

SMARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Local Governing Body Annual Impact Report 2021-22

Summary of Achievements During the Year

- Last year, we became the most popular school in the rural West Ashford area by parental choice and so our Reception class intake in 2021 grew from 15 to 25 pupils. This year, the trend was repeated; we had 26 first choice applications for places in Year R in September 2022, plus 15 second and 10 third place choices, making 51 applications in total. The school will be taking 26 children into Year R this September.
- In March 2022, Thomas Dixon conducted a pupil survey with 72 children aged between 8 and 11. Overall, the Smarden children who took this survey in 2022 were happier with all aspects of their lives than the national average (and happier than Smarden children were on most questions, in 2021).
- All pupil premium pupils at Smarden were given a "Champion" last year as part of the TKAT program to give every pupil on free school meals a tutor. 100% of pupils with an ACE tutor passed their reading assessments this summer and gained expected level.
- There was no Ofsted inspection this year

Local Governing Body (LGB) Membership, Meetings and Activities

- Four LGB meetings were held online in September, December, March and July.
- Matt Hardwick was elected to serve as Chair for 21-22, after Thomas Dixon stepped down and continued with the LGB as Deputy Chair.
- Mrs Laura Pickard continued as our Clerk to the Governors. In addition to co-ordinating and documenting the activities of the LGB, Mrs Pickard acts as valuable liaison between TKAT and the LGB
- One of our stated priorities for this year was the appointment of new governors to improve our community links and our coverage of pre-school and early years areas with the appointment of two new staff governors and one parent governor.
- We now have a full complement of eight governors as set out in our constitution (as revised and adopted in October 2019).
- Governors took part in training (including the safeguarding training at the start of each school year), attended LGB meetings, and undertook monitoring of specified areas with meetings returning to face to face meetings in March.
- Governors also have provided challenge to the school and to the head teacher in key areas such as safeguarding, health and safety and educational attainment scores via the Headteacher's report

Governance functions

The core functions of governance in publicly funded schools are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

In MATs these functions must be carried out at board level, and in some cases aspects of these functions will be delegated to LGBs.

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

- Smarden School embraces TKAT's vision: Inspiring Learners, Changing Lives.
- Our school motto is "Enjoying, Learning and Achieving Together" and our school values and governance ethos are set out on the Governors page of our school website: <https://www.smardenprimaryschool.co.uk/governors/>
- The Governor's Mission statement is available online via the above link
- This ethos underpins the support and challenges that governors offer to the SLT.
- This academic year provided an opportunity for us to make sure that enjoyment, learning, and achievement were pursued in a safe and reassuring learning environment (whether online or in school) in especially challenging circumstances.
- This experience refocused the minds of governors and staff on questions of wellbeing which will shape our future work.

- **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff**
- The priority areas on which the school was challenged by governors included stretching more able pupils, and achieving greater depth in maths and other subjects.
- Governors supported Mrs Miller in her view that the wider curriculum continues to need to be further deepened and enriched.
- Governors challenged the school on spending, value for money, and getting the most out of the budget.
- Staff and governor online wellbeing surveys were used to provide the SLT with accurate snapshots of parental and community concerns.

2. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

- Governors continue to explore with the school leadership how to make the best use of all funds, including those raised by Friends of Smarden Primary School (FOSP, our PTA).
- Financial and budgetary matters are monitored throughout the year by Matt Hardwick as chair of governors and by Claire Summers, who is our lead finance governor, as well as by the full LGB meetings.
- This year, as in previous years, the headteacher, business manager and governors have done all they can to ensure that every penny of the budget is spent wisely and

any surplus, where possible, is redirected towards supporting the safety, wellbeing and academic progress of children.

- Successful completion of the perimeter fencing and tarmacing of the front entrance to the school were carried out this year.

Summary of Local Governing Body effectiveness:

- We now have all posts filled in our LGB and the balance between staff, parents, community and other areas is good.
- Governors are familiar with their particular areas and have a good understanding of the role of governor monitoring.
- Mrs Miller has successfully instilled a rigorous attitude in the LGB, encouraging all governors to ask difficult questions and to demand high standards in all areas of school life, and supporting an ethos of transparency and of ambition for all our children.

Review of progress on stated goals in last year's impact statement:

Aiming for greater depth and a broader curriculum: This remains a work in progress. Ellie Warner is leading on Maths and staff and governors are all involved in providing a rich 'Discover, Explore, Create' wider curriculum.

Recruit two new governors (community and early years): Successfully achieved – Simon Hoyle and Sarah Judge.

Monitoring progress of AMA and SEND: This remains a focus for this year after the disruptions of lockdown.

Future plans: Priorities for 2022-23

Priority areas which governors will be supporting and challenging the SLT on are:

- Monitoring whether we have embedded higher expectations for all so that the more able are always challenged
- Embedding Maths Mastery throughout the school.
- Making wellbeing a priority area for Smarden – improving provision for children and staff – and enriching the curriculum through improved teaching and resources in PSHE, RSE, and emotional literacy.
- Supporting and extending the wider curriculum.
- Developing and reviewing key policies in collaboration with the SLT, including a new Teaching and Learning Policy and a new Vision for Smarden Primary and Preschool.

Chair of Governors: **Matt Hardwick**

Date: **November 2022**

Comment from Director of Education

Thank you for this Impact statement which clearly communicates the work of the LGB in supporting the school to achieve its vision and values. The support that the Governors, and particularly the Chair, provide Smarden and the headteacher is one of the stronger examples in the Trust. The school, Headteacher and Director are greatly appreciative of the Chair's ongoing

support for the Headteacher and the school's journey to outstanding.

The contributions that the Governors have made over the last year have contributed towards the successful development of the curriculum and further work on improving provision for the more able. It is also highly commendable that the LGB is now fully staffed and has no vacancies.

Moving forward it may be a worth continuing to support and challenge in the areas of:

- how the school maintains the high level outcomes seen last year and how to further increase the proportion of children achieving greater depth
- how the school will manage its popularity and growth
- what the school needs to do to achieve an 'outstanding' OFSTED outcome.

Comment from Link Trustee

I would like to thank the governing body for their support of the school. Thank you for a very clear impact statement - it is great to see 3 clear areas of focus. I am very pleased to see a fully staffed LGB, with a good balance of experience and representation. I am very encouraged to see the focus on higher achievement and challenge to all, especially the more able. And at the same time the continued focus of ACE for those who need it. I look forward to seeing the plan to get the school to outstanding.