



## **Blue Sky Federation: THROUGH KNOWLEDGE WE GROW**

### **Governor Impact Statement: September 2018**

Our Vision: Being together: building on our strengths, valuing our individuality. Together, we will celebrate the unique qualities and characteristics that each school brings to our federation. As two, small, village schools we will continue to enhance and celebrate our qualities and characteristics. We believe we are stronger together; broadening and enriching opportunities for all. The ethos, values, heritage and status of both schools will be respected and preserved - embracing a vibrant future.

Our unique offering of Flexi Schooling and Forest School meant we had a high level of turbulence, nevertheless, governors continued to fully support our offering.

At both our schools we had a high proportion of SEND pupils and as governors we recognised the impact this has on our data. However, we strove to do the very best for all our pupils.

As a governing body our main focus was to support and challenge the school to ensure that all of our pupils, regardless of their backgrounds or additional needs, make appropriate progress to reach potential, supported by a challenging and diverse curriculum. For this to happen the pupils must be supported by a well led, enthusiastic, professionally competent and motivated staff all working together within a happy, safe and stimulating environment.

The work of the governing body has had a significant impact on developing our schools. Listed below are examples of activities, events, and systems that illustrate the impact of the governing body on school improvement. At half termly meetings we received:

- Head's report – which included details of pupil numbers in school and pre-school, attendance, the quality of teaching and learning, and events.
- Governors work with staff to develop our school development.
- Pupil data – the Assistant Head provided regular information on pupil progress and attainment during this year, the new National Curriculum and working without levels. We knew that our data was statistically unreliable due to our small cohorts.
- Information about interventions – the leadership team reported on use of Pupil Premium (PP) funding, organisation of PP pupils as well as general strategies used in classes to reach targets in key issues.
- Governors were shown how assessment data was inputted to the new assessment program and how Governors can interpret it, now that teachers no longer report in levels.

These examples are just some of the ways in which Governors had the opportunity to challenge and seek clarification on progress and identify how this was impacting on different groups of pupils. It gave them a focus on what to look for and ask about during visits. Minutes of meetings demonstrated how governors used this knowledge to inform their questioning. Also, the governors benchmark our data against, the Local Authority and schools nationally to ensure the school's standards and expectations are high.

In addition there were regular updates, for governors to keep abreast of various aspects of monitoring.



Governors attended a range of courses to develop their skills and expertise which meant that their challenge could be more effective. This included finance training, safeguarding training, SIAMS training and governor monitoring training.

Governors attended INSET days to work on the School Development Plan with the staff

### **Data**

The data was used to scrutinise the progress and attainment of pupils in both schools as well as groups of pupils. Confidentiality has to be respected as we dealt with such small groups of pupils. Governors met with the head teacher as part of the Pupils and Curriculum Committee at least once a term and looked at progress data, the results of tests and complete book scrutinies. They also met with subject leaders to hold them to account on data and pupil progress. This will continue to be a focus for monitoring in the year ahead.

### **Governor visits**

Governors visited the schools as part of their individual monitoring of the School Development Plan key issues, this allowed Governors to speak directly to staff and pupils as well being able to look at pupils' books. Governors reported their findings to the full Governing Body for discussion. Governors were able to see the improvements to teaching and learning through daily practice in pupils work. They were able to talk to pupils about the curriculum and their enjoyment of school.

### **Policies**

Governors reviewed school policies as part of the review cycle to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Specific attention is paid to ensure that the school complies with the Department of Education mandatory policy list.

### **Personnel and Pay**

The Governors reviewed the Pay Policy in July 2018. The performance of all staff was discussed in general at the Resources Committee. Governors have supported the head teacher with issues over performance where necessary. The performance review of the headteacher was undertaken by two governors with special responsibility for this, and independent guidance was sought. The impact is that headteacher's pay is linked to performance, and the priorities for school improvement become performance objectives for our headteacher. Due to budget constraints a staffing review has been carried out at Northrepps Primary School with support from the Local Authority.

### **Financial Management**

The Resources Committees worked with the Office Manager and head teacher to ensure that the budget was managed effectively and improvements were effective and continuous. Governors attend all budget setting and revisions with the Office Manager and Finance Officer from the Local Authority.

### **Staff Recruitment**

Governors have been involved in the recruitment of Pre-School staff, teachers and support staff.



### **School Evaluation Form**

Throughout the year Governors and the leadership team discussed the Self Evaluation Form and Governors had an opportunity to input their comments. The knowledge of both schools has grown due to the increase and quality of monitoring as well as challenges to the head teacher.

### **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)**

In July 2017, Erpingham VC Primary School had its church school inspection. As part of this, two governors spent considerable time with the inspector answering questions and also attended the feedback session. The inspector looked at the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school, how the school meets the needs of its learners, the impact of collective worship, the effectiveness of religious education and the effectiveness of leadership and management as a church school. We were delighted that the school received a 'good' grade, particularly as standards have been raised at Erpingham VC Primary School & Northrepps Primary School. The inspector commented on the strong Christian ethos at the school, which is constantly reviewed and discussed by the governors, as well as its impact being monitored at every governor visit.

### **Governor Expertise**

The governing body has undergone further changes this year. Ongoing review has helped to ensure the federation has moved forward. The governing body now have a clear action plan and have completed a detailed skills audit which will inform training, monitoring and support for the coming year. We have recruited 2 new governors from the Swallowtail Federation to develop our sphere of expertise.

### **Partnerships**

The federation worked in partnership with a number of other schools to ensure support and challenge. We have an informal partnership with Swallowtail Federation. This also helped us explore ways to become more sustainable. We have a dedicated 'cluster' governor who attends all cluster meetings of schools in the area. The impact is that we have met our duty to the cluster, and ensured that the school has a say in how cluster has operated and monies were used. Feedback from cluster meetings are given in every meeting of the full governing body.

As an active member of Aylsham Cluster Trust the governing body have established a more formalised system of school to school support within the co-operative trust.

### **Ofsted**

Erpingham VC Primary is 'Good' (April 2018) Northrepps Primary is 'Requires Improvement' (Feb 2017). As a result of the Ofsted inspection at Northrepps governors have worked closely with the head teacher and leadership team to address the issues. We worked closely with the Local Authority Improvement Team and established an Improvement Board across both schools. This met weekly and included the Chair of Governors. Minutes were published on Governor Hub and improvements discussed at full governing body meetings. The impact of this was that our improvement partner from the LA held more formal Improvement Board Meetings with the headteacher and governors at least once a term.