



Droxford Junior School Governing Body Annual Report

www.droxfordjunior.co.uk/governors

October 2024

Contents

1. Chair's Introduction and Overview
2. Report from the Resources Committee
3. Report from the Curriculum Committee
4. Frequently Asked Questions
5. Members of the Governing Body

1. Chair's Introduction and Overview

On behalf of all of the Governing Body, a warm welcome to our new students and parents; please let us extend our thanks once more for your continued support of the school and its wider community.

Over the last year, the school has continued to build upon its successes in all aspects of school life. We are all incredibly proud of the most recent OFSTED report, where the school retained its outstanding status. The report highlighted the school's effective and ambitious curriculum and exceptional teaching within a vibrant and positive school community. This could not have been achieved without the school community coming together with the main aim to ensure that the children have all the support they need to embody the school's values and skills for learning. Achieving Ambassador Status in recognition of the school's commitment to developing outdoor spaces for learning and play and enrichment opportunities, has been another high point of the year, and again testament to the hard work and enormous dedication of staff in providing an holistic well-rounded offer for all children lucky enough to attend Droxford.

• Role of the Governing Body - What do Governors do?

Over the past year we have recruited some new Governors who have bought their time and skill sets to support the school, but we are committed to maintaining a diverse and effective Governing Body and are always looking for new people to join our team. The strength of our board lies on our ability to attract and rely upon members from a wide variety of backgrounds, to share the duties amongst ourselves and be able to make decisions as part of a group. Diversity of perspectives on the board is very welcome. If you would be interested in learning more about the role of a Governor, please do not hesitate to contact us via our Clerk, Miss Madgwick, at clerk@droxford.hants.sch.uk.

Governors are strategic leaders within schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. We have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

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

The governing body does not:

- Inspect the school or have involvement in the day-to-day running of the school
- Authorise each item of expenditure
- Decide which pupils will be admitted to the school, or how pupils are taught individual subjects

Each individual governor is a member of the Governing Board and all decisions are the joint responsibility of the board. As Governors, we attend meetings and ask questions, and some of us have special responsibilities assigned to us such as Development and Training or Safeguarding.

We meet half termly to discuss and review a range of items including policies, progress and achievements, financial forecasts, and attendance data. In addition, the children and staff see us in school regularly to carry out themed

learning walks. On these occasions, we talk to the children and staff and get a greater insight to the day-to-day experience at Droxford. The children always provide wonderful feedback and are great fun to talk to as they are keen to share their thoughts, feelings and memories about school life. Our school visits always have a focus, be it how certain groups are supported, certain subjects are taught, or analysis of progression as a whole across the school. It is incredibly helpful to speak to staff subject leaders on these days as well. We enjoy hearing about the work they do to ensure that the curriculum is broad and well managed, as well as having the opportunity to ask questions and of course thank them for their hard work.

Most governors have a specific area of responsibility and will visit the school to review these areas. We are not qualified to measure or judge the quality of teaching but we do ensure robust processes are in place to do this. Governors are also usually part of any interview panel when recruiting for new staff members.

We attend a range of training courses run by the Local Authority to ensure we have the latest knowledge and skills to carry out our role effectively.

For a full list of Governors and their roles, please see section 5.



Year 5 sailing residential (Summer term)

- **How well is the school doing?**

We remain incredibly proud of our Year 6 children and staff who work so hard to prepare for and undertake the SATs tests each summer. As always, the children responded to the challenge and performed well, showing great determination and resilience. The school achieved extremely well, with scores beyond national averages in reading, writing and maths. These scores are carefully analysed by both staff and Governors and help to inform us all as to any future focus areas as to how best we can support the children, moving forwards.

- **What is the plan for this year?**

Our Strategic development plan for 2024-2025 has the following key priorities which we are working on as a school

1. English: Embed the strategies currently in place to continue to improve the writing outcomes across the school.
2. Maths: Integrate a variety of whole school strategies to ensure greater fluency across the school.
3. Behaviour: Drawing on research, ensure the consistency of whole school behaviour strategies are in line with the school policy.
4. Creative Curriculum: Further develop the whole school curriculum by embedding 'Creative Curriculum' opportunities.

- **Is the school in a sound financial position?**

I'm really pleased to report that the school ended 2023/4 with a modest annual surplus. This was a good performance given the on-going funding challenges that we faced and will be added to the overall surplus that we have been maintaining. As such, the school is in a sound financial position. However, as a Governing Body, we are continuously trying to balance the on-going needs of the school – and our desire to attract the best teachers and make the right funding available to support the annual School Improvement Plan, against the need for us to operate a cautious budget, given the forecast drop in pupil numbers over the next 2-3 year (which will have a consequent impact on our funding).

Looking ahead to 2024-5, we have budgeted to make a small in-year deficit, which will use up some of our overall surplus. This budget will continue to allow us to invest in the school and assumes that we operate effectively and

efficiently. Importantly, and reflecting the school's excellent performance and reputation, we did pick-up more pupils than expected as part of the September 2024 intake – and this will improve our funding position in 2025-6 and onwards. We are continuing to try to attract new pupils, which will improve our funding position further and are also very grateful for the excellent support that the Friends of Droxford School (FODS) provide. In addition, we have also seen an incredible response from you, as parents, in our requests for learning materials or those who have made direct donations. Thank you to everyone who have supported us through the year, it is greatly appreciated.

- **How can you get involved?**

We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation for the invaluable contributions you make to enhance the educational experience of our children here at Droxford. Your involvement, dedication, and support are what makes our community truly exceptional.

There are numerous ways in which you can show your support and become actively engaged in the betterment of our school. We are always looking for motivated and innovated people to join both the Governing Body and the Friends of Droxford School (FODS). It is important to note that these opportunities are open to anyone, whether you work full or part-time, so please do not feel that your schedule is a barrier to getting involved.

Here are a few ways you can make a difference:

- a. Your continued support**

We encourage you to participate in the various events organised by the school this year. FODS is in need of parents to lead their events, so please do volunteer if you can. Not only are these events fun and enjoyable, they also play a crucial role in raising much-needed funds for the school. Additionally, we invite you to join us for the school's 'Dig Days' where your involvement helps to maintain our school grounds and learning environment whilst saving thousands of pounds, annually.

- b. Your ideas**

Your ideas and insights are valuable to us. If you have suggestions on how the school can raise funds or if you have observed successful initiatives in other schools, we welcome your input. Your fresh perspectives can help us to innovate and improve.

- c. Your financial support**

Despite being a publicly funded school, Droxford has consistently delivered outstanding results comparable to many local private schools. If you find yourself in a fortunate financial position, you may like to consider contributing a lump sum or a regular donation directly to the school. Past generous donations have allowed us to upgrade our technology, benefitting every child's learning journey.

- d. Your time**

Do you have spare time during the day? Perhaps you could consider volunteering to listen to the children read. Are you passionate about a particular hobby or skill? You could run or assist in running a club, fostering the children's interests and talents. Your time and involvement help us with our costs as well as providing the children with a richer and more diverse learning experience.

Our school community thrives because of everyone's commitment; we create an environment that truly nurtures and supports the children's growth. We understand the demands of modern life but hope that you will be able to find a way to engage that suits your schedule and interests.

Thank you for being an essential part of our school's journey. Your contributions truly make a positive impact on the lives of everyone at Droxford.

Warm regards
Helen Parrott, Chair of the Governing Board

2. Report from the Resources Committee

The Resources Committee is one of the two sub committees of the full Governing Board and meets once every half-term. We are responsible for: overseeing the financial running of the school, including budget setting and monitoring and ensuring that sufficient funding is made available to maintain and improve the school's assets (including the buildings and grounds); the employment and welfare of the staff, and; Health and Safety within the school.

As Helen sets out, it has been an incredible year for the school, with some fantastic achievements and formal recognition. From a financial perspective, we have had another good year, where we again generated a modest surplus. This was forecast but, as I've mentioned before, we are now entering a period where our Year 3 intake will be lower (predominantly because of the lower numbers of pupils in our main feeder schools), with a corresponding drop in the funding that we receive. We have been planning for this period for a long time and are doing all we can to spend our funding sensibly and ensure we channel our funds into the areas of the school that really need investment and in helping Mat and the team have the resource to deliver the School Improvement Plan.

Against this backdrop, it's really pleasing to note that the investment that was made available to support improved writing across the school has helped really boost our writing results. In addition, we have also supported Mat's plans to develop the school curriculum, through both integrating the creative curriculum with Winchester University and through starting a plan to allow subject leads more time to develop their professional knowledge. We are in the process of working through this year's School Improvement Plan but will, I'm sure, have some more positive stories to report back on in 2025.

In terms of the physical condition of the school, it has also been a significant year with the appointment of Gary Parkin as the Site Manager in September 2023. Gary has made a huge difference to the school and really got stuck into a very involved site maintenance and health and safety programme. Aside from the normal day-to-day tasks, Gary has also completed the reception toilets refurbishment and the installation of the new World map in the school courtyard (which is well worth a look!). Finally, Gary (and his leaf blowers!) are now a central part of the Dig Days that are held twice yearly...thank you to all the parents and children who take part in these...your support is a massive part of helping us keep the school in the condition that it's currently in and creating a really inspiring learning (and playing) environment.

I mentioned that the Resources Committee also oversees the employment and welfare of our staff. During the year we both provided feedback on the actions taken from the 2022-3 survey and ran the 2023-4 survey. The results of the latest survey were, again, shared openly with all the team. There was some very positive feedback about our school and how staff are valued and also some areas that we can work on. As in previous years, the results have been taken on board by the Senior Leadership Team and improvements made. We are very fortunate to have such a strong and experienced team at Droxford and are committed to ensuring that this group is well looked after and given the right opportunity to develop. Thank you to all the staff for all their hard work during the year.

Finally, I mentioned the school's overall financial position at the start of this report. We are, as I said, targeting our investment carefully but the help and support we receive both from all the parents and from FODS, have meant we have been able to invest in learning materials (ICT and broader educational supplies) at a rate that will really support the development of all the children during their time at Droxford. This support will continue to be very important to us but thank you from all of the Resources team for your time and financial support during the last year, it has made a big difference to us.

Chris Woodgate, Chair, Resources Committee



3. Report from the Curriculum Committee

It has been a very exciting and rewarding year for Droxford Junior. We as school governors are delighted and proud of its successful journey.

To mention a few successes: Droxford has a rich and diverse curriculum provision, provides a wide variety of enrichment opportunities and achievements, excellent KS2 SATs results reaching well above county and national averages, awarded Ambassador School for the South Downs National Park and has anyone mentioned OFSTED? A well-deserved grade of OUTSTANDING!

The most important and enjoyable roles of being a curriculum governor is supporting the school's direction and seeing that all pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum. (You don't need experience or knowledge in education to be a governor.)

To do this, we make pre-arranged visits and calls with a clear focus; these are linked to the school's development plan and its vision (approximately three per academic year.) We observe school life in action and how the curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils. We are informed of the standards achieved.

A variety of ways we achieve that are:

- By visiting the classrooms and observe adults and children working effectively.
- We enjoy talking to the children about their learning and school experiences.
- We talk with the subject leaders and classroom teachers to find out about what has been happening, what is happening and what will happen in the future based on the learning and outcomes for pupils.
- We speak with the leadership team to understand the decisions the school have made and its impact, and to see how they have adapted the curriculum to meet the local context of the school and its pupils.
- We also support with relevant school policies.
- We enjoy hearing about the school's enrichment programmes and how it caters to and offers further opportunities outside of the classroom and how they increase pupil's enjoyment of school life.
- It's also a great way to observe many options for play at break and lunch times, how orderly and kind behaviour is and also the excellent safeguarding culture in the school.
- All members of the curriculum committee would like to thank all staff who gave their time to work with the Governors over the year and we wish you another vibrant and successful year ahead

Sarah Emms, Parent Governor

4. Frequently Asked Questions

- **How do I find out more about the role of governors?**

For more information on the role and responsibility of a governing body and how to apply to be a governor, visit the HCC website: [Hampshire County Council - What Governors Do.](#)

- **How do I find out more about becoming a governor and how to apply?**

Please visit the HCC website: [Hampshire County Council: Becoming A Governor](#)

Our Chair of Governors would welcome the opportunity to discuss the role in more detail and any of the other governors will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

- **How can I find out more about the school policies?**

All relevant policies are available to download from the school website: www.droxfordjunior.co.uk/policies/



If anything is not clear, or more information is required, please contact the School Office.

- **Can I contact governors directly to discuss matters about my child’s education?**

Your child’s class teacher would be your first point of contact, as they have the best first-hand knowledge and expertise to deal with any queries. If appropriate the Headteacher, Matthew Dampier, may also be involved.

Any other matters can be dealt with by following the procedures and policies detailed on the website: www.droxfordjunior.co.uk/policies/

- **Do parent governors act as a representative for all parents?**

Parent governors provide a parent’s perspective. However, their role is not to act as a representative for other parents.

- **How can I give feedback to governors?**

Participating in any surveys is an excellent way to provide structured feedback and allows the governing body to incorporate this feedback into future strategic plans. Contact can also be made via the school office, or you can email our Clerk, Miss Madgwick at clerk@droxford.hants.sch.uk.



5. Members of the Governing Body 2024/2025

No.	Name	Governor Type
1	Helen Parrott Chair of the Governing Board	Co-opted Governor
2	Christopher Woodgate Co-Vice Chair of the Governing Board	Co-opted Governor
3	June Kershaw Co-Vice Chair of the Governing Board	Co-opted Governor
4	Matthew Rees	Co-opted Governor
5	Denise Allen (to be appointed on 09/10)	Co-opted Governor
6	Bonike Bracewell (to be appointed on 09/10)	Co-opted Governor
7	Edward Hannah (to be appointed on 09/10)	Co-opted Governor
8	Sarah Emms	Parent Governor
9	Richard Savage (to be appointed on 09/10)	Parent Governor
10	Jennifer Smith	Staff Governor
11	Matthew Dampier	Headteacher
12	Local Authority Governor Vacancy	



Vision: Equipping our children with the knowledge and skills to navigate life successfully.