

Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation'

September 2020

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing boards, the 3 core strategic functions of 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation' Governing Board are:

- 1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.**
- 2. Holding the Headteacher and Co-headteacher to account for the educational performance of the two schools and their pupils.**
- 3. Overseeing the financial performance of the two schools and making sure their funding is well spent.**

Governance arrangements

The 'Great Massingham and Harpley C of E Primary Schools Federation' was formed in September 2015. The Governing Board comprises two parent governors, one staff governor (school A), one Head Teacher governor, one Local Authority governor, one Bishop's appointed governor, two DBE/PCC governors (one for each village) and eight co-opted governors. Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Board and are people who, in the opinion of the governors, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the two schools: the co-opted governors on our Governing Board comprise six co-opted members from the local communities of Great Massingham and Harpley and three associate members. *(Associate members are not full members of the Governing Board but people who bring particular skills or knowledge. They may only vote at committee level.)* It is important that the Governing Board consists of governors with a good range of skills and this is regularly reviewed at our meetings to ensure we have the best possible team for the two schools.

The full Governing Board meets five times throughout the school year – twice in the autumn and spring terms and once in the summer term. There are five sub committees, each with their own specific terms of reference, to cover all the management aspects of the two schools. Both schools have their own 'Finance & Premises Committee' because the schools have separate budgets. All other committees are joint, Federation committees. The joint committees are:

- 'Steering and Ethos' committee
- 'Pay, Performance and Personnel' committee
- 'Policies and Curriculum' committee
- 'Standards' committee.

All committees meet at least once a term, generally. *(See end of report for a list of Governors.)*

Attendance record of governors
The work that we have done on our committees and in the governing body

Governors have an excellent attendance record at meetings and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not 'quorate' (*the number of governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made*).

Last year (September 2019 to July 2020) was another very busy and successful, despite the additional pressures associated with Lockdown that began at the end of March, due to the COVID 19 outbreak. Both Schools remained open the whole time for children of key workers and specified groups.

The '**Finance and Premises Committees**', as well as monitoring and managing the finances of the individual schools, also oversee the general maintenance of the sites and buildings. The committees make important decisions about how the budgets are used. The two finance committees have the same Chair and the Head Teacher is also a member of both. This is particularly important as it means we have a uniform system of monitoring. We always aim to put a high priority on ensuring we have good, highly skilled staff with a good pupil/teacher ratio and we are always looking for ways of further improving the facilities we offer.

Regarding the premises, it is important that regular checks are made to make sure there are no serious maintenance issues. Our two Health and Safety governors carry out regular checks of the premises with the site manager of the two schools. Both schools buy into the Norfolk Property Services Buildings Maintenance Partnership (BMP) and we liaise regularly with our designated surveyor to cover all aspects of repair and maintenance. We also have access to a Help Desk for minor repairs. The main improvement to the school buildings and grounds at Harpley in 2019/20 was to repair and upgrade the amphitheatre, continue to improve the school grounds by ensuring the safety of all trees and tidying the willow domes and painting some of the interior such as the toilets.

At Great Massingham, various improvements were made to the KS1 outside area, trees were surveyed and some removed, the nature/gardening area was improved and a gazebo installed in the front, outside playground area.

We are so fortunate to have strong support from parents in both schools. The governors appreciate what parents achieve with fundraising and that so many are prepared to give their time and energy to support their children's schools. Thank you.

The '**Steering and Ethos Committee**' spends considerable time evaluating the progress of the two schools and decides on actions for future improvement. The Committee also looks at the vision and ethos for the two schools, the Head Teacher's well-being and helps formulate and monitor the School Self Evaluation Form (SEF), the School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) and the SIAMs SEF.

The '**Pay, Performance and Personnel**' committee is responsible for Head Teacher's performance management and for considering other personnel matters linked to management of staff.

The '**Policies and Curriculum**' committee monitors, evaluates and reviews the implementation of the curriculum and other school policies. The committee also monitors the work of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the SEND policy.

The '**Standards Committee**' monitors the work of the school including the Head Teacher's monitoring of teaching and learning and assesses whether what is happening in the classroom is in line with the expectations of the school and national targets. Governor visits are organised to collect evidence and agree judgements for school self-evaluation, to establish processes for

tracking pupils and their performance data and to measure the impact of pupil premium funding and support for children with special educational needs. When collecting this evidence, members of the committee look closely at school data and interview children about their work (pupil voice).

All Governors report back to the Full Governing Board when they have carried out an individual monitoring visit. Monitoring covers all aspects of school life including attendance and behaviour, collective worship, lunchtime, playtime and school clubs. Governors discuss key data giving the results of pupil achievement and progress, so that they can be sure that the schools are on track to fulfil their ambitious targets for all pupils. They also focus on the attainment and progress of 'vulnerable groups' of children and on how the Pupil Premium Grant is being spent by the schools. Governors take safeguarding and safeguarding procedures very seriously. We have three nominated safeguarding governors who are kept informed of any safeguarding matters and who give regular reports to the Governing Body.

Early in the summer term, the 'Finance and Premises' Committees approved the 2020/21 budget plans for the two schools: we are pleased to report that each school has a 3 - year, balanced budget plan in place and all finances are sound.

From the end of March 2020, the restrictions placed on schools as part of the COVID 19 epidemic meant governors had to find a new way of working. Much more reliance was placed on electronic communication with no face to face meetings or visits to school. However, governors continued to give strong support and were kept fully updated by the Headteacher and Co-Headteacher. Governors have been impressed with the calm, efficient, caring way the staff of the two schools continued to offer high quality education both to the children attending school and to those working at home. Now, in the Autumn Term, with all the children attending again, the same high level of commitment is being shown.

We are fortunate to have excellent staff at both schools. Senior staff take management/curriculum responsibility across the Federation. Staff from both schools combine, on a regular basis, for training, planning, assessment moderation, data analysis, staff meetings and more. Teachers in smaller schools can often feel isolated and working together across the Federation makes a huge difference.

The KS2 science and languages swap afternoons (Wednesdays) continued through 2019/20 until the start of the COVID 19 Lockdown in March. They have proved to be very successful. Years 3 and 4 from both schools come together at Great Massingham and years 5 and 6 at Harpley. This ensures the science curriculum is delivered efficiently and allows the teaching of two languages - Y3 and Y4 children learn Spanish and the older children study French. At the time of updating this annual statement, we have not yet been able to reinstate this arrangement but there is every intention to do so when it becomes possible.

We are grateful to all our other volunteers whether with Gardening Club, Ark Club, supporting with French, hearing children read, accompanying the children for swimming and other sports and much more. We are fortunate to have so much support and we really do appreciate it.

From September 2020, we have had changes to our senior staff personnel but our arrangement of having both a Head Teacher (0.6) and an Assistant Head/Co-Headteacher (0.6), both non class teachers with a crossover day on Wednesdays, continues. The Governing Board strongly believes this system has further strengthened our management structure and succession planning and proved to be beneficial to the two schools. Mrs Kirsten Stibbon who was previously our Co-

Headteacher has been appointed as Headteacher, following the retirement of Mrs Beardall who has been an amazing role model over many years. Mrs Sophie Stephens has been appointed as our new Co-Headteacher.

We are proud of our Church of England status as two Voluntary Controlled, Church of England schools. It enables both schools to come together for special occasions such as the Cathedral Days at Norwich Cathedral. We celebrate all Christian festivals, usually at the village Churches of St Mary's and St Lawrence, and these occasions are always well attended by parents and friends. Rev'd Judith Pollard, our local vicar, is also a school governor and takes Collective Worship regularly at both schools. This is very much appreciated and considered very important by the whole school community. Rev'd Judith also plays a large part in our special assemblies during the year - Harvest, Christmas, Lent, Easter and end of term/year services. The Governing Board has three foundation governors to ensure that the links with our three local churches and communities are sound. Sadly, most of these activities have been put on the hold due to COVID19 for the time being and we hope that it will not be too long before everything will resume. Some things, such as the Harvest did take place with the food was donated to the food bank. Sadly, no parents were able to attend. However, the services at both churches were recorded on video for parents to borrow and feel part of everything.

Pupils, parents/carers and staff at school are all important 'stakeholders' and we want everyone to have their say, to express their ideas and to keep on making our learning communities great places to be. Governors wish to thank parents for your feedback via our newsletters. Your comments have been very helpful and assist us in our aim to continue to further improve our schools and take account of everyone's needs. We listen and respond to what our pupils tell us – they play a big part in the decision-making process. Pupils express themselves informally via, for example, 'circle time' sessions and general conversations with staff and, more formally, via the School Council, the annual governor questionnaire and other governor monitoring (pupil voice). There is also an annual parent questionnaire.

If parents have any further questions about the work of the Governing Board, then please contact us.

Minutes of Main meetings are public documents and are available from the School offices.

The Governing Board is pleased with the way the Federation, now in its sixth year, is progressing and bringing benefit to both schools. Both schools are graded GOOD by Ofsted. It is unclear, at the moment, when the next phase of inspections will begin but both schools are having regular 'Getting Ready for Inspection' virtual training to ensure we are on track.

Future plans for the governors

2020/21 looks like being yet another busy year. We plan, as always, to offer a good variety of After School Clubs across the Federation and a special Federation Day each term. (*Sadly, subject to COVID Restrictions at present*) Many of the educational visits are joint visits. Most important of all, we will ensure that the two schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum and that the good standards are maintained and built upon.

How you can contact the governing body

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents – please contact the Chair of Governors, via the school office. A list of governors is displayed in the school foyers and on each school website. The list is also included below.

**GREAT MASSINGHAM and HARPLEY
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION
GOVERNING BOARD 2020 to 2021**

Chair of Governors: Bev Randall

Vice - Chair: Sarah Bingham

Membership of The Governing Board

Head Teacher	Kirsten Stibbon
Parent Governor	Ian Castle
Parent Governor	Sarah Bingham
Staff Governor	Sophie Stephens
Local Authority Governor	Archie Reid
DBE/PCC Governor representing Great Massingham St Mary & Little Massingham St. Andrew	Alan Frazer
Bishop's Appointed Governor	Rev'd Judith Pollard
DBE/PCC Governor representing Harpley St. Lawrence	Rosemary Mehers
Co-opted Governors	Bev Randall (Community) Ann Beardall (Staff) Mim Reeve (Community) Jane Taylor (Community) Carly Molyneux (Community) Suzie Allen (Community) Susan Wood (Associate) Neil Quinn (Associate) Kathy Calver (Associate)