



2021 – 2022 Annual Governance Statement

Background

Purpose

In accordance with government requirements, the three core functions of our Governing Board are:

1. Setting the strategic direction and ensuring clarity of vision and ethos.
2. Holding the Head Teacher to account for school improvement and educational performance.
3. Overseeing the finances to ensure that money is well spent.

To do this we work closely with our Head Teacher, Mrs Hancock, and staff, to set and monitor the annual objectives in our School Development Plan, review and refine our policies, and set and monitor the budget. We are proud of the role we play in supporting our professional and dedicated staff team to continue delivering the best outcomes for our children.

This statement provides further detail on our activities and priorities this year.

Governance arrangements

In line with government recommendations, our Governing Board is made up of:

- The Head Teacher
- 1 elected staff governor
- 4 elected parent governors
- 1 Local Authority governor appointed by the Local Authority
- 2 foundation governors appointed by the Diocese
- 3 co-opted governors, appointed by the Governing Board, who have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school

The full Governing Board meets four times a year. In addition, the Finance and General Purpose Committee and the Curriculum Committee both meet termly.

There is also a Pay and Complaints Panel that meets at least annually, the Head Teacher Performance Management Panel, which meets twice yearly and includes an external consultant who helps with target-setting, and the Buildings Working Group that meets on an ad hoc basis.

In addition, governors are allocated specific roles that they undertake to ensure both statutory compliance (e.g. on safeguarding and special educational needs (SEN) provision) and school improvement (e.g. via roles aligned to curriculum areas). A full list of roles and responsibilities is included in **Appendix A**. A table of our main activities this year by term is in **Appendix B**.

How you can contact us

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents, carers, neighbours or anyone with an interest in the school. Please contact the Chair of Governors, Milly Bowring, via the school office or by email at cbowring@hatherop.gloucs.sch.uk.

The work of the Governing Board this year

Strategic planning and monitoring

The Governing Board is thorough in carrying out its strategic responsibilities. Our annual School Development Plan is structured against the four areas in the Ofsted framework: Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development and Leadership and Management, and are agreed by the Governing Board in Term 1. We then monitor the implementation and impact of those priorities over the year using a range of evidence, including pupil assessments, stakeholder views, monitoring visits and Head Teacher and staff reports during meetings.

An important part of our role is to support and work closely with Mrs Hancock and staff to ensure that we are able meet the school's vision of 'Caring, Believing, Achieving' in the long term. This summer this included supporting staff recruitment and conducting exit interviews.

- **School Development Plan:** This year's plan identified 11 priorities aiming to ensure the highest quality of teaching whilst maintaining pupil and staff well-being and addressing the effects of the pandemic. Some of these key priorities are covered below. We will publish our 2021-22 plan and its impact by the start of next term.
- **Buildings Working Group:** Governors and staff met in Term 1 to discuss the challenges they face and build relations post-pandemic. Staff noted the hall is too small, the Y5/6 classroom is in need of improvement and that it would be useful to have the potential to move to a different class structure in future. A working group led by parent governor Lisa Clayton has been set up to explore options based on UK Government guidance. Stakeholders will be fully consulted during this process.
- **Long-term planning:** Governors met with staff in Term 5 to discuss what 'Caring, Believing, Achieving' means in practice and to start developing a set of long-term priorities for Hatherop. It was a hugely valuable session that showed the strength of our shared values, ethos and ambitions for all of our pupils. We will continue to work on this, including our Christian vision, next year, and will share priorities with staff and parents for feedback.

Gathering evidence

We collect a range of evidence helping us to understand the hard work by staff on implementation and the positive impact it is having on pupils. Governors conduct **monitoring visits** at least termly, linked to current priorities, e.g. Milly joined an English lesson, Angie Bray a geography lesson, Ben Platts came in for a maths visit and Jackie Cullum a visit on spiritual learning and RE. We have been particularly impressed by the rapid progress seen during **termly assessments** in writing.

We also canvas **stakeholder views** both in person (e.g. at parents evenings, staff meetings and with pupils during visits) and via our annual stakeholder surveys. We were delighted with the positive views of staff, parents and pupils this year. For example, parents are more positive across the board with 93% saying their child is taught well. Staff have praised the provision for their professional development, school leadership and governance. Survey results and next steps are fed back to each group and the results of the parent survey will be published.¹

¹ Staff survey results are not published because the numbers are small.

Finance and General Purpose Committee

This Committee sits termly, with Sam Lawson chairing, and is responsible for setting and reviewing our budget, dealing with any grounds and buildings matters and reviewing relevant policies to ensure good practice and compliance (e.g. pay and complaints, charging, and health and safety policies). The Committee is keen to ensure that spending enables our schools' strategic priorities and provides value for money. There are regular discussions on funding for Pupil Premium, SEN and PE provision.

The Committee follows an annual cycle, with the school's financial position reviewed termly and a timetable leading up to final budget approval in May. Particular focuses this year have included:

- **Budget:** As a small school the budget is always a keen focus, to ensure it is well-managed. There has been over-spend in electricity this year due to fuel costs, which will be reflected in next year's budget. Budget for staff salaries and training is always a high priority. Four versions of the budget plan were reviewed between March and May, before final approval. We complete [the School Financial Value Standard](#) annually and benchmark spend against similar schools. An independent audit has been carried out on the school fund.
- **Buildings:** The school's roof has recently been repaired, uneven paving fixed and carpets cleaned. Electricians and lighting are also being improved in response to health and safety visits. There are also regular discussions with members of the Buildings Working Group to discuss next steps (see above).

Curriculum Committee

Our Curriculum Committee sits termly and has a particular focus on monitoring priorities under Ofsted areas: Quality of Education, Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development. We see pupil progress data termly on reading, writing and maths, and discuss monitoring visits. We have standing items on Pupil Premium, SEN and PE. We are keen to ensure that our **Pupil Premium provision** reflects best practice, including targeted interventions, and regularly discuss **SEN provision** with Mrs Balloch (SEN-Co) and Angie (SEN Governor). We review policies to ensure alignment with current priorities and best practice guidance (e.g. [EEF evidence and resources](#)). The Curriculum Committee is currently chaired by Milly, with Micky St Aldwyns taking over the role from next year.

Focuses this year have included:

- **Curriculum planning and delivery**, led by Mrs Hancock, to ensure a clear progression of knowledge and consistency within subjects across years (which is complex given our unusual structure and mixed-year classes). During her visit, Angie saw how the curriculum had been logically sequenced to enable pupils to make links between history and geography.
- **Writing:** All staff having been trained in [The Write Stuff](#) programme. Milly was hugely impressed to see it in action during a Year 5/6 writing lesson and termly assessments have shown rapid progress, which is a fantastic result given that writing suffered most during the pandemic.
- **Reading** is a high priority. Staff have been trained in Floppy's Phonics and [VIPERS](#) guided reading, and are working hard to ensure a consistent and ambitious approach. This has translated into good termly progress and many exceeding age-related expectations.

- **Re-establishing PE provision and wider learning opportunities** post-pandemic, whilst balancing costs and logistics. We are aware this is a priority for many parents. Support from a PE specialist and staff training have led to success in swimming, netball, rounders and cross-country. Pupil experiences this year have included a visit from a Rabbi and learning trips to the Fresh Air Sculpture Show, Gloucester Cathedral and Cheddar Gorge among others.
- **Behaviour and emotional well-being:** An ex-Ofsted inspector visited and praised our pupils' attitudes and behaviour as 'outstanding'. Our dedicated support staff have received additional training in maintaining our consistently high expectations during breaks and after-school clubs. Ms Howard talked to us about her 'trauma-informed' training on supporting pupils' emotional needs and is sharing lessons with staff.
- **Christian vision and values:** Jackie has been working closely with Mrs Dugdale to align our spiritual education with the Gloucester Model Policy and enable pupils to lead collective worship. It is wonderful to see our caring ethos and Christian values in action on our visits.

Structure and succession planning

This year we determined that our Strategic Planning Committee responsibilities should be undertaken by the full Board, leaving two committees (Curriculum and Finance and General Purpose – see above). This was in order to be more efficient and reduce the burden on our Head Teacher.

An important part of our role is succession planning and ensuring we have a full complement of committed members. The usual term of office is four years and no governor should sit on the Board for more than two terms. We were sad to say goodbye to our fantastic Chair of Governors, Mike Francis, parent governors Louise Cowan and Iain Turnbull, foundation governor Simon Brignall, and long-standing and invaluable clerk, Penny Ibbotson.²

Micky St Aldwyns joins us as Local Authority governor; Sam Lawson (dad of Bea) and Ben Platts (dad of Albert and George), as parent governors; Clare Brignall as foundation governor; and Michael Birnie (dad of Emma), as a co-opted governor from the Ernest Cook Trust. They bring much varied and valuable expertise and we are delighted to have them! You can see their responsibilities in **Appendix A**.

Self-evaluation and training

We understand that an important part of our role is reflecting on - and seeking to continuously improve - our own effectiveness, including undertaking appropriate training. This year, we completed lots of formal training including Chair of Governors and Head Teacher Performance Management (Milly), Safeguarding and Single Central Record (Micky), Finance (Sam), New Governor (Ben and Sam), Roles and Responsibilities and Outstanding Governance (all).

We have also taken some time to reflect on our effectiveness and areas to work on. You can find our answers to the NGA 20 Questions Every Board Should Ask Itself in **Appendix C** and a skills audit to inform training needs in **Appendix D**. In particular, we are working hard on re-establishing connections with staff post-pandemic, increasing transparency and planning for the long-term.

² Clerk recruitment is on-going at the time of writing.

Appendix A: Roles and responsibilities (March 22)

2021/22	Curriculum/ Self Evaluation Group	FA&P	Buildings Working Group	Chair	Vice Chair	Parent Governor	Foundation Governor	LA Governor	Co-opted governor	Headteacher/Staff governor	Associate Member	Pay & Complaints Panel	Appeal Pay & Complaints Panel	Health & Safety	Safer Recruitment	Head Performance mgt Govs .	Looked After Children	Child protection	SEN Governor	Safeguarding	Data Governor	School Trust Fund **	Data Protection	Christian Distinctiveness	Creative Hub	STEM Hub	Health & Well Being Hub
Simon Brignall	√						√																√			√	
Jackie Cullum	√						√																√			√	
Rebecca Balloch	√									√																	
Taryn Hancock	√	√	√							√					√									√			
Angie Bray	√								√										√						√		
Sam Lawson		√	√			√						√											√				
Ed Wilson		√			√				√					√		√						√				√	
Michael Birnie		√	√						√			√			√												
Michael St Aldwyn	√							√									√	√		√					√		
Millie Bowring	√	√	√	√		√									√	√					√				√		
Lisa Clayton		√	√			√								√												√	
Ben Platts		√				√						√				√					√						

**Note: School Trust Fund Group also contains Mike Francis, David Hicks-Beach, Ian Powell & Jill Rixon (clerk)

Appendix B: Governor key dates and activities – 2021/22

This tables covers key dates and activities this year but is not an exhaustive list. For example, the Chair also meets regularly with the Head Teacher to discuss relevant matters and provide support.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Who?</u>
<u>Term 1</u>		
22 nd Sept	Full Governing Board meeting	All
6 th Oct	Strategic Planning Committee	Committee members
11 th Oct	HT Performance Management training	MBo
11 th Oct	STEM Hub Computing visit	LC
20 th Oct	Staff / Governor meeting on challenges	All
20 th Oct	Curriculum Committee	Committee members
<u>Term 2</u>		
8 th Nov	Health and Safety inspection	TH, IT & LC
10 th Nov	Finance and General Purpose Committee	Committee members
23 rd Nov	RE and spiritual learning visit	JC
24 th Nov	Full Governing Board meeting	All
10 th Dec	Chair of Governors training	MBo
<u>Term 3</u>		
12 th Jan	Strategic Planning Committee	Committee members
18 th Jan	Roles and Responsibilities training	All
26 th Jan	Curriculum Committee	Committee members
27 th Jan	Finance training	SL
31 st Jan & 7 th Feb	New Governor training	SL
7 th Feb	Buildings walk-around	MBi, LC & MBo
10 th Feb	Parents evening phonics workshop	MBo & JC
11 th Feb	English monitoring visit	MBo
16 th Feb	LA English review	MBo, AB & JC
17 th Feb	Special Ed Needs (SEN) meeting	AB & RB
<u>Term 4</u>		
2 nd & 3 rd March	Parents evening	MBo & EW
8 th March	Safeguarding Children training	MSA
9 th March	Single Central Record training	MSA
9 th March	Finance and General Purpose Committee	Committee members
15 th March	Outstanding Governance training	All
16 th March	ECT field trip to Lea Wood	MBo
23 rd March	Full Governing Board meeting	All
28 th March	HT mid-year review – HT Performance Panel	MBo & EW
6 th April	Monitoring visit on History / Geography	AB
<u>Term 5</u>		
28th April	SIAMs mid-term review	JC, TH
4th May	Staff / Governor strategy session	All
11th May	Curriculum Committee	Committee members
18th May	Finance and General Purpose Committee	Committee members
24th May	Teacher recruitment	TH, RB, MBo
25th May	ECT field trip to Lea Wood	MBo & JC
24th May	Parents eve on relationships and sex education	MBo
25th May	Extraordinary FGB to approve budget	All

Term 6		
9th June	Count on Nature at church	CBr
14 th June	Stakeholder survey analysis and feedback	MBo
30 th June & 1 st July	Buildings project options review	LC, TH & MBo
Various	Exit interviews for teachers and clerk	LC, MBI, EW
6th July 6pm	Full Governing Board meeting	All
14 th July	LA Early Years visit	TH, RB
Week 11 th July	Monitoring visit on maths	BP

Appendix C: Our answer to the National Governance Association NGA 20 Questions every governing board should ask itself

Reviewed by all the governors during a group reflection and training session coordinated by Gloucestershire County Council Governor Services on the 15th March 2022.

Governing board effectiveness

Right skills: do we have the right skills on the governing board?

<i>1. Have we completed a skills audit which informs the governor specification we use as the basis of governor appointment and interview?</i>	Not yet, but will in April to inform training needs. Will use the GCC template as it is relatively simple. Action: Skills Audit (April 22)
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Effectiveness: are we as effective as we could be?

<i>2. How well do we understand our roles and responsibilities, including what it means to be strategic?</i>	All governors undertook recent R&R training in addition to new governor training. A range of specific roles (e.g. Safeguarding, SEN) are allocated, with relevant training. We understand the need to be strategic not operational ('eyes on, hands off').
<i>3. Do we have a professional clerk who provides legal advice and oversees the governing board's induction and development needs?</i>	Yes - an excellent professional clerk who provides legal advice, including updates on changes, and oversees induction and development needs.
<i>4. Is the size, composition and committee structure of our governing board conducive to effective working?</i>	Yes, current structure works – 3x effective committees and there is good communication / information provided at FGB. However, could reduce the number of committees to be more efficient. Action: Review committee structure (March FGB).
<i>5. How do we make use of good practice from across the country?</i>	School budget is benchmarked against similar schools. Regular training explores examples of good practice. Membership of the Key for Governors is a source of good practice from other schools.

Role of the chair: does our chair show strong and effective leadership?

<i>6. Do we carry out a regular 360° review of the chair's performance and elect the chair each year?</i>	Not historically but keen to do this. Process can be relatively simple and inform annual election cycle. Action: Develop simple form (for Dec '22)
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7. Do we engage in good succession planning so that no governor serves for longer than two terms of office and the chair is replaced at least every six years?	No current governor has served longer than two-terms. New Chair appointed in Jan after previous served for 4 years. Will have open conversations about succession planning going forwards.
8. Does the chair carry out an annual review of each governor's contribution to the board's performance?	Yes, plan to continue doing this informally, involving an annual two-way conversation with each member about how it is going.

Vision, ethos and strategy

Strategy: does the school have a clear vision and strategic priorities?

9. Does our vision look forward three to five years, and does it include what the children who have left the school will have achieved?	Not yet but planning to address this with staff in May, to develop a relatively simple set of shared long-term priorities, based on our vision and values . May also explore tracking children who have left. Action: Staff / Governor strategy session (May '22)
10. Have we agreed a strategy with priorities for achieving our vision with key performance indicators against which we can regularly monitor and review the strategy?	Yes. Governors contribute to our annual School Development Plan (SDP) which identifies key school improvement priorities, plus actions, intended impacts and planned evidence to monitor implementation and impact of each (e.g. visits, discussions, surveys, assessment data).
11. How effectively does our strategic planning cycle drive the governing board's activities and agenda setting?	Reasonably effective and an area being actively worked-on e.g. ensuring governor input to early versions and mid-year SDP updates in committee meetings, identifying evidence against SDP priorities up-front, linking governor visits more tightly to SDP priorities, and planning the process for summer term governor input into next year's SDP.

Engagement: are we properly engaged with our school community, the wider school sector and the outside world?

12. How well do we listen to, understand and respond to our pupils, parents and staff?	We conduct annual stakeholder surveys (staff, parent, and pupil), attend parents' evening at least once/ year, capture pupil voice in visits, and attend at least one staff meeting / year. High-level results and actions are fed-back to staff and parents.
13. How do we make regular reports on the work of the governing board to our parents and local community?	Plan to improve this e.g. send a termly update to staff, publish an annual governance statement on website and input into monthly newsletter. Actions: Termly staff update, newsletter, annual governance statement.
14. What benefit does the school draw from collaboration with other schools and other sectors, locally and nationally?	Hatherop is in the South Cotswold School partnership and a safeguarding partnership with Southrop. The school collaborates with various local partners for e.g. for events and educational visits (recently Ernest Cook Trust, the Church, sports)

Effective accountability

Accountability of the executive: do we hold the school leaders to account?

<p>15. How well do we understand the school's performance data (including in-year progress tracking data) so we can properly hold school leaders to account?</p>	<p>This is a strength. Termly attainment and progress data (based teacher assessment informed by NFER and other tests) across subjects and for different groups are discussed. The Data Governor has access to anonymous data on Insight platform. Will be interesting to see how internal assessments relate to 2022 external summer assessment data.</p>
<p>16. Do governors regularly visit the school to get to know it and monitor the implementation of the school strategy?</p>	<p>Yes – although unable to do this well recently due to COVID, now have a planned schedule of monitoring visits linked to SDP priorities, with at least two visits per term. There is a visits policy and form.</p>
<p>17. How well does our policy review schedule work and how do we ensure compliance?</p>	<p>This is good, thanks to our clerk. There is a three-year policy review schedule via committee meetings to ensure compliance. Policy review is delegated to appropriate governors where appropriate.</p>
<p>18. Do we know how effective performance management of all staff is within the school?</p>	<p>HT conducts annual and mid-year reviews. Staff objectives are linked to SDP where appropriate. HT annual review is conducted by three trained governors, supported by LA. HT mid-year review is booked. Staff survey indicates satisfaction with management and training opportunities.</p>
<p>19. Are our financial management systems robust so we can ensure best value for money?</p>	<p>We have a finance committee, with an effective Chair. The finances are reviewed 4x / year by the LA and 3x / year by the governors. We complete the Schools Financial Values Standard annually. Spending is aligned with the SDP.</p>

Impact: are we having an impact on outcomes for pupils?

<p>20. How much has the school improved over the last three years, and what has the governing board's contribution been to this?</p>	<p>The school has worked hard to improve its offer in many areas (e.g. writing provision, curriculum planning, phonics and reading, embedding maths mastery), whilst maintaining the schools' caring ethos and high standards of behaviour and attitudes, which is impressive, given this has happened along-side staff managing complex transitions to and from remote learning during COVID. This is for the most part due to the outstanding leadership and management provided by our new HT, hard work and dedication of staff. Governors have also contributed; appointing our HT, supporting her during difficult decisions, providing constructive challenge and discussion on key priorities (e.g. on evidence-based writing programmes, Pupil Premium funding, SEN, spiritual education), and gathering / reporting on stakeholder views. As a small, low-disadvantage, school, the finances have been a keen, on-going focus, and more recently attention has turned to school structure and buildings. This is in addition to the regular drum-beat of committee meetings, policy review and input into / monitoring of the SDP and its impact.</p>
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Appendix D: Skills Audit

Completed in March 2022. No urgent training needs were identified as all competencies are covered one or more members of the Board. Green boxes show the middle (median) of the distribution.

Experience, skills and other attributes	Level of experience/skill: rate on scale of 1 (none) to 4 (extensive) Do remember to think about all the situations in which you may have developed/used these skills			
	1	2	3	4
Essential for all governors/trustees				
Commitment to improving education for all pupils		2		8
Ability to work in a professional manner as part of a team and take collective responsibility for decisions			1	9
Willingness to learn			1	9
Commitment to the school's vision and ethos			2	8
Basic literacy and numeracy skills			1	9
Basic IT skills (i.e. word processing and email)			3	7
Should exist across the governing board				
Understanding and/or experience of governance				
Experience of being a board member in another sector or a governor/trustee in another school	3		5	2
Experience of chairing a board/governing board or committee	1	2	5	2
Experience of professional leadership	1	1	4	4
Vision and strategic planning				
Understanding and experience of strategic planning		2	6	2
Ability to analyse and review complex issues objectively		2	4	4
Problem solving skills			9	1
Ability to propose and consider innovative solutions		2	7	1
Change management (e.g. overseeing a merger or an organisational restructure, changing careers)	2	2	4	2
Understanding of current education policy		4	4	2
Holding the head to account				
Communication skills, including being able to discuss sensitive issues tactfully			7	3
Ability to analyse data		2	7	1
Ability to question and challenge			7	3
Experience of project management		2	4	4
Performance management/appraisal of someone else	1	1	6	2
Experience of being performance managed/appraised yourself	1		4	5

Financial oversight				
Financial planning/management (e.g. as part of your job)		3	4	3
Experience of procurement/purchasing	2	4	4	
Experience of premises and facilities management	1	6	2	1
Knowing your school and community				
Links with the community		3	6	1
Links with local businesses	4	3	3	
Knowledge of the local/regional economy		8	2	
Working or volunteering with young people (e.g. teaching/social work/youth work/sports coaching/health services for young people)		6	3	1
Understanding of special educational needs	3	2	5	
Knowledge				
Keystage 1 and 2 curriculum (Primary Schools)	2	5	1	2
School financial management	1	5	3	1
Best Value	2	4	4	
Awareness of sources of information about the school ie ASP, IDSR, LA analysis packs (if provided), FFT, external reviews and internal monitoring information	4	4	1	1
The Ofsted inspection process	3	4	3	
The strengths and weaknesses of the school		2	6	2
Current state of the school buildings and the maintenance required		3	5	2
The short and long term priorities of the school		2	5	3

08/07/2022