

Governor Newsletter: July 2022



Review of 2021/22

At the beginning of each year Governors and the school's Senior Leadership team agree the objectives for the school over the coming year. As Mr Purkiss has already shared with you, the school has been focused on developing the curriculum; embedding the Read, Write, Inc. programme; ensuring our most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are making good progress, equal to their peers; and establishing the new Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This year we had the joy as Governors of getting back into school and see at first-hand how the priorities for the year were developing.

We were able to see how the curriculum is being progressed with knowledge maps for every year group outlining the learning journey for the year ahead. If you are not familiar with the knowledge maps for your child/ren please do look on the website. We saw the fantastic work being done with the younger children learning through Read, Write, Inc. New at the beginning of September 2021, we have seen how well embedded the programme is and how all teaching staff and assistants have become confident in delivering the programme in a fun, engaging and effective way that the children respond to and embrace.



We've also looked at the progress of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, those with special educational needs and those who have struggled academically to make sure that no child is left behind. Our school has 23% of children on the SEN register whether they are accessing the Thrive programme or with complex educational needs, we have seen that each child has an individual plan to succeed and attain to the best of their ability. It is clear that at our school, SEN provision is not an addition in the classroom, it is part of everyday teaching in the classroom so all children are supported and included.

Part of the monitoring described takes in analysing the data that comes out in terms 2, 4 & 6. Whilst data is not the key driver of our monitoring, with the effects of Covid still apparent at the beginning of September, it has given us the opportunity to track progress and attainment in our school and also in comparison with the other 34 schools in our Multi-Academy Trust. Our results show that, whilst there is still work to do, our children have made good progress against their peer groups in catching up to pre-pandemic levels which we feel is down to three specific drivers: the method of home schooling chosen by the school that gave clear instruction but freedom to complete throughout the day; consistent, good and often outstanding teaching by our dedicated staff; and the support and engagement of our wonderful parent community.



We've worked closely with the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust over the past year and have had very worthwhile visits from the Director of Education and the Assistant Director of Education in each of the three long terms that have helped provide direction and suggestions for school improvement. As Governors we've engaged with training from both the Trust and the Diocese on safeguarding, health & safety, SEND, environmental awareness, finance, new governor training, Christian distinctiveness in primary schools, as well as many others. We have assisted in the SEN audit and the health & safety audit which both had positive results.

We have also been working on the 5 year strategy for Bathwick St Mary, looking at what it means to be a Bathwick Child, our aspirations for our children on their journey through the school and when they leave us in Year 6, more of which will be shared with you in September.



And finally, I will be stepping down as Co-Chair after 5 fantastic years. It's been an absolute privilege to serve on the Committee of such a wonderful school, which such a dedicated team of colleagues, Senior Leadership team and wider school staff. It's certainly been challenging at times but every challenge has been met with enthusiasm, fortitude and teamwork. I've learnt something every week and have loved it, and I'm grateful for having had the opportunity to serve this very special community. I leave you in the very safe hands of Ben Jenkins, my Co-Chair and new Co-Chair, Marina de Vos.

Wishing you all a very happy summer.

Lucy Spedo Mirandola, Co-Chair of Governors

Looking towards next year

As we finish the academic year 2021-2022 and we all look forward to what we hope will be a lovely summer, on behalf of the Governing Committee I would like to invite a moment to pause and reflect on what a fantastic year we have had. I was privileged to be able to present the Christian Values Awards at the end of this Summer term and it was a real pleasure to hear the children talk about the things that have made this year so special. The residential trips are a memorable highlight and after the last couple of years where these opportunities were sadly limited it was wonderful to hear the children talk so enthusiastically and fondly about their experiences. The colour disco was also an amazing treat which the children all enjoyed enormously, many thanks to all who contributed to making this event such a success. And, of course, how special it was for the children to take part in the school sports day. Congratulations to Forester on their team victory and well done to everyone who took part and did their best. Trips to the beach, farms, local museums and World Book Day have also all contributed to a highly enjoyable and stimulating year for the children. The plays and performances have also returned with parents and carers able to be present and enjoy watching the huge talent we have at Bathwick, including the Nativity, Plastic Pirates and the Witches of Oz. On behalf of the Governors thank you to all the staff and parents / carers for all your hard work, dedication and support to make this such an exciting and fulfilling year for the children.



Bathwick St. Mary is a dynamic place, and it must meet the challenge of constant change. Staff change, Governors change and of course Reception children (sometimes seemingly in the blink of an eye) will become Year 6 and move into Secondary School. However, something that will never change is our commitment to ensure that the children will always be at the centre of everything we do at Bathwick. The five year strategy currently being



developed by the Governors and staff is absolutely clear and uncompromising that all decisions are rooted around that principle. Bathwick, deservedly and in recognition of the values which define our school, continues to be in high demand both within and outside our traditional catchment area. Indeed we are fortunate to welcome children from all over the world. Each child unique and contributing something special to those around them, creating our inclusive and thriving school. The ethos of Bathwick is rightly lauded as a nurturing school which not only supports excellence in achievement, challenging those who exceed standards, but as a safe and stimulating environment where *all* children can be the best they can be.

Our school is also constantly striving to be the best it can be. During the next academic year 2022-2023 we anticipate welcoming Ofsted and having the opportunity to assess our progress on that journey and showcase the best of Bathwick. We are excited to have this opportunity. Last year the school volunteered to take part in a pilot Ofsted inspection, primarily set up by Ofsted as they prepared to implement the amended assessment Framework from 2019 but delayed by Covid. It was a great experience for the school and has helped enormously as we continue to redevelop the curriculum and introduce new systems such as Read, Write, Inc. for teaching phonics. We have been working with our school improvement partners in the BWMAT to embed these practices and working together with the benefit of their guidance, our self-evaluation is that Bathwick is currently bridging the gap between Good and Outstanding. The staff have worked tirelessly to meet the demands of the new Framework for the benefit of our children and the focus is now on embedding and refining these changes, strengthening best practice and ensuring the curriculum is well sequenced. The Governors will continue to monitor, support and challenge the school to maintain this progress and continue the current trajectory as we look forward to another exciting year.



We will continue to prioritise supporting the school's vision to be an inclusive and joyful school that provides a stimulating environment in which we celebrate and nurture every child. Our ambition is to continue to reach for the highest recognition from Ofsted through an inspiring education rooted in core Christian values where we challenge and support our children to reach their full potential and become compassionate, courageous individuals. The school has worked incredibly hard, modelling the passion and determination we want to instil in our children, on sequencing our entire curriculum. We want to maintain the creativity and richness of the curriculum and promote a lifelong love of learning. With the exceptional leadership team we have here at Bathwick, and the dedication and excellence we have right across the teaching and non-teaching staff we can all look forward to another joyful and stimulating year in 2022-2023. The world faces many challenges but Bathwick will do all it can to encourage the children to become caring and confident advocates for others and our world. As Governors we are proud to serve the school and our community to help nurture the future.

A renewed focus for the Governing Committee next academic year will be to increase the visibility of our work and its impact. This means much more opportunity for engagement with the whole school community and maximising the opportunity to be in school and actively engaged in the dynamism of our school. There will be regular updates via the school newsletter and ad hoc additional notices such as this, alongside an increased number of Governor drop-ins. The website section on Governors will also receive an overhaul so there is greater transparency on the identity of Governors and what role they fulfil.

Finally, it is with real sadness that I say goodbye to my Co-Chair Lucy Spedo Mirandola at the end of this academic year. We are very grateful for everything she has done for our school during her tenure as Co-Chair. She has overseen many of the most significant moments in our school's recent history, from the appointment of a new Head Teacher to joining the Multi-Academy Trust and her calm and highly effective leadership will be much missed. However, I am very pleased to say that the Governing Committee is incredibly grateful that she has volunteered to continue to serve the school as the Governor with responsibility for our SEND provision. Thank you Lucy and we look forward to still be working with you next year.



On behalf of all Governors can I wish you all a wonderful summer.

Benjamin Jenkins, Co-Chair of Governors