

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

## **The Governing Body make-up**

There are 14 places on the Governing Board for Dereham Church Infant and Nursery School. Governors are of 2 different categories: church foundation (8 places) and representative (6 places). Representative Governors include 3 parent, 2 staff and 1 local authority governor.

The Governing Board currently has 9 members comprising 5 Church Foundation governors, 1 parent governor, 1 staff governor, 1 local authority governor and the Headteacher. The Board is chaired by Mrs Patricia Waller, with Mr Oliver Thomas as vice-chair.

In July there are currently 6 vacancies (2 parent governor and 4 Church Foundation Governors). Applications from parents, grandparents, carers and all other interested parties are always very welcome! Governors come from all walks of life and bring their own skills and experiences to benefit the school. Governors are expected to undertake training and be an active member of the board. If you are interested in joining the Governing Board and want to find out more, please email the Chair at [pwaller62r5@nsix.org.uk](mailto:pwaller62r5@nsix.org.uk). We are also seeking people with specific knowledge or experience in personnel management, strategic planning or Data Protection.

In accordance with DfE guidance, the Governing Board employs a Governance Professional, who organises meetings and takes minutes. The Governance Professional is an invaluable font of knowledge regarding procedure and legal requirements and guides and assists the governors in their duties.

## **The function of the Governing Body**

All Governing Boards have the same three core functions:

- setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and for the performance management of its staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

As a church school, the Board of Governors is also responsible for helping to uphold and promote the Christian ethos and strong values that makes our school so distinctive.

To help us keep focused on our task of strategic planning and decision making, the Governing Board created the **following vision statement** which was adopted in September 2018.

**"We aspire to provide our children with the best possible start in life long learning, based on a firm Christian foundation in a safe environment."**

We will fulfil this vision as a governing body by:

- leading by example
- working to support, positively challenge and enable the Headteacher, senior leaders and staff to drive improvement and the highest levels of achievement and personal development.

## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

- adopting a robust and supportive approach, holding the senior leadership to account for all aspects of the school's performance and recognising and celebrating achievements.

All Governors abide by the agreed **Code of Conduct for the Governing Body**. This sets out the expectations and commitment required from Governors in order to properly carry out their work for the school and is reviewed regularly and was updated in December 2022.

As a governing body we work together to support our Headteacher and her staff to provide the best possible start to the lives of our children. Our continued aim is to make our school a happy, caring environment where not only does everyone feel valued and safe, but our children are also supported and inspired to develop to their full potential personally, academically and creatively.

To do this we need to think and plan strategically and monitor outcomes. In December 2018 we adopted a **Five Year Strategy** which has 6 core aims. We revised this in December 2021.

1. Ensure **school's Christian vision and ethos is fundamental and is reflected** in all we do
2. Ensure **highest quality school leadership is maintained and developed** through higher and middle leadership
3. **Striving for Best** – highest quality teaching and learning with an aspirational and inspirational curriculum
4. Further develop the school's **holistic approach to development of the individual child**
5. Promote **healthy positive relationships** with all members of the school community
6. Ensure **school's continued sustainability** in an academy dominated environment and continuing strong financial and pro-active budget management.

As governors, we review and discuss the school's values and ethos. We view safeguarding as being at the heart of everything the school does, and this is reflected in how the staff and pupils behave and interact.

Governors also have oversight of a variety of issues including pupil welfare, building and grounds maintenance, budgetary control and staff appointments. It is important for the Governing Board to have people with the right mix of skills and experience, together with practical and creative talents so that we provide both challenge and support to the school leadership.

### **Governors' Action Plan for 2022-23**

We achieve the core functions of governance and further the aims of our Five Year Strategic Plan by creating an Action Plan each year which will ensure we are proactive and strategic in our work.

Every year this plan is tailored to ensure that it addresses the areas which will help support the Governing Body Vision Statement and drive improvement. Actions are informed by the 5 Year Strategic Plan, previous Governors Action Plan and the School Improvement Development Plan.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

The Governors Action Plan adopted a new format this year to more clearly identify required actions.

The **Governors Action Plan** had 4 aims:

1. Promote culture of Safeguarding and Inclusion throughout the school community
2. Oversee School's financial performance to ensure efficiency and sustainability
3. Drive improvements in quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
4. Ensure Curriculum provides high quality breadth and depth of learning for all

## **The work of the Governing Body in the past year**

The Full Governing Body has met 6 times during the past academic year:

7<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022,

3<sup>rd</sup> February, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 19<sup>th</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

The Full Governor Meetings usually take place at school on a Friday.

At the first meeting of the new academic year in October, governors voted to continue using the new meeting structure with the Full Governor Meetings conducting the business that was previously handled by the Achievements and Standards Committee and the Resources Committee. This new governance structure is promoted by the NGA (National Governance Association) and is used by a growing number of other schools because it provides all governors with better oversight and allows them to be more involved in matters relating to finance and academic achievement. The slimmed-down meeting structure also makes the workload of governors more manageable.

To continue to promote the distinctive Christian character of the school, the Governors kept the **Church Foundation Committee**. This Committee met twice, in the Autumn and Summer terms.

## **Safeguarding**

The Governing Board has a statutory duty to ensure that the children and adults in our school are safe and to promote their welfare. It is the responsibility of the Governors to ensure that the school complies with all the regulations and requirements. The key DfE document is Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022). The Governors take their Safeguarding role very seriously and we promote a culture that views safeguarding as the responsibility of everyone in the school community. By law, each school must have a named Governor responsible for Safeguarding. At DCINS the governor is Mrs Patricia Waller, who is the Chair of Governors.

Safeguarding not only includes ensuring the physical, mental and emotional health of our children, it also covers health and safety, behaviour management, our school ethos, what we teach as part of the curriculum, recruitment procedures, first aid, educational visits, anti-bullying, pupil attendance, on-line safety, the Prevent Duty and the staff code of conduct.

## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

For the purposes of safeguarding, the Senior Designated Person is our Parent Support Adviser Mrs Lisa Playford. The two additional Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are Mrs Amy Futers, Headteacher and Mrs Chloe Cole, Assistant Headteacher.

At this school, we view safeguarding as our highest priority – it cannot be just a written policy, it has to be lived as a way of life. This school is recognised as having very high safeguarding standards which are maintained through the diligence and work of our DSLs who model the behaviour expected from all staff. All staff, students and regular volunteers and all governors have an Enhanced DBS check before starting at our school and checks are made that any contractors, outside agencies etc have a DBS.

The expectation is that everyone in our school community takes responsibility for safeguarding and the annual safeguarding refresher training for all staff, and the mandatory safeguarding training of all governors emphasises this expectation. The training is provided by the Norfolk County Council Safeguarding team, but throughout the year the staff receive regular safeguarding briefings and updates to flag up any changes to the statutory guidance and enhance awareness and understanding of issues such as online safety or poor attendance.

The school uses an on-line safeguarding reporting and recording system (CPOMS) to document all safeguarding and pupil welfare information. This is accessible by all teaching staff and makes the reporting and actioning of safeguarding concerns and incidents faster and more efficient because reports are automatically shared electronically with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

At each Full Governors Meeting, the governors receive a Safeguarding report from the Headteacher which includes data on attendance figures, anonymised reports on matters concerning the welfare of all the children, including referrals and work with external agencies. Additionally, the Safeguarding Governor will report to the Governing Board regarding checks on the school's safeguarding procedures and records and on various aspects of safeguarding, such as Harmful Sexual Behaviour and reporting of Low Level Concerns.

The Safeguarding Governor completed the Norfolk County Council Safeguarding Governor Compliance Checklist in October 2022 and she met regularly with the Designated Safeguarding Leads to get updates on safeguarding issues and discuss topics covered in the Compliance Checklist.

One area the Compliance Checklist highlighted was the need for all staff and pupils to have more awareness of the importance of Online Safety. Age appropriate teaching about online safety is woven into the curriculum as part of RHSE and PSHE lessons, and every time a pupil uses an ipad or computer at school they are reminded of the Pupils' ICT Code of Conduct. Pupils can only use the internet while monitored by a member of staff. The Safeguarding Governor also investigated the school's online filter system and its effectiveness, plus requesting that an online safety audit was carried out. In January all staff undertook comprehensive online safety training provided by the Online Safety Alliance. Additionally, governors reviewed the school's Online Safety policy in February and as a result, it was rewritten to provide a more robust policy which also covered cyber bullying, grooming and social networking plus more information on roles and responsibilities and online safety coverage in the curriculum.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

Governors recognise that a happy, healthy staff team are essential to a happy, healthy school. As part of our Safeguarding function, governors also have a duty to protect the wellbeing

of our Headteacher and staff. The Chair meets or talks with the Headteacher on a regular basis to provide support and challenge and to discuss aspects of school leadership.

Governors also receive reports on staff wellbeing at each Full Governor meeting.

## **The School Improvement Development Plan**

The role of the governing body is to act strategically to help raise standards of teaching and learning, by monitoring and evaluating progress towards the priorities and targets set in the School Improvement & Development plan (SIDP).

On 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the school senior leadership team together with staff and governors discussed the plan for improvement and development for 2022 -23. There are 3 priority areas, each with their own objectives, actions and success criteria. The selection of these focus points was informed by the need to drive rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

### **1. Quality of Education**

Enable **all** children to read and comprehend age-appropriate texts and beyond through the teaching of high quality synthetic systematic phonics and reading lessons.

### **2. Leadership and Management**

Ensure subject leaders can account for the quality of education in their subjects and use this to drive improvement. Ensure that subject leaders use robust monitoring to identify priorities and evaluate the impact of their actions so that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils

### **3. Leadership and Management**

Further develop teacher subject knowledge and pedagogy to ensure it is strong and enhances the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment.

### **Other: the school to be cyber security compliant**

The Governors monitor the progress towards the SIDP targets by reviewing reports from the Interim Headteacher/Acting Headteacher, analysing school data from internal and external sources, receiving reports from Subject Leads and Senior teaching staff, undertaking school visits and meeting with staff.

### **1. Quality of Education**

Phonics and KS1 reading results last year were very low. An ability to read and understand age-appropriate texts is vital in enabling children to succeed in their learning. A new synthetic phonics programme (Essential Letters and Sounds or ELS) was introduced in September and the school was accepted as a partner with the Wensum Hub, which is supported by the DfE to improve the teaching of phonics and reading in Norfolk. Teachers were supported by the Literacy Lead to plan guided reading and phonics teaching.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

Pupils' reading and phonic knowledge was monitored and tracked using various assessment grids and parents were encouraged to support their children with their phonics learning and reading. A mentor from the Wensum Hub visited each term to support the Literacy Lead in upskilling staff to drive improvement in teaching and learning.

## **The results of the Phonics tests completed in June this year were very encouraging:**

Yr1 pass rate was 74.5% with 48 pupils - a vast improvement from last year when it was 36%  
And 26 Yr2 pupils had done retakes and achieved 76.9% (last year it was 40%)

This is a remarkable turnaround in just one year and evidences all the hard work that the Senior Leadership team and staff have put into the new Phonics scheme.

With the continued support of the Wensum Hub for another year, it is anticipated that results next year should be comparable with national and Norfolk averages.

In addition to this, the current Good Level of Development for Reception is 51%, which is on par with last year.

End of key stage data:

**Reading:** last year 48.9% at expected standard with 16% at Greater Depth standard  
**this year 57.8% at expected standard with 20% at Greater Depth standard**

**Writing:** last year 30.6% at expected standard with 0% at Greater Depth standard  
**this year 48.9% at expected standard with 8.9% at Greater Depth standard**

**Maths:** last year 72% at expected standard with 4% at Greater Depth standard  
**this year 64.5% at expected standard but 22.2% at Greater Depth standard**

These results are a definite improvement on last year and reflect how hard the staff have worked to raise the quality of teaching and learning.

## **2. Leadership and Management**

We want all subject leaders to be secure in their subject knowledge and be confident in identifying areas for improvement, to know how to hold their colleagues to account and be able to train them to improve teaching of that subject.

Subject leaders received training and continuing professional development to enable them to effectively monitor the teaching of their subject across the school. Subject Leaders lead staff meetings to share knowledge and information about their subjects and training updates. Staff were mentored by the Interim Headteacher in the monitoring of pupil books and curriculum plans and work scrutiny in order to evidence improvements in quality of teaching.

## **3. Leadership and Management**

Staff were given additional training and mentoring in consistent and effective teaching practices to ensure all pupils made expected progress and were appropriately challenged and that children from disadvantaged groups made similar progress to their peers. New assessment formats were introduced and moderated to ensure teaching staff were using them accurately and staff were trained to use an online data programme called Pupil Asset in order to be able to record and more easily analyse data on the progress and attainment of their pupils.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

## **Other: Cyber Security**

Norfolk County Council advised schools of new requirements to make school computer and internet based systems secure. Governors reviewed the introduction of new policies and procedures and promoted the provision of online safety training for all staff. Administrative staff will also be taking cyber security training and the school has signed up to join the Police Cyber Alarm.

## **Proposal to convert to academy status**

The school's experience of navigating the Covid pandemic years while trying to do the best for our staff, pupils and families, has resulted in the governors highlighting the need for our school to have access to external support and oversight. It is the view of the Governing Body and the Diocese, that by our school converting to academy status and joining the Diocesan Multi Academy Trust DNEAT, we will be better able to provide for our school community in the future. Underpinning the governors' decision, is the desire to ensure the promotion, preservation, protection and future development of the distinctive Christian character of our school.

Joining DNEAT will ensure that the uniqueness of our school is celebrated and the contribution it can make to the MAT is recognised and appreciated. It will also mean that in future, DCINS will not be left isolated or vulnerable in the rapidly changing and complex educational environment of modern-day Britain.

Our Governing Body's priority remains to enable the school to continue to equip our children with the skills and knowledge to enable them to achieve their best possible potential, while also providing them with a foundation of Christian values.

After having completed the public consultation procedure, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 the Regional Director of the East of England approved the application for our school to convert to become an academy as part of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) and during this summer term our school has been working with the local authority, DNEAT and the DfE to ensure that the transition to academy status is as smooth as possible. There is a lot of administrative work to be carried out, but it is expected that the school will convert to academy status on or around the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023. The exact date will depend on how long it takes to complete all the various legal and administrative processes. On conversion, the school's name will alter slightly to recognise its new status. In May the governors agreed that it will be called Dereham Church of England Infant and Nursery Academy or DCEINA.

In the interim period we are very grateful for the support and assistance that DNEAT are allowing us to access in order to further help drive the necessary improvements identified last year.

## **Formation of the School Improvement Group**

To assist the school leaders and governors to continue the drive for rapid improvements in the school's standards of teaching and learning, governors proposed the formation of a School Improvement Group (SIG). Representatives from the Local Authority and DNEAT are working with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to provide specific support to enhance curriculum leadership and to overhaul the whole school curriculum provision. This group will

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

continue its work up until the school converts to academy status in the Autumn term and joins DNEAT.

## **Curriculum**

The school curriculum plan was created in 2018 with Speaking and Listening, First-Hand Experiences and Growth Mindset at its heart. While these remain the fundamental principles, it was recognised that the curriculum needed more opportunities to provide breadth and depth of learning and in April, VNET were engaged to undertake a curriculum review audit. In the light of the audit's finding, the leadership team and staff began work at the start of the summer term, on a whole school curriculum redesign. Curriculum intent, implementation and impact statements have been revised and updated and the whole school curriculum plan has been re-written to bring the fundamental principles more sharply into focus. The new Phonics programme Essential Letters and Sounds, and the Power of Reading scheme are key components of the new curriculum together with the use of Maths Whizz, an online virtual maths programme which identifies gaps in learning and teachers can tailor and adapt to meet the specific needs of each individual child. Maths Whizz is also a learning resource which all the children thoroughly enjoy using and which helps them gain confidence in their maths skills.

The medium and long-term plans for each subject have also been revised and updated to include new end points for each subject and also ensure there was sequencing of learning and that each plan could be adapted to ensure learning for all. The new curriculum will be implemented at the start of the forthcoming new academic year 2023-4 and it will be monitored closely to ensure that it promotes quality teaching and learning for all.

RE maintains a priority status within the curriculum and learning was planned as 5 one-week blocks across the year. In addition to visits to St Nicholas Church by all year groups, the school held services in the church to celebrate Harvest Festival, the Nativity, Easter and the leaving of Yr2 pupils and parents and families are invited to all these services.

This year the school engaged 2 tutors through the government's National Tutoring programme to provide after-school small group support for pupils needing additional help with writing and maths.

The school has always recognised the important part that parents and families play in supporting their children's learning and the school has worked hard to engage with parents and encourage them to actively participate in their children's learning. Staff regularly hold maths and reading workshops and cafés for parents to explain how they can support their children's learning at home.

Curriculum events at school have included highlights such as a trip to the Time and Tide museum at Yarmouth by Year 2 in January, and a visit to the Theatre Royal in Norwich to see the Smeds and the Smoos which was eagerly anticipated by the Reception classes in early May. This was the first time that most of the children had been to a theatre and the school were delighted to receive compliments from the theatre staff about how well our young pupils behaved!



## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

In February, to support their learning, Year 1 children had a Kings and Queens dress-up day and a Banquet, and Year 2 pupils had a WW2 dress-up day and a walk to the Pillbox in Dereham.

Activities to celebrate the King's Coronation in May included a street party at lunchtime and a Coronation Day parade and singing.

Whole school events included Internet Safety day when pupils are reminded how to use technology in a safe and positive way, and Number day, when everyone, staff included, dressed up in a maths-themed costume such as a clock, playing card or a numicon. Yet more inventive costumes were worn when Year 2 celebrated the ever-popular Pirate Day in June! Plus at one assembly, Olly Day visited the school with his road-safety themed magic show.

Staff and children had a new experience in June when Calm Cats came to the school and each year group were able to take part in a special mindfulness workshop where they learnt breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, and stretches.

An array of walks around Dereham town, visits to St Nicholas church and the Baptist church, plus performances by the school choir both in town and at the Meeting Point all help to reinforce the children's sense of belonging as an active part of the local community.

Sporting activities include gymnastics, cross-country running, football and athletics. DCINS has become a Member School to the West Norwich & Dereham School Sport Partnership. This provides more opportunities for our children to participate in Competitions and Festivals throughout the year.

Extra-curricular activities: Over the past year, the school has organised a variety of clubs such as Olympic games, Zumba, Art, Science, multi-dance and cookery. The choir club meets every week at lunchtime and learns a variety of seasonal songs and hymns and they go out and sing in Dereham town centre, Morrisons and at Dereham Cancer Care. Kidz Club also run a weekly lunchtime Sparklers club with Christian based stories and activities.

### **Finance**

The school's financial situation is monitored by the governors throughout the year with reports being made to Full Governor Meetings by the Headteacher. A governor with finance or accounting experience/skills is also specifically appointed to work with the Finance Officer, Headteacher/Interim Headteacher and the LA financial support adviser to review the budget.

The governors oversee the school's spending and how funds such as the Pupil and Sports Premiums and Recovery Funding monies are used. Reports prepared by the Headteacher and the Finance officer evidence how the monies are used and the impact the initiatives are making on the progress and attainment of Pupil Premium and disadvantaged children. The reports on these funds are published on the school's website under the Governors section.

## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

In the current economic climate, it has become increasingly difficult for the school to continue to sustain a surplus, as income has decreased in line with the lower numbers of pupils on roll. For over three years now the Reception year has had less than 60 pupils and the amount of funding the school receives from the government has fallen accordingly.

Our Headteacher/Interim Headteacher and Finance Officer, together with the governors, continue to monitor the school's income and expenditure closely, but the massive increases in energy costs, together with salary rises, means that the school cannot balance the budget without making cuts to expenditure. While staff have organised very successful fundraising events and initiatives, the battle to maintain and improve good standards of teaching and learning and to provide the right level of support to those children who have additional needs is growing harder each term.

On a more positive note, income is being raised through the letting of the school premises at weekends to Breckland Youth for Christ and hiring the school hall for birthday parties, and more hiring opportunities are being sought.

The school is also benefiting from the income stream derived from Gemstones – the breakfast and after-school clubs which have proved to be very popular with families from our school and also those of other schools too! Through Gemstones, the school can provide supervision from 7.30am up till 6pm and there is also a drop off/collection service to the Junior Academy. Gemstones runs a wide range of activities including board games, cooking based activities and movie time, plus outdoor activities and games. Places at Gemstones are available to children from Reception and KS1 classes.

### **Monitoring**

Governors monitor the management and performance of the school in a variety of ways including:

The SEND governor meets with the school SenCo to understand how the school strives to provide all pupils with support and intervention to enable them to achieve their fullest potential.

A panel selected from the governing body also undertakes the performance management of the Headteacher. They are assisted in this task by an external professional from VNET. Performance targets are set which support and drive the priorities of the School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP).

Governors reviewed the Attendance data at each Full Governor meeting, together with reports on initiatives to improve attendance rates. In the wake of the pandemic years, governors were of the opinion that work needed to be done to reduce the numbers of pupils absent from school and especially to reduce the rate of persistent absence. In October they set a target of 92% attendance, but revised this to a more ambitious 95% in December. One of the objectives set for the Parent Support Adviser was to identify individual pupils and their families who needed support to improve their attendance record. Governors were pleased to note that attendance data improved term on term and the weekly attendance data in the summer term evidenced a noticeable improvement with many classes regularly achieving more than 95% and some often nearing 100%.

## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

The Safeguarding Governor completed the Norfolk County Council Safeguarding Governor Compliance Checklist in October 2022 and she met regularly with the Designated Safeguarding Leads to get updates on safeguarding issues and discuss topics covered in the Compliance Checklist. All governors have a duty to monitor the school's safeguarding and whenever they visit the school they will be observing how safeguarding procedures are being carried out by staff, volunteers and pupils.

The Finance Governor and Chair took part in 5 meetings throughout the year with the Headteacher/Interim Headteacher and the Norfolk Schools Finance Support Officer to set and then revise the Budget. Governors worked with the Interim Headteacher to rewrite the Pupil and Sports Premiums strategies to ensure that appropriate provision is made for all pupils who belong to vulnerable groups, including those from low-income families who are disadvantaged. This includes funding to ensure those pupils have access to the same opportunities as their peers, such as school trips and after-school clubs. A new set of reporting formats was implemented to identify the spending of funds and provide evidence of impact of the various initiatives on the progress and attainment of Pupil Premium children.

Governors worked with the Headteacher and Finance Officer to complete the annual Schools Financial Value Standards questionnaire which was then submitted on time to Norfolk County Council.

In February and June, governors carried out audits of the school website to ensure it was up-to-date and informative and met all the statutory responsibilities.

During the year presentations were made to governors by Foundation Subject Leaders while governors also meet with the Literacy, Maths and SEND Leads to discuss curriculum provision. The resulting reports, including any actions or points of concern identified were then shared with the whole governing body.

In addition, governors attended parent workshops and cafes for Phonics, Early Years Speech and Language and Maths, where they talked to parents, and took part in activities alongside pupils. Governors' observations and thoughts were then shared with the other governors at Full Governor meetings.

### **Policies and Procedures**

One of the many duties of Governors is to review the school's policies and procedures, not only to ensure they are compliant with current legislation or statutory guidance, but also that they reflect the Christian values and ethos of our school.

As a voluntary aided church school, the Governing Board are responsible for setting the school's admission criteria in consultation with the staff and the Diocese and local authority.

Policies are reviewed at Full Governor meetings and also by the Church Foundation Committee, who then refers them to Full Governor meetings for final approval. Most policies are reviewed on a three year rolling programme, but some are reviewed annually, including Safeguarding, Finance and the Health and Safety policies.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

## **Professional Development Training**

Governors recognise the importance of continued professional development in the form of training and upskilling of staff, and of the resulting benefits to the whole school community. Enabling staff to hone their knowledge, skills and working practices is one of the prime ways of driving improvement and enhancing the quality of teaching. Governors therefore expect and encourage all staff to undertake training, particularly in support of the SIDP priorities.

At each Full Governor Meeting, the Headteacher/Interim Headteacher reports on what training has been undertaken by staff. Training has included whole-school Safeguarding, together with Internet Safety and a particular focus on Phonics and Reading. The school is partnered with the Wensum Hub, and one of their trainers visited the school 6 times this year to support the Literacy Lead in promoting the implementation of the new phonics programme Essential Letters and Sounds and staff have received numerous training updates and mentoring sessions, together with support in the provision of Guided Reading.

Teaching staff received one-to-one mentoring on differentiation, use of success criteria, marking and giving verbal feedback and work sampling and subject leader monitoring. All Subject Leaders have received specific training to enhance their subject knowledge and skills and to enable them to share this with their colleagues.

Staff had training on the use of the online Maths Whizz programme and the Assistant Headteacher has continued her Maths Mastery Development studies.

Pastoral and wellbeing CPD undertaken by staff has included Early Help Assessment and Planning, Domestic Abuse and Operation Encompass training, Trauma training and Signalong training. The Finance Officer has taken various Star Accounts and finance and budget related training courses.

Additionally staff have attended networking events and forums organised by VNET, the 8 Schools Project and during the summer term they have joined various events organised by DNEAT.

Training is also one of the duties of all governors. On appointment or election, individual governors are expected to undertake introductory training and also Safeguarding training, but they are also expected to continue with training and development throughout their terms of office. Some training will equip individual governors to undertake specific roles and duties such as Safeguarding, while other training contributes to the skill base of the Governing Board. Training has included: Safer Recruitment, Performance Management, Financial Management, introduction to GDPR, Cyber Security, Pupil Premium and Effective Governance.

Governors also attended a variety of forums, on-line briefings and seminars run by VNET(Viscount Norfolk Education Trust), NGA (National Governance Association) and NGN (Norfolk Governors Network), The Modern Governor, Judicium Education and Ruth Merton's Headlines briefings.

# Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

## **The school community and beyond**

In Spring this year, the school appointed Mrs Lisa Playford as our Full Time Parent Support Adviser to manage the safeguarding and attendance within the school. She also provides support to parents and families with advice and help, signposting them to other help organisations for help with such issues as housing, debt and mental health.

Initiatives to encourage parents and families to engage and work with the school have included events such as the Magic show with a fish and chips supper in February and the Zumba Saturday picnic in June with a bouncy castle and face paints, proved extremely popular, with some parents attending a school event for the first time.

Every Tuesday morning the school holds a reading breakfast from 8.25 until 8.45am, when parents and carers have the opportunity to come and listen to their children reading and to share a variety of stories and reading materials, together with cakes and cookies.

In the Autumn pupils created pieces of artwork with a Nativity theme, which were exhibited at the Dereham Windmill Art Exhibition and in the Spring term pupils helped decorate bird boxes to be put up in the newly refurbished Queen Mother's Garden.

A new community initiative was started this year with monthly 'Stay and play' coffee mornings for adults and younger children. As a school we wanted to extend an invitation to both our school families and families from the wider community, to come together for a chat and share learning opportunities with their pre-school children.

The school continues to support EACH, a local charity working with children and families with life-threatening illnesses and a collection of food items was made at the Harvest Festival service to support the Mid Norfolk Foodbank.

The school held special event days such as two Purple Days for Dereham Cancer and for Epilepsy, plus Red Nose day in March is always popular!

We have a very caring school community and governors always appreciated the work done by the PTA who organised decorating days before Christmas and sales and quizzes. Unfortunately this year, due to lack of numbers, the PTA has not been active and governors are hopeful that parents and families of pupils joining the school this coming September can be recruited so that the PTA can once again be part of school community life.

## **In Conclusion**

As this academic year draws to a close, we look forward to the start of a new phase in the life of our school as the date of conversion to academy status approaches. This heralds a new beginning, but one which holds many exciting opportunities for the school, its staff and all the pupils and their families.

## Governors Annual Report to Parents for Sept 2022 to July 2023

However, while our status may change from LA voluntary maintained school to being an academy within the family of the Diocese of Norwich Educational Trust (DNEAT), what will not change is our school's very distinctive Christian ethos and the caring way in which the whole school community works together to make this a place where our children want to come to school and want to learn. But most of all, this is a place where everyone feels safe and feels valued.

The Governing Board  
Dereham Church Infant and Nursery School  
July 2023