



## Introduction

Information about our governors, and how our governing body works, is available via each school website at

<http://www.sopleyprimaryschool.org/governors/>

and the 'Federation' area <http://www.sopleyprimaryschool.org/federation/> which has pages devoted to

- Governance
- Updates and reports
- Policies
- Background to the federation process and new ways of working

Please ask at the school office if you have difficulty finding the information you need.

Our Governing Body is made up of volunteers from the local community and the wider world. This includes people from business, education and other backgrounds, who between them offer a diverse range of skills and views, bringing a breadth of experience to the team. We work within a statutory framework and have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- **Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and**
- **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

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**This is our first impact statement since federation in May 2016 – it gives some examples of impact but is not intended to be an exhaustive account of the work of the governing body.**

We measure our impact in terms of how we have met our core strategic functions and the impact this has had in the following areas:

- **Leadership and Management**
- **Teaching, learning and assessment**
- **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**
- **Outcomes**
- **Early Years provision**

**Leadership and Management - Which of the core functions has this work involved:**

- ✓ Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- ✓ Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- ✓ Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

**What impact are we making as a Federation Governing Body ?**

Key leadership positions have been subject to considerable turbulence over the past two years – over this time the new governing body have worked hard to establish and sustain effective leadership and management through:

**1. Timely recruitment of leaders**

- Executive Headteachers
- Heads of School
- Interim leadership
- Governors

**2. Capacity building and financial efficiency**

- Staffing costs account for over 70% of each school's budget. Federation provided an opportunity to develop shared staffing in a number of areas. This is not just about reducing costs, it also contributes to effectiveness i.e. sharing and developing good practice. Examples include:
  - The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) now works across both schools – this is improving consistency and has provided opportunities to share good practice.
  - The administration function has recently been reorganised to improve financial efficiency and make best use of the expertise across the federation.
  - A Site Manager has been employed to take the lead on H&S matters – the aim is to free up leadership capacity to redirect towards teaching and learning priorities.
- Investing in IT solutions to support teaching and learning e.g. Target Tracker pupil tracking system has been introduced across both schools and we are also in the process of finalising a cross federation IT system. Over time these measures are intended to support more effective use of leadership and staff time.

### 3. Developing a self-improving culture

- Establishing robust governance working practices - terms of reference/guidance documents/annual programme of work, skills based appointments, training and development of governors, self-evaluation etc.
- Governor monitoring and evaluation activity in order to understand areas of strength and weakness – examples include; review of safeguarding arrangements across the federation, completion of external H&S and safeguarding audits, review of statutory compliance, outcomes for pupils, equality matters, aligning policies/practice across the federation, stakeholder surveys, financial scrutiny and benchmarking – including the use of Pupil Premium and PE/Sports Premium, audit of the effectiveness of performance management etc. A recent external report from a link inspector (LLP) noted *“The governors have provided strong support and challenge within the school during the period of turbulence within the leadership of the school. The interim executive headteacher states that they have a thorough understanding of the schools strengths and areas of development, including their understanding of assessment data. They have developed the systems by which they are involved in monitoring the impact of the school improvement plan as well as ensuring that there is rigorous monitoring of the schools statutory health and safety requirements. They provide effective support and challenge to the executive headteacher and plan to work more closely with middle leaders in holding them to account for their impact on provision.”*
- Governor support and challenge – governors are actively involved in shaping policy and key documents e.g. new anti-bullying policy and School Self Evaluation and Improvement Plans. Governors are proactive on special projects e.g. safer pedestrian access at Burley. Governors have a good range of expertise which is used to provide challenge e.g. setting of higher attendance target at Sopley School for 2018, scrutiny of pupil progress data and requests for follow up reporting from the leadership team.
- The governing body works hard to meet the required standards – we were pleased that the Ofsted inspection at Burley School in February 2017 noted *“School leaders and governors fulfil their responsibilities to keep pupils safe well. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and all staff are kept up to date with safeguarding information.”* Maintaining these standards requires ongoing vigilance and we programme this work through our ‘School Improvement Cycle’.
- Communication with, and responding to feedback from stakeholders. The governing body produce termly updates about the work of the governing body and publish other reports on the federation and school webpages [www.sopleyprimaryschool.org/federation/post-2715/](http://www.sopleyprimaryschool.org/federation/post-2715/) . Some recent examples of responding to feedback include; governors will follow up key areas arising from the pupil survey with more in depth pupil interviews, in response to comments at a parent drop in we are carrying out a consultation on the demand for breakfast clubs, the Anti-bullying policy was adjusted to reflect feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

**Teaching, Learning and Assessment** - Which of the core functions has this work involved:

- ✓ Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- ✓ Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- ✓ Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Currently the teaching and learning at both schools is 'good'. This was validated at Burley during the Ofsted inspection of February 2017. Sopley have been externally monitored by a member of the Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service team in December 2017 who concurred with the judgements made by the Executive Headteacher about the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Assessment**

Teacher assessments are moderated across our two schools and we also work with other schools to ensure that judgments are secure and consistent. Both schools have recently worked on moderation with an Ofsted Outstanding provider, Hordle C of E (VA) Primary School.

In the 2016-17 academic year the schools were included in the sampling exercise carried out by Hampshire Local Education Authority – across the federation we were externally moderated across all areas - Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Each of these external moderation exercises confirmed that the judgements made by our teachers were secure and consistent.

The Early Years Foundation Stage are also included in the Hampshire Local Education Authority 2017-18 moderation sample – again, the feedback has been very positive for both schools.

Working together to improve teaching, learning and assessment across the two schools is already underway through:

- Moderation
- Staff meetings – working on current school improvement themes and projects e.g. No Nonsense Spelling
- Joint training – e.g. Maths No Problem
- Shared roles – e.g. EHT, SENDCO

The governing body have also invested in resources to pave the way for more effective joint working over time

- Target Tracker (pupil performance tracking system)
- A linked IT system will be implemented in April 2018

**Personal development, behaviour and welfare** - Which of the core functions has this work involved:

- ✓ Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- ✓ Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- ✓ Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

### **Safeguarding**

Since federation there has been a thorough and ongoing review cycle for safeguarding arrangements. Good practice has been shared between the schools to enhance the safeguarding culture – examples include; improved signage, staffroom displays, shared safeguarding training, aligning systems and practice across both schools, consistent governor monitoring and challenge. In response to a ‘near miss’ incident, a governor led the initiative to install the new gates on the gravel track at the front of Burley School – these provide safe pedestrian access for children at drop off and collection times.

Expenditure on safeguarding and H&S reflects the commitment to a strong safeguarding culture rather than just meeting minimum requirements e.g. depth of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) cover across the federation, higher grading for Site Manager.

### **Attendance**

The governing body have issued regular reminders about the importance of good attendance and have adopted the Hampshire model policy to promote good attendance. **This has not resulted in the improvement we had hoped for – although there are some special circumstances which have impacted on attendance at Sopley there is still more work to do to improve attendance in both schools.** We are currently looking at how the schools manage poor attenders. The recent re-organisation of the admin. function has enabled us to increase expertise within the team, this will provide additional support for the senior leadership team in tackling poor attendance.

### **Values and ethos**

Governors have continued to support the individuality of each school as expressed through the ‘Burley Values’ and ‘Sopley Learner and ethos’.

Governors also monitor how the schools prepare children for life in modern Britain by promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Both schools do this in a range of ways; through the curriculum, assemblies, school council, displays, procedures/policies etc.

Governors visit both schools regularly - they consistently find a purposeful and welcoming learning environment. The governors were very impressed with the questions the Sopley school council developed for the selection process for the new Executive Headteacher, and the feedback the children at Burley gave during the assembly sessions. The children in both schools conducted themselves very well throughout the process, it was a good example of the school values in action.

### **Behaviour and Anti-bullying**

Governors have been closely involved in the development of the new federation Anti-bullying policy which was developed in response to concerns raised by parents (Parent View 16/17) – feedback from parents, pupils and staff were considered throughout the development process. Behaviour policy is currently under review – in particular the system of rewards and sanctions.

The ongoing impact of both policies will be monitored in a range of ways – feedback from stakeholders, reviewing incident logs etc.

**Outcomes** - Which of the core functions has this work involved:

- ✓ Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- ✓ Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- ✓ Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Governors have a structured cycle of work to monitor the impact of school improvement activity on pupil outcomes – this is supported by external monitoring by a link inspector (LLP) from the Hampshire Inspection and Advice Service. **A summary of impact at Sopley over the 2016-17 academic year (LLP report November 2017):**

*“The impact of the previous executive head of school and English and mathematics leaders is clear in the improved outcomes across the school and improvements made to the quality of teaching and learning. The interim executive headteacher and new heads of school have a strong understanding of the strengths and development areas for the school and are ably supported and challenged by the governing body. There are robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning. Assessment systems are now more rigorous so that teachers have a better understanding of attainment, as well as being able to plan for targeted children and groups that need to make accelerated progress.”*

**Further examples of impact at Sopley over the 2016-17 academic year – from the most recent LLP report (November 2017):**

- The number of children achieving ‘Age Related Expectations’ (ARE) in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 (year 6) rose from 31% to 56% – there is still more work to do. At present the focus is on maths, spelling and greater depth (see below).
- *“The school’s focus (in 2016-17) on the improvement of writing and reading has impacted on the standards achieved at the end of KS2 and progress across KS1 and the proportion attaining ARE which is now broadly in line with the national average in writing and remains above in reading. There has been an increase in the proportion of children achieving greater depth in reading.”*
- Impact of the school’s work (in 2016-17) to improve standards in maths. *“Progress across KS2 has improved from being significantly below the national average to being in line, attainment as measured as the proportion of children attaining ARE has risen from being well below the national average to being in line with national averages at 67%.”*

**Vulnerable Groups** – Children from groups who are vulnerable to underachievement (e.g. pupils who are eligible for pupil premium, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and are carefully tracked.

Analysis of the latest statutory tests (Summer 2017) shows that at Sopley the progress for these groups in reading, writing and maths were at least in line with the average for these groups in Hampshire schools.

Children entitled to pupil premium exceeded the Hampshire average in reading writing and maths.

Children with SEND exceeded the Hampshire average in reading and writing.

**Pupil Progress** – Analysis of the latest statutory tests (Summer 2017) shows that at Sopley progress in reading, writing and maths was in line with the average in Hampshire schools. (see annexe ) and within the average range for schools nationally (see annexe). However, the ambitious targets reflect the fact that, to raise the rates of attainment, some children will need to make accelerated progress from their starting points in order to catch up and then keep up with Age Related Expectations (ARE).

### School Improvement Priorities 2017-18

- **QUALITY OF TEACHING** – Ensure that this continues to be at least good.
- **MATHEMATICS** - Increasing the number of children attaining age related expectations (ARE) in maths.
- **CHALLENGE AND DEPTH IN LEARNING** - To identify and target those children capable of achieving higher standards. Planning for and providing challenge for the more able to pupils to ensure that they are securing a greater depth of understanding in their learning is a key priority for the school ensuring that these children make good progress from their starting points.
- **SPELLING** - The improvement in spelling across all year groups (includes phonics). A new whole school spelling programme was introduced in Autumn 2017. Additional support for those pupils with specific additional needs for spelling has also been put in place.
- **EARLY YEARS** - Continue to develop provision, ensuring rapid progress through high quality experiences and quality interventions.

At **Burley** outcomes and areas for improvement were noted in the recent Ofsted Inspection Report:

- *“At the end of each key stage in 2016, pupils achieved well. The proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. The proportion reaching the high standard was also above the national average. Pupils made exceptional progress in reading.”*
- *“At the end of Year 2 in 2016, pupils’ attainment was also above the national average in reading writing and mathematics. Pupils made good progress from their starting points and were well prepared for learning at the start of key stage 2.”*
- *“Next steps for the school - Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:*
  - *development planning, including in the early years, is improved to ensure it is sharply focused on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils, and making sure that more pupils gain a greater depth of understanding*
  - *greater proportions of pupils reach higher standards in writing.”*

### School Improvement Priorities 2017-18

Burley is also working on the same broad areas as Sopley. Targets will reflect a greater emphasis on progress from starting points of the pupils.

**Early Years provision** - Which of the core functions has this work involved:

- ✓ Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- ✓ Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- ✓ Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Early Years provision at both schools results in good outcomes for the children.

At Burley and Sopley schools, the number of children who achieved a 'Good Level of Development (GLD)' at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in 2017 was above the Hampshire and National averages. Children achieving a 'Good Level of Development' are those achieving at least the expected level within the following areas of learning: communication and language; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development; literacy; and mathematics.

Comments from external reports:

- **Sopley LLP Report November 2017**

*"The quality of teaching and learning in EYFS is strong. Attainment at the end of Year R continues to improve and is now well above national averages, with 88% of the cohort securing GLD."*

- **Burley Ofsted February 2017**

*"Children in the early years also achieve well. From starting points that are above those typical for their age, they make good progress. Children are very well prepared for learning in Year 1. The percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has been consistently above the national average for three years."*

At Sopley there was a need to reorganise the provision to help improve standards. The governing body used school funds to invest in additional resources to support this work, this included external advice and support and improvements to the learning environment.

Over the academic year 2017-18 both schools are included in the Hampshire sampling exercise which moderates the assessment of children in Early Years settings – the feedback to date has been positive and gives us a valuable external view of the quality of the provision.