

Introduction

The academic year 2025/6 has been another busy year for Cherry Grove Primary School. A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the whole school community to ensure that it has been positive and productive. The Governing Body has had its role to play. The following provides a brief overview of the work undertaken this year, together with an explanation of our governance arrangements, role and purpose.

Governance arrangements

The Governing Body is made up of seven Co-opted Governors, two Parent Governors, one Local Authority Governor, one Staff Governor and the Headteacher. The Deputy Headteacher is as an Associate Member.

Meet our Governors



Jon Gilbert
Headteacher



John Morrow
Chair of Governors [Co-Opted Governor]



Martin Brannan
Co-Vice Chair of Governors [Parent Governor]



Rob Pullen
Co-Vice Chair of Governors [Co-Opted Governor]



Liam McCaughey
Co-Opted Governor



Dorothy Turnbull
Parent Governor



Oliver Gover
Co-Opted Governor



Sibby Jose
Co-Opted Governor



Sam Durrant
Co-Opted Governor



Olivia Pearson
Staff Governor



Tommy Spencer
Associate Member

We currently have governor vacancies for; a Local Authority Governor and two Co-Opted Governors. We are going through a recruitment exercise and expect to have all positions filled shortly.

The Governing Body has met 6 times during the academic year 2025/26.

Governors have also undertaken a number of link visits, meeting with leaders from the school to review strategic priority areas.



The role of the Governing Body

The core functions of the Governing Body include:

- *that the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined*
- *that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school*
- *the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources*

A Governing Body and its governors must:

- *act with integrity, objectivity, and honesty and in the best interests of the school*
- *be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and shall be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties*

The Governing Body also has legislative responsibility and strategic oversight for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Core functions

- *that the vision, ethos, and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined*

The vision and values of the school were updated and revised in 2022. At Cherry Grove Primary School "We CARE", which embodies the core values of the school.

Community Aspiration Respect Experiences

Our Vision is to foster an independent 'love of learning', so children leave Cherry Grove with the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their potential as 21st Century citizens.

The Governing Body ensures that all discussion and decision-making uses this vision as its guiding principle and focus. Meetings and link governor visits provide opportunity for questioning and scrutiny which plays a crucial role in ensuring this alignment, and it has been evident to the Body that it is not an empty vision and that the work of the school closely aligns with its vision and staff clearly care about each pupil.

- *that the headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school*

Every year, the Governing Body appoints a Headteacher Performance Management Panel of Governors to work alongside an external adviser in appraising the performance of the Headteacher, Mr Gilbert.

This academic year has been Mr Gilbert's first full year at Cherry Grove. Governors recognised the importance of supporting and evaluating his transition into the role, and consequently prioritised this process. Reflecting its significance, the panel comprised of the Chair and both Vice-Chairs of Governors.

Throughout the year, Mr Gilbert's leadership has been kept under close review. Regular communication between Governors and the Headteacher has been an important part of developing a strong and effective working relationship, whilst ensuring appropriate support and challenge. The Governing Body has been pleased to see Mr Gilbert settle into his role quickly, demonstrating enthusiasm, commitment, and a clear focus on the continued development of the school.

Each full Governing Body meeting also provides an opportunity for Governors to review the school's performance, scrutinise progress against agreed priorities and hold leaders to account for the educational outcomes of pupils.

- *the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources*

The Body keeps the budget of the school under careful review, through its main meetings and separate working meetings with leaders from the school. School budgets remain extremely challenging nationally, with many schools operating in or moving towards deficit positions. The careful management of the school's budget has avoided this.

Strategic priorities for the Governing Body and the school 2025/26

Every year priority areas are agreed by the Governing Body. This comprises the School Improvement Plan. Each priority area has an assigned Governor who volunteers to act as a link between the school and the Body, meeting with responsible members of staff and reviewing related documentations.

The School Improvement Plan is created by the Headteacher to provide focused attention to key priority areas. This year they have been:

- Writing
- Attainment for Pupil Premium
- Personal Development & Approach to Behaviour
- Early Years Provision

Governors have worked hard with the school on other priority areas such as SEND, safeguarding, health and safety, looked after and previously looked after children, attendance and much more.

Each priority area has a nominated Governor who provides oversight and scrutiny on behalf of the Governing Body. Through regular meetings with staff leading these areas, Governors have been able to gain a detailed understanding of both progress and future priorities.

The reports received from Governors have been extremely encouraging. We have been particularly pleased by the high standards of practice observed and the commitment shown by staff to continually develop and improve outcomes for pupils.

The Governor's scrutiny of each of these areas has been incredibly positive. Link visits have highlighted a number of areas of good practice and evidence of development.

Key work carried out by Governors

Nursery Closure

Few decisions made by Governors this year were as difficult as the decision to close the nursery provision.

Governors carefully explored a range of options and considered whether there was any viable way for the nursery to remain open. Unfortunately, ongoing financial pressures and declining sustainability meant that closure was the only responsible option available.

We recognise the important role the nursery has played within the Cherry Grove community for more than 50 years and understand the disappointment felt by many families. Governors would like to give their sincere thanks to Ms Wilson for her exceptional leadership and commitment over many years, helping generations of children make a positive start to their education.

Takeover Day

Governors were once again delighted to participate in the school's annual Takeover Day, which has become a favourite event in the governance calendar.

During the summer term, pupils joined governors in a special Governing Body meeting and quickly demonstrated strong decision-making skills. After careful consideration, the pupil governors concluded that the school's budget could not quite stretch to Tesla cars and premium coffee machines for staff. It was a thoroughly enjoyable session and an excellent reminder of the insight, confidence, and humour of our pupils.

Final message

As alluded to throughout this statement, the academic year has presented several challenges and significant areas of work. The Governing Body would like to extend its sincere thanks to the entire school community for the commitment, resilience and support shown throughout the year.

In particular, we would like to recognise the dedication of all members of staff, who work tirelessly to make Cherry Grove a welcoming, nurturing, and caring environment in which pupils can learn, grow and thrive.



We would also like to thank the PTA for the considerable time and energy they give in supporting the school. Through events such as Hot Chocolate Fridays, Freeze Pop Fridays, and themed Discos, they have continued to raise valuable funds that directly benefit our pupils and enrich school life.

Best wishes from

Dr John Morrow, Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Full Governing Body