

Crowthorne Church of England Primary School

Governors' Report—2023 / 2024

Inspiring and enabling our school community to live life to the full



Introduction

Welcome to this year's Governors' report. The Governance of the school focusses on three key areas: 1) Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; 2) Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school, its' pupils and the performance management of staff and 3) Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure money is well spent. The Governing body of Crowthorne CofE Primary school are obliged by statute to report details regarding the school along with other information that is both useful and relevant to parents. This report meets that statutory obligation for the academic year 2023/2024.

A Year in Review 2023 / 2024

The Autumn term started brightly with the school being re-painted during the summer break along with the playground markings being refurbished ready for the new children joining. Clarity regarding strategic planning for the school intake came with the finalisation discussions regarding the "two site school" (with a new building at Bucklers Park) culminating in an announcement of a new SEND school at the proposed site.

After bringing swimming to the school (pool-to-school) in November, and fabulous Christmas events, the new calendar year raised safety concerns across the country regarding RAAC (reinforced autoclave aerated concrete) in school structures. Within days the school was able to confirm that there was no RAAC present. With Miss Jackson announcing her intention to step down from her role, the recruitment process started. In recognition of all staff efforts, in February 2024 the school received a letter from the Minister of Schools congratulating the school in being within the top 1% countrywide for KS2 results.

Spring term was a busy time with strong support from the Friends of Crowthorne with bingo sessions, Readathon, colouring competition and a disco. Moving to the summer term, along with a heightened academic focus, we prepared ourselves for our leavers but not before our annual sports day and final "Tray Day" where parents and carers are encouraged to visit the school.

Every term demonstrates a huge amount of activity both academic and pastoral with engagement from all stakeholders. Coupled with a continued focus on charitable efforts (such as MAF and Children in Need) such diversity ensures that the school continues to fulfil the vision of "Inspiring and enabling our school community to live life to the full".

A view from ... Bracknell Forest Standards & Effectiveness Partner (April 2024)

"Crowthorne is a calm and purposeful place. Learning is at the centre of everything they do, and the pupils are cognisant of what it means to be a learner. Classrooms are purposeful and joyous, very little time is spent on dealing with inappropriate behaviour. This atmosphere is contagious and represents a way of being for all pupils."

Head Teacher Recruitment

In January 2024 the current head teacher, Miss Jackson, notified the Chair of the Governors that she wished to step down from her role. Having been with the school for seventeen years, and during that time built and led a strong leadership team through some of the most challenging times in education, Miss Jackson's wishes were to be respected.

The advert for the new Headteacher was published on 9th February and on 25th March 2024 the Governors appointed Mrs Hicks as the school's new Headteacher in readiness for the 2024/2025 academic year. Mrs Hicks is currently Deputy Headteacher at The Pines School in Bracknell and has held this position since 2019, and in this position her responsibilities also include those of Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Curriculum Lead and Assessment Lead. Prior to joining The Pines, Mrs Hicks had held teaching positions in other local primary schools in both Bracknell and Wokingham Local Authorities.

Miss Jackson leaves a lasting legacy at Crowthorne CofE Primary school and transfers the stewardship of the school to Mrs Hicks who has the fullest of welcomes, and support, from the governing body. We all look forward to working with her in the future and helping her to ensure that the school continues to provide the highest possible level of education and care for our pupils.

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Roll 2023/2024

Number on roll:	211
Average Attendance:	96.25%

School Improvement Plan

On an annual basis, in collaboration with the governors and other stakeholders, the school reflects on its areas for improvement. Taking into account a variety of sources, seven school improvement priorities ("Key Priorities" [KP]) are identified. These are then approved, and progress towards these used as a quality assurance measure by governors throughout the academic year. For Crowthorne CofE school the KP areas are:

1. Develop a Mental Health Strategy to effectively support and develop the health and well-being of our school community.
2. Review and enhance the reading journey for children across the school, ensuring it supports the development of a love of reading, whilst meeting the needs of all pupils and supporting them to make good progress.
3. Ensure all children are making expected or better progress in Writing, Spelling and Grammar [SpaG], with more children achieving Greater Depth in writing compared to July 2023 data.
4. Develop the Math's curriculum and provision to ensure more children are supported to achieve GD (TA and Test Scores) and a mastery of Math's.
5. Ensure lower attaining boys in KS1 are supported to fully engage with their learning, leading to strong progress and narrowing the attainment gap with their peers.
6. Create a more sustainable school. Review our curriculum to ensure links are made where possible to support the children's understanding of climate issues.
7. For children to make good or better progress in foundation subjects, with assessment procedures being accurate and ensuring knowledge learnt is retained over time.

All of the Key Priorities have success criteria associated with them for Autumn, Spring and Summer terms of the academic year and progress is documented in review within the plan. Whilst there is marked progress in all areas, there are a number of stand-out successes that the school has achieved. The enjoyment of reading [KP2] has always been a strength of the school however it was identified that fluency can be a barrier to progress. Where some children may struggle to read aloud, their comprehension is very good. Equally reading aloud can impact the children's ability in written assessments. The development of fluency has been, and therefore continues to be, a major focus in this Key Priority. In SpaG [KP3] focusing on it as a priority has seen some stellar results, such as all Year 4 children achieving a Scaled Score of 110+; this is a major step forward from last year with the highest score available being 120 and all children scoring 100 or more either meeting or exceeding expected standards.

The above gives just two examples of how by setting priorities, bringing focus and measures to those priorities can deliver improvement and progress across the wide spectrum of educational requirements that the children deserve.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

SMSC is essential for children and young people's individual development, as well as the development of society as a whole. It is an essential element of the OFSTED framework for schools in the UK. A significant element of this are the extracurricular activities that the children participate in. One example is the hugely successful choir and subsequent participation in the 'School Junior Music Festival' which took place on Tuesday 25th June at the Hexagon Theatre in Reading. The choir also performed at Wellington College Chapel as part of the Crowthorne carnival celebrations performing three songs from Pirates of the Curry Bean which they performed with enthusiasm, again representing the school so well. Autumn saw success in a local football tournament and most recently, community participation in the Crowthorne Carnival.

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SATS outcomes 2023/24

	Expected+	Greater Depth	NATIONAL Meeting "Expected+"
Reading	100%	47%	74%
Writing	97%	27%	72%
Maths	93%	50%	73%
SPaG	93%	60%	72%

NATIONAL is the data published 9/July/2024 by the Government in respect of this academic years' national average achievement for Key Stage 2 assessments.
SPaG=Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Charity - A focus on compassion

For more than 75 years, the Christian charity MAF has used light aircraft to fly medical, relief and life-transforming help to vulnerable people living in hard-to-reach places. Today, MAF flies to more destinations than the 6 largest airlines in the world combined, in more than 25 countries. To date the school has raised over £2570 for this charity and continues with many other charitable causes.

The School Vision in Action

"Inspiring and enabling our school community to live life to the full; Promoting excellence and nurturing compassion, courage, honesty, hope, thankfulness, trust and respect for every child to thrive and demonstrate resilience, and for all pupils to make good or better progress in all areas. "

Every week of the year the Governors seek to ensure that the school is demonstrably executing its vision; with such a diverse spectrum to address this can be a challenge! One of the clearest ways to demonstrate this is a snapshot of all of the activities that took place in a single week of the school. During the week of 27th November 2023 all of the following activities took place:

- Year 5 and 6 received swimming lessons; the following week Years 3 and 4 enjoyed the same.
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 were busy practising their play and show.
- KS2 participated in 'Prayer Spaces'; a team from Kerith Community Church delivered this in school.
- Year 2 went on a trip to explore local woods and create maps.
- Year 1 went on a geography trip to study our local high street.

Of course, not every week of the academic year can be as jam-packed as the example provided above, however the key themes of the Vision are woven through every daily activity in the school. This is incredibly important for the children's development outside of the academic year and is monitored by governors through recorded visits to the school including attending assemblies, topic-talks and tray-days.

Staffing, Staff Development and Well-Being

There have been some significant staffing changes throughout the 2023/2024 academic year primarily driven by the school's promotion of career advancement and staff well-being.

Miss Gerrish (ECT) departed at Christmas along with Mrs Hennessey and Mrs Cardoz. Mrs Hennessey took a new role at Wellington College, and Mr Cranstone joined the team-teaching Year 3 from January. At the end of the spring term Miss Fray and Mrs Couchman departed with Miss Fray taking time for extended travels and sharing those experiences with the children as she goes. Mrs Mitchell joined as Year 1 Teacher and Key Stage 1 Lead and Mrs Hawley was welcomed back from maternity leave at the end of April to cover PPA and teaching Year 4 on a Friday.

Staffing always raises challenges. However, the quality of candidates, along with the interest in the school that these changes bring demonstrates that even with a reduced number of available teaching staff across the country, Crowthorne CofE continues to attract the right caliber of candidates and those that are in tune with the vision and values of the school. The school also continues to maintain at least one teaching assistant per year group within the budgetary constraints that the school must operate. The Governors duly appreciate and thank all staff for their hard work and beyond expectation efforts this year.

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OFSTED

The school's last OFSTED inspection was in February 2014. At that point the school was rated Outstanding. The school inspection process across England has been disrupted due to the impact of Covid-19 and thereafter a wholesale review of the inspection process and how outcomes are both decided and then presented to school leadership and governing body. This included mental health awareness training for the OFSTED teams.

From September 2024 upgraded inspections will reduce the burden on schools and improve flexibility for inspectors. The move will see "deep dives" removed from ungraded inspections, allowing more flexibility for schools to discuss where they have made progress, as well as where more improvement can be unlocked, with inspectors. This change comes following feedback from schools around the country that find the 'deep dive' method to be a challenge and is set to benefit all schools. With almost 3,000 ungraded inspections slated for next year, the schools involved will benefit from a more collaborative approach to these inspections – which currently represent more than 40% of all inspections that are planned for next year.

The school leadership team and governing body continue to remain in a state of preparedness for the next OFSTED inspection which is likely to be imminent in to 2024/2025 school year and continuously review and update the Self Evaluation Form along with review by the Local Authority Standards and Effectiveness Partner (STEP).

Governing Body

The school Governing Body is a statutory requirement for the effective oversight and governance of the school. The school's governing board is responsible overall for the conduct of the school and must lead the school with a view to promoting high standards of achievement. It should fulfil its functions in a strategic way. It is important that the Governing Body do not interfere in the day-to-day management and running of the school which is ably achieved through the Head Teacher, the SLT and staff. The Governing body is also there to ensure that all activities and areas of focus or ethos are evidenced and core matters such as Safeguarding are effectively and continually executed.

There is a full complement of governors. The governing body is comprised of the Headteacher, one Local Authority governor, two parent governors, six co-opted governors, two foundation, one staff, one Associate governor and the Church of England Vicar aligned to the Church of England school. All governors are self-assessed regarding general and specific skills that they can bring to the advantage of the oversight of the school.

All current Governors, their register of business interests, meeting attendance and other information for transparency can be found on the school website.

Good luck and Best Wishes

The Governing body send our best wishes to all our Year 6 Leavers. With a full roll for 2024/2025 we also look forward to welcoming new families in September. School re-opens for Autumn Term on
Wednesday 4th September 2024

Resources & Statutory Information

Please keep yourself informed by visiting the school website: <https://www.crowthornecofe.co.uk/>

It is regularly kept up-to-date with copies of the school policies, newsletters, information for parents and children along with more details on Governance. There is also statutory information the school must provide in respect of matters such as our Data Protection and Data Access Policies. Don't forget to subscribe to the school Twitter feed on social media and the Friends of Crowthorne CofE a not for profit organisation



@CrowthorneCofE



@FriendsofCrowthorneCE