays around the school at the end of year Open Evening

Throughout this year, we have continued to be reassured by inspection feedback, following visits from our independent School Improvement Partner, that staff are consistently doing all that they need to do to ensure that your children are not disadvantaged by the pandemic and that they are suc-

## Actions taken by the Governing Body throughout 2022/23 (cont'd)

successfully getting back on track and making the progress they should. As one would hope, once again this was reinforced by the Ofsted inspection when the inspector provided overwhelmingly positive feedback in person to governors and the school's Senior Leadership Team and also in her report.

We were delighted to support the school in achieving their Mental Health Kitemark and Dani Roe should be commended for all her hard work in driving that achievement.

We have additionally worked extensively with the school and local authority in developing the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and are delighted that this is now recognised as an exemplar by other schools.

**Standards:** Formal testing (SATs) has taken place this year. At the point of writing, we have yet to receive the Year 6 data but this will be shared with you via the school website as soon as we are able.

This year, governors have undertaken specific visits to school focussing on key areas of the curriculum e.g. Writing, Art and History, as well as an afternoon visit to the school where they observed a whole range of curriculum areas being delivered across most of the year groups ranging from PE (dance and lacrosse in Years 4 & 5) to Science (Year 2), to History (the Anglo Saxons and the Egyptians in Years 4 & 6), and to Art (Years 1, 5 & 6). Your children are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning and able to discuss their lessons with us as well as telling us all about what they had been learning before their current topic

There have also been governor visits to observe, seek feedback and report upon Special Educational Needs provision and internal school data; Extended Services; PSHE, Behaviour and Anti-bullying; and statutory governor Health and Safety and Safeguarding visits. Reports from all of our visits fed into the Ofsted inspection, providing a basis for discussion with the inspector and offering reassurance when her findings were very much in line with our own.

**Sport:** As a Governing Body we continue, through link governor Lou Collins, to take a keen interest in sports provision at Greenway and are very grateful to all staff but particularly Mr Lewis for ensuring that your children have so many opportunities made available to them. DSSN (Dacorum School Sports Network) of which we are a member, is always at pains to highlight the excellent practice Greenway demonstrates in Hertfordshire for its PE, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA); this is very rewarding, though equally wanting to live up to this ensures that school works hard to maintain its reputation year on year.

We will continue to monitor the use of Sports Premium funding and provision of sport across the school next year.

**Budget:** Throughout the year the Governing Body monitors expenditure against budget headings and prepares and submits an annual return to the local authority at the financial year-end. Due to exceptional circumstances governors had previously needed to agree a budget with a (technical) in-year deficit for 2022/2023 (the deficit amount being covered by a carry forward). We were though delighted that at the end of the financial year we have managed to end with an in-year surplus albeit a very small one!

All schools continue to face very difficult times particularly around staffing and we are doing our utmost to think creatively and support the long-term financial sustainability of the school – this has included doggedly pursuing and finally obtaining compensation from one of the school's energy providers as a result of their failure to bill the school for an extended period of time!

**Pupil Premium/Catch Up Premium:** Governors monitor the spending of Pupil Premium and Catch Up Premium to ensure that the money received is used in the most effective way for the benefit of those particular children eligible for it. You will see a summary of how this money has been spent on the school's website. We are delighted that a recent visit from the Local Authority has praised the school's exemplary approach in how all pupils' needs at Greenway are supported. Governor links Fiona Duck and Michelle Webb continue to meet with the school's INCO Dani Roe on a regular basis to specifically discuss the provision for those pupils with additional needs, and including all pupils who are eligible for pupil premium.

**Premises:** We support the school in monitoring a rolling programme of improvements and we are very pleased to continue to have Governor Nick Brown's expertise as a qualified surveyor on the Governing Body. Heavy rain has continued to cause challenges for the school even though a lot of work has been undertaken on the drains – some of you may have seen humidifiers in use following the last deluge. We are grateful to all staff for setting to with mops and buckets to clear up after what amounted to a flash flood. We are also extremely grateful to the contractors working on the local Shootersway development for renovating the gazebo and outside benches and to all those who enabled this to happen.

**Parent & Pupil Questionnaire:** All but new parents/carers to Greenway will know that Governors usually conduct and analyse a detailed annual survey to explore a range of questions about how parents/carers and pupils feel about school. This year our planned surveys were trumped by Ofsted. As Ofsted (via the Parent View Survey that parents/carers are asked to complete during the inspection, and via the Inspector conducting Pupil Voice sessions) made enquiries that significantly overlapped with our own planned surveys, we made the decision not to ask for more of your time but to use that data (which is available online) instead.

## Actions taken by the Governing Body throughout 2022/23 (cont'd)

The Ofsted Inspector had discussions with school staff and governors on the basis of those findings and was both reassured (as her report indicates) and impressed at the extent to which she felt parents/carers and pupils' views were understood.

**Parent Forum:** The Greenway Parent Forum continues to prove an effective method of communication and feedback between school and parents, and we are grateful to Governor Fiona Duck for chairing this group. We would like to thank all parents/carers who have been on Parent Forum this year and all those who have fed views in via their representatives.

**GSA:** We are delighted that this year the GSA has been able to return to some face-to-face fund-raising activities enjoyed by so many of you. Thank you to all those involved in providing and supporting such wonderful happy events. Money raised has been invaluable in supporting delivery to the children in a wide variety of ways not least in supplementing the school music curriculum; providing new outdoor play equipment for Nursery; and establishing a new garden area for KS1.

**Governor training:** All Governors undertake training annually to support them in their roles and responsibilities and this year has been no different - a great deal of this has now moved online. The entire Governing Body has had updated safeguarding training and governors have separately had training on a variety of topics including allergy awareness, exclusions and finance.

**School Website:** Governor Nicola Reid again reviewed the school website with school leaders to ensure that this is up to date and legally compliant and we are grateful to her for this piece of work.

**Music and Other Achievements:** This year school has also organised wonderful trips to St Albans Cathedral for the choir to sing at the annual service for the Hospice for St Francis and a very successful Music evening enjoyed by so many parents/carers.

**Greenway Camps:** Governors have worked hard with staff to provide an Easter and Summer camp for many Greenway families involving more than 100 pupils. This provides hours of fun in a safe environment with known school friends as well as supporting those parents/carers needing childcare. We wish everyone involved in the camp this summer lots of fun.

**Prospectus:** The online prospectus for new parents/carers has also been produced by our expert-in-the-field of design, governor Fiona Duck. Thanks to Fiona, and some lovely photographs of your children, we anticipate being just as popular a school choice as we have always been.

**Finally,** we wish those staff leaving the school this year (Mrs Bennett; Mrs Crockett, Mrs Evans Mrs Harris; and Mrs Fletcher-Bryan) the very best of luck in the future. They have been delightful for governors and staff to work with and we will miss them all.

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth O'Reilly MBE

**Chair of Governors**