



The Bellbird
Primary School



“This is a
good school.”
Ofsted 2019

ANNUAL GOVERNORS’ REPORT

2020/21

The Governors of The Bellbird Primary School are the group of parents, staff and members of our community that decide on school policies, hold the Headteachers to account for the school’s performance, and ensure that the school’s budget and other resources are best used. The Governors meet as a full group each half term, with some additional subcommittee meetings. Every year we provide a report to parents to tell you about the things that the Governors have been involved in during the year. This is our report covering the 2020/2021 academic year.



Tim Wreghitt, Chair of Governors

Although the last year has been a very difficult year for The Bellbird School, because of Covid-19, several lockdowns and

the temporary move to remote learning, the staff have adapted to the new challenges splendidly and continued to provide the excellent learning experiences under the changed circumstances. The Governors have held all their regular meetings remotely with a smaller team meeting with the Headteachers fortnightly to monitor and agree the school learning arrangements. A few essential meetings have been able to be held at school, Governors have been able to meet remotely with the subject leaders, and monitoring visits will resume later this year. As you will see, our finances are in a good position and the school is almost full to capacity. All in all, a very good year. Let’s keep it up!

Mr Duncan Macfarlane	Vice Chair, Parent Governor	Finance	Phil O’Dell
Mrs Katie Kendall Mrs Rebecca Pentney	Headteachers	Safeguarding	Henry Weir & Florence Roegiers
Mr Nick Silk	Parent Governor	Property and Safety	Nick Silk
Mrs Kimberly Campbell	Parent Governor	Parent Consultation	Duncan Macfarlane
Mrs Elizabeth Taylor	Parent Governor	Assessment	Henry Weir
Mrs Maureen Tsentides	Parent Governor	Environment	Tim Wreghitt
Mrs Nicola Frost	Parent Governor	FABS	Katie Graham
Dr Katie Graham	Community Governor	FLASH	John Rimell
Mr John Rimell	Community Governor	Art, DT & Music	Elizabeth Taylor
Mr Phil O’Dell	Community Governor		
Mrs Florence Roegiers	Community Governor		
Mr Henry Weir	Local Authority Governor		
Mrs Sally Barron	Staff Governor		
Mrs Diane Baslington	Clerk to Governors		

There are two vacancies on the Governing Body for Community Governors, people within the local vicinity with specialist skills or interest in education. Also the position of Clerk to Governors has fallen vacant. If you know of anyone who might be interested in these positions, please ask them to contact me or the school.

GOVERNORS

Dr Tim Wreghitt

Chair,
Community
Governor

Among our Board of Governors, we have various members who take a lead in key areas, including:

Mrs Katie Kendall & Mrs Rebecca Pentney, Headteachers



As we write this, we are beginning the school year with relative normality. The 2020/2021 school year did not begin in the same way. We had a very robust risk assessment in place alongside a staff body who were keen to do everything they could to reduce the risk and keep the children and the team safe. We are extremely proud to say that with our risk assessment in place we only had two bubble closures resulting in minimal disruption to learning. The staff who had to close



bubbles worked extremely hard to ensure home learning was the best it could be and fed these experiences back to the rest of the team.

This was extremely beneficial when, with very little notice, at the start of the Spring term we found ourselves undertaking the gargantuan task of changing our school provision to home learning for all but our critical worker children. We are so proud of the whole school community and their response to this challenge. The result was a quality blend of teacher input, home learning books, independent work and most importantly time to feedback, discuss and review each day. At home parents worked hard to support their children, many while juggling their own workload as well. In school, TAs supported critical worker children alongside the teacher input. As Head teachers we look back at this challenging time with fierce pride in our school community. Whilst it was immeasurably hard, we feel strongly the children received the best learning opportunities they could. Throughout the year we continued to track the children's attainment and progress alongside the curriculum coverage, so we knew where to focus input in each year group. This continues to be invaluable moving into the new school year.

Despite being proud, we all breathed a sigh of relief when the children were able to return to school. With our risk assessment in place, we managed to avoid a bubble closure for the rest of the academic year and we ensured that the children had a quality learning experience with a very heavy focus on our beautiful great outdoors. Within classes children were able to access multiple outdoor projects; growing (and eating) vegetables, maths treasure trails and outdoor cooking to name a few. We were also very pleased to be able to enjoy sports day with each year group competing individually and a shared whole school zoom assembly to watch some of the fun and announce the winning team. We have definitely become more creative in our uses of Zoom as the year has gone on!

With sports day and a host of other events for individual year groups (historical visitors, cooking with home grown produce) we ended the year optimistically. The whole school was able to enjoy the recording of the year 6 production, it was the most wonderful way to end the year. In addition to this year 6 had an amazing activity week which included an Oscar's ceremony meaning they really made lasting memories of their last few weeks in primary school. They left us with smiles on their faces, ready for the challenges of secondary school.

Another year of hard work, overcoming challenges and immersing ourselves in the moments that make it all worthwhile. Continuing to 'soar to success' in many wonderful ways.

FRIENDS & FUNDS

Dr Katie Graham

It has been a very difficult year for FABS. Fundraising possibilities have been severely curtailed because of the restrictions resulting from the pandemic. Despite this, FABS members have been busy supporting the school, especially at Christmas and Easter. They have provided leaving books for Year 6 pupils, cycle safety helmets and supported swimming lessons, as in previous years. We owe them a sincere vote of thanks.

regularly check nationally available figures to ensure that our spending is in line with comparable schools in Cambridgeshire and across the



country so that we can be sure that we are being as efficient as possible.

Most of our funding is provided by the government and county council using a formula. This allocates money between each school and is mainly based on the number of pupils each school has but also other factors such as how deprived a school's area is and where it is in the country. For us, our pupil number rise and other formula changes gave us extra funding of

£207,000 for the budget year 2021/22, an increase of 14%.

Although significant and welcome, this merely allows our external funding to catch up to the level we have always needed as there has been long standing and widespread agreement that Cambridgeshire schools have been under-funded by central government.

"...we consistently meet the requirements of the county council, the government and Ofsted..."

The additional funding has been used to cope with the extra costs of the rise in pupil numbers and to invest in a wellbeing facility to help any of our children who have any emotional

MONEY MATTERS

Mr Phil O'Dell

With a pupil roll of nearly 400 the school now spends over £2m a year on staffing and other costs. Governors

needs not provided for elsewhere within the school. We also made a significant change to our out of school hours provision, though this had minimal effects on our budget.

We consistently meet the requirements of the county council, the government and Ofsted in the way we set our budgets and administer our finances. We thank our staff for their work in these areas and, as always, our wonderful local funding support, spearheaded by FABs.

SAFEGUARDING

Mr Henry Weir & Mrs Elizabeth Taylor

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All employed and peripatetic Staff, and volunteers at the school have a DBS check which forms parts of the school's Single Central Register. All staff and volunteers have induction training to include Safeguarding and Prevent training, this is followed by pertinent updates and training.

Please view our Safeguarding page including policies and general advice on the Website under the Parent tab.

The staff have access to an online platform to protect pupils in our school community. A link governor undertakes regular monitoring visits to ensure Safeguarding stands at the core of our care of pupils

Over the course of the year, we have been supported by the Local Authority with particular respect to Covid-19 regulations and guidance, to ensure that all pupils and staff remained safe throughout this challenging time.

Our Covid-19 risk assessment was regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the constant changing situations and safety measures required, depending on both the national and local picture.

Throughout this time, the critical incident committee have met regularly to ensure that all of our measures are compliant with government guidance.

Find out more at
<http://www.thebellbird.cambs.sch.uk/safeguarding/>



Mr John Rimell

It has been a big year of change for the Bellbird in many ways and not least for our afterschool provision. When The Bellbird was established in 2007, the governors then were keen for there to be an afterschool club. At the time the level of interest was low and with the teaching staff focused on establishing the school, the governors led the setup of FLASH. In the early years, the low numbers meant that it didn't break-even cost wise, but we felt that it was an important service and had faith it would grow... and it did. My first experience was in 2011; Mr P was in charge and it was based in the one room, with up to 30 places a day, but that was filling up. It expanded its space through use of the Jigsaw room and was able to offer more places. Mrs Foster and Mrs Wheeler took over coordinating the provision and further it grew. We upgraded to an online booking service and after the recent building extension allowed it to move to the larger space at the back of the building with first 50 and then 60 places a day under the leadership of Mrs Saunders. With Covid-19, everything changed, with the need to establish the bubbles and all the other Covid-19 precautions, and although Breakfast Club stopped, FLASH was able to continue. A huge thank you to all the staff involved in achieving this! With Mrs Saunders stepping down and looking forward for ways to further develop the provision, the governors supported the review of the schools wrap-around care options. With Premier Education

shortlisted, we attended their presentation and had an extensive Q&A session afterwards. Following all this due diligence and checking references, the governors unanimously supported the Heads' recommendation; Premier Education would provide the next step in The Bellbird's afterschool provision. As governors, in this next year we'll be supporting the Heads, monitoring the service, and will be running a survey of parents to hear directly your thoughts.

FEEDBACK

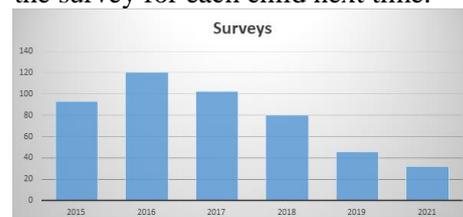
Mr Duncan Macfarlane



It was great to be able to conduct a parent survey again this year after we took the decision not to in 2020.

"I would urge all parents/carers to fill in the survey for each child..."

This year the number of responses we received has continued to reduce. I would urge all parents/carers to fill in the survey for each child next time.



This year we added some questions on the pandemic which showed 100% approval of how the school responded to the pandemic.

ART, DT & MUSIC

Mrs Elizabeth Taylor

The restricted movement around school has been perhaps the most challenging factor for subject leads for Art, DT and Music in the last year, but all areas of the curriculum are well resourced.

The music curriculum benefits hugely from use of Charanga, an online teaching and learning platform. It facilitates pupils' access to music of many genres, focusing on listening, appraisal, improvising and composing. Content is taught and revisited every year, linking well to current educational research on understanding how people learn. Other resources used have given pupils the option for signing along to songs, which has been a great way to bring pupils together through music, when singing hasn't been permitted in schools. Pupils are very positive about music; they are interested and excited by the subject. Now that restrictions have lifted, it is hoped that historically run music trips may go ahead.

DT and Art benefit from productive periods of focused learning via full days/afternoons blocks of curriculum time. Access for additional funding to support this has been made available. The Focus Education key framework seeks to drive a structure for high quality progression and development of personal skills such as perseverance and problem solving. Building on complexity, year on year in terms of knowledge and vocabulary, this challenging framework maps well to the KS3/4 Curriculum.

Pupils have the opportunity to use a range of materials and processes including printing, collage, textiles, 3D clay, photography, drawing and sculpture. Learning also includes iconic designers and artist such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Diego Rivera, and there is a wealth of opportunity to understand and celebrate different cultures. Children develop their technical skills and become familiar with different materials, plan and design their own pieces and critically review their outcomes. An incredibly diverse range of projects are covered throughout the years, facilitating learning about mechanisms, electronics and construction. These include Egyptian games, Roman times/purse Mayan masks and Kilmano slippers. Opportunities for cross curricular links are exploited, along with connections to local artists in the community. Pupils also explore food and nutrition, including safety and hygiene, in various activities such as 'cook like an explorer' and making hot cross buns.

hearing presentations from subject leaders so we can understand more about what goes on in the classroom each day. This enables us to understand the challenges the staff face such as embedding new curricula and other educational initiatives and looking how this can be enriched at The Bellbird. We are always particularly keen to discuss resource matters with the teachers and how any additional funds we might manage to afford can be put to best use to help the children.

THANK YOU

The Governors would like to thank all the school staff who have worked tirelessly over the last year to make The Bellbird School an excellent successful environment for learning. Their achievements are plain for all to see and they and our pupils are a credit to the school. Thank you also to our wonderful parents and carers for your help and support.



SHARING

To facilitate oversight of the various curricula areas, Governors pair with the Teacher Curricula Leads. A key feature of our Governor meetings is



'Belle' the Bellbird cow on show at the Sedgwick museum for 'Cows about Cambridge 2021'



HOW TO CONTACT US

Governors are contactable via the School Office and website. Any matters regarding day to day issues, including complaints, should be discussed with either your child's Class Teacher or the Headteachers.