

Governors Report to Parents and Carers



July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

What another wonderful, exciting and eventful year this has been in the life of Manor Fields Primary School. Yet again many great things have been achieved during the year and the staff have all worked tirelessly to create an amazing and inclusive school meeting the needs of every child.

At the start of this academic year, we knew as a governing body that we would have to find a new Headteacher; a special person to build on the amazing success of Jo McMorris. What a daunting task that has been but what a privilege for a Governing Body to be involved in shaping the school in the years ahead.

Through much of the Autumn Term we spent many hours putting together a recruitment pack that would promote the school nationwide and go alongside the advert for the Headteacher post. The advert went live in January, and we interviewed in March.

We were delighted to appoint Ms Jess Clarke as our new headteacher as we know she has the right qualities and experience to build on the success of the school.

We also needed to plan for the retirement of two other key members of the leadership team, Jane Fielding, Deputy Headteacher, and Cathryn Leeman our SEND lead.



It is going to feel very strange in September with such a major change in staffing but the new appointees are excited to meet you. All of our new staff, whether they be teaching or support staff, are experienced so we are confident that the school will continue to offer the best education to all our pupils.

As a governing body we have continued to fulfil our key roles of :-

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school.
- Consulting with stakeholders (staff, parents/carers, pupils and the wider community) about the vision plans, progress and impact of changes.

This academic year each governor has been linked to a class so that we have been able to get to know the teacher, the children and the curriculum for that year group really well. In addition to our regular Full Governing Body, Finance, and Curriculum & Outcomes meetings, we now have link teacher-governor meetings three times a year. Whenever possible we support our link class by helping on school trips and at other special events.

Finance

The School Budget has been particularly difficult to manage this year due to ever increasing costs. As reported by our Finance governor in the last newsletter, setting a balanced budget continues to be a challenge. Our grateful thanks go to Mrs Sharpe, the school Business Manager, for her dogged persistence and expertise in working on a school budget that continually needs revision with government initiatives, rising staff costs, inflation and u

BUDGET



As governors we are strongly committed to providing the best possible opportunities for every child at Manor Fields. We are therefore so grateful to the hard-working HSA who give up their time to raise funds for extra curricular activities, such as whole school visits to Paultons Park and the Pantomime, as well as providing funds for additional resources.



Safeguarding & Attendance

Governor Mrs Oliver reports that Safeguarding and Attendance matters continue to have the highest priority in contributing to the best possible learning environment for the school and the full governing body receives a report on these matters at each of its meetings.

The Lead Governor, Mrs Oliver (LG), has worked closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms McMorris (DSL), throughout the year to ensure that effective and robust systems and training can support and enhance good practice

The LG and DSL have met at least once a term to monitor and review implementation of school policies in the light of legislation and any national guidance. Such meetings have, on occasion, involved other staff members who can make additional contributions to knowledge or expertise and therefore assist the governing body in its overall responsibility for safeguarding.

Many opportunities are taken by governors to spend time in school at events or helping with activities and this gives extra insights into how children experience their sense of safety and care in the school setting.

The LG has also attended termly meetings with the headteacher and Education Welfare Officer and sometimes other staff to undertake formal monitoring of attendance levels and identify ways of assisting with improvements where needed.



SEND Report from governor Paul Daniel

What a year it has been - full of amazing successes, real challenges and yes, much change. As always through it all, our school has absorbed and approached things positively and with pupils at the heart of all decisions.

We began the year with a largely full Kingfisher cohort, together with a wide spread of needs across the entire pupil population. All of this, against the backdrop of a very tough, financial landscape (and a potentially changing staff population).

Despite these challenges our provision has once again illustrated the true values of our school - with inclusion and opportunity at the top of the agenda. In particular, our pupils have continued to shine and won praise from many external stakeholders and people within the community with whom they have interacted. Feedback from the Cathedral, the Playhouse, residential providers and other partners has been universally positive about the engaging behaviour and curiosity of our pupils.

Another key success this year was the very positive feedback from an external review of our Resource Base (Kingfisher 1& 2) provision.

In particular, I think we should all be proud of these key points;

- The use of pupil buddies to help develop key skills
- Integration on school trips/visits and on the school council
- The strong use of multi sensory techniques supported by in-house therapies
- Strong relationships with families/carers

Visitors to the school (including many interview candidates) have spoken highly of our pupils' positivity and engagement during visits - yet further proof of the key life skills our pupils are learning whilst in school.

It won't have escaped your notice that we have also had to negotiate succession plans for some very significant and long serving staff. This has posed its own challenges but with the unlimited help and support from key individuals (along with that of the wider school community) we have

successfully managed to meet this challenge. Subsequently, we wish our departing colleagues every success for their next adventures and welcome our team members with open arms.



A Notable Year for Sporting Achievements

Congratulations to Mr Cooke on achieving the School Games Mark – Gold Award.

In order to achieve this prestigious award, the school has to offer a wide range of sporting opportunities. The school must demonstrate equality of opportunity by offering sporting opportunities to all children whatever their ability.

Many children are now able to ride their bikes and scooters safely as the result of the Bikeability and Scootability schemes.

The Manor Fields Quad Kids team and The Boccia team achieved greatness when they made it through to the county finals.

In May the school fielded the biggest mini marathon squad ever. A special mention goes to the Year3/4 girls' team who won the event for their category.



The importance of research

Over the last year Manor Fields has had a privileged opportunity to be part of the EEF Cracking Communication Project. This project was supported by

the Education Endowment Foundation and the Somerset Research School and was designed to support the development of the communication skills of our youngest learners. Skilled teachers in Robins, Kingfisher 1 and Magpies worked together to explore a selection of evidence-based resources and the impact of these actions were presented at a countywide conference.



And Finally

This will be my last report as I am standing down as Chair at the end of this academic year. During my time as Chair, I have got to know so many of you and I know how lucky the school is to have all of you as such a supportive and committed community.

It has been such an honour and a privilege to undertake this role and to be involved in the life of the school. What an incredible experience it has been for me to work alongside the inspiring Jo McMorris and her committed team.

Your children are a credit to you and the school. They are a delight to talk too, and I am always so impressed at how thoughtful, articulate and confident they are.

The hidden work of the Governors cannot be underestimated. I would like to thank my governor colleagues for their support during my time as Chair but more importantly for their own significant contributions to the governance of the school. We should never forget that these roles are voluntary and often take up much of their personal time.

It takes a huge team effort to make a successful school, so we recognise the hard work involved and say thank you to Ms McMorris, the teaching staff, the teaching assistants, the admin staff, the cleaning staff and the governors. Everyone has an important part to play in achieving our vision of **inspiring learning for life**.

We wish all our families a wonderful summer break.

Best wishes
Jan Paterson
Chair of Governors

