



Crich Carr Church of England Primary School

Governors' Annual Statement

September 2019 - July 2020

Overview

This past academic year has proved to be extremely challenging for the school. The year commenced with an unexceptional Autumn term. However, with the onset of the corona virus pandemic in March, the government closed all schools from 20 March. In line with government requirements, our school remained open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children, with staffing undertaken on a rota basis.

In addition, from 15 June, we were also able to offer places to children in Reception and Year 6.

School reopened fully on 2 September, 2020, for all pupils from Nursery to Year 6, albeit operating within carefully planned and risk assessed Covid-19 safeguards.

The Governing Body would wish to extend its heartfelt thanks to the Headteacher and staff for their unstinting efforts in keeping the school operational during such a difficult and unprecedented period.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of our school endeavours to fulfil the roles defined by the Government's Department for Education and is supported in this by the Local Authority, Derbyshire County Council. It seeks to ensure the school provides the best possible education for all its pupils, its three core responsibilities being:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision for the school, safeguarding its ethos and establishing its strategic direction.**
- 2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

How the Governing Body is structured

Our Governing Body comprises 12 members, as follows:

- 4 elected Parent Governors
- 1 Local Authority Governor, appointed by Derbyshire County Council
- The Headteacher

- 1 Staff Governor
- 2 Foundation Governors, appointed by the Diocese of Derby
- 3 Co-opted Governors, appointed, as appropriate, by the Governing Body

In addition, the Governing Body has appointed two Associate Members to support its activities.

A list of our current Governors, the Governing Body's subcommittees upon which they sit and the subcommittees' roles and responsibilities can be found on the school website.

We currently (December 2020) have a vacancy for a second Foundation Governor, to be appointed by the Diocese of Derby.

The Governing Body's Operation

The Governing Body plans to hold six meetings every academic year – two per term. Two of these were held in the Autumn term and one in January, all at the school. With the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions, such face-to-face meetings have not been possible. However, the remaining three meetings have been successfully held remotely, using Zoom technology.

The use of Zoom also proved to be extremely valuable during the summer to help provide ready support and guidance to the Headteacher in planning the school's operation as the government's Covid-19 requirements evolved and changed.

Usually, regular school visits by Governors are an important and integral part of the Governing Body's responsibilities. Such visits were possible in the Autumn term but Covid-19 restrictions have, unfortunately, made Governor visits impracticable during the latter half of the academic year,

The School's Academic Year 2019/20 – a Governors' Overview

School Leadership

As a result of a fundamental review undertaken by the Headteacher, the conclusions and recommendations of which were fully endorsed by the Governing Body, a new class structure and responsibilities (below) were successfully implemented at the start of the 2019/20 September term:

- **Class 1 – Early Years Reception:** Vicki Holmes (Headteacher)
- **Class 2 – Years 1, 2 & 3:** Angie Smithurst
- **Class 3 – Years 4, 5 & 6:** Rosemary Fothergill

Feedback from pupils, staff and parents alike in the Autumn term were very positive.

The school has faced many challenges throughout the coronavirus pandemic but have worked hard as a team to continue to provide quality teaching and learning to all children, and continual support to their families.

Inspections

The last Ofsted inspection was in January 2018, followed by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) a month later. In its inspection report, Ofsted concluded: 'The school continues to be good. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection'.

Both inspection reports are available on the school's website. Further Ofsted and SIAMS inspections are not anticipated before 2022.

School Numbers and Finances

The total annual cost of running the school is of the order of £300k (of which some 85% is attributable to staff related costs). Almost of all of this is funded by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) as by far the most significant contributor to the school's annual budget. The funding we receive from DCC is primarily a function of the number of pupils attending the school. As such, the school's continuing financial viability relies heavily upon being able to attract parents to choose Crich Carr as the preferred school for their children.

Against this background, we experienced a very worrying fall in pupil numbers between 2015 and 2018, with total pupil numbers falling to the low 40s. However, this decline has been reversed, with currently a total of 55 children in Reception (9), KS1 (15) and KS2 (31). In addition, we continue to offer a very active nursery section, attended by 10 children.

This healthy turnaround in school numbers reflects the way in which the school, with its unique 'family' ethos and excellent academic record, appeals to and attracts prospective parents. It is worth noting that almost all of the growth in pupil numbers results from children living outside the immediate Whatstandwell catchment area.

Academic Results and Progress

The Curriculum and Standards Committee continually monitors the academic performance and progress of the school on behalf of the Governing Body. Due to the coronavirus pandemic there was no statutory testing for children in 2020. Up until the lockdown in March 2020, the children were making good progress and were on track to achieve good results at the end of the year, as demonstrated by internal assessment and tracking. Children are individually tracked and, where necessary, booster sessions and interventions are put into place. This also applies to those children with a special need who have individual plans.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding of all members of our School community is of the upmost importance to the school. Rigorous, robust and effective procedures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and staff. The Safeguarding and Wellbeing of Pupils Committee meets on a termly basis to discuss any issues or concerns and have undertaken the annual S175 Safeguarding audit. The Committee has used this to develop an Action Plan to adapt and improve our policies and procedures to ensure continual improvement and compliance.

Christian Distinctiveness

We are a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. As such, the school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian values and practice. We pride ourselves on being a fully inclusive school, where everyone is welcome and will be shown care, understanding and respect.

We provide the children with the opportunity to develop their spiritual awareness, their understanding of Christian beliefs, respect for those with other faiths and those of no faith.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the St Mary's church and the Diocese of Derby.

Andy Horsley
Roger Keeling
Co-chairs of Governors

December 2020