

Gresham Primary School

Annual Chair of Governors Report - Academic Year 23/24

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Gresham's annual report on the activities of the Governing Body (GB) during the past academic year.

It was again my privilege to be re-appointed Chair by the GB for a further term and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Steele and all the teaching and support staff for their outstanding contribution in making Gresham an outstanding school for all the children to enjoy and prepare themselves for the future.

As always, a great deal of work has been undertaken by the GB behind the scenes to help and support the Headteacher and staff over the period and I would like to extend my thanks to my fellow governors for their unwavering support and help over the period.

The GB continues to review our skills to ensure that the GB is comprised of people who have the combined skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and the ongoing maintenance and ethos of its strategic direction.

The GB has continued to train throughout the year to improve skills and ensure we are fully equipped to meet best practice governance.

This review will continue to be completed annually and where appropriate, governor training will be provided for the key areas that require additional skills to undertake the governing role effectively.

The commencement of the school year began with us awaiting an overdue Ofsted inspection. The uncertainty of exactly when the next inspection takes place adds an additional physiological strain, which must be managed by the senior leadership team and the GB, to support the welfare of the school team.

The new year also involved all teaching, support staff and governors undertaking revised Keeping Children Safe in Education safeguarding refresher training. At the September GB meeting we reviewed the roles and responsibilities of Governors, to allocate roles and responsibilities for the new academic year.

We also reviewed the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and reviewed the key priorities and targets that had been set by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for the year.

At our October meeting we reviewed the school's latest Ofsted Inspection, which had been completed in late September and highlighted the many strengths of Gresham Primary School. The Governing Body was very happy with the 'Good' outcome. However, we recognise that the school must consistently strive to improve and innovate to ensure the best possible outcomes for its pupils.

In November, we noted that the school census return, which is used to calculate school funding by the Local Authority, showed a shortfall in numbers from our budget of 248 pupils with an actual on roll of just 239. The loss in pupils mainly centered around parents taking children out of the school to transfer them to private education. This seriously impacted our financial funding throughout the academic year and has resulted in having to draw-down on capital reserves, which is not sustainable.

Even without this loss in funding, we are currently anticipating that the school will have exhausted our capital reserves and will go into financial deficit during the 25/26 academic year, funding levels are just not keeping pace with inflation!

I do hope that with the change in government, a more pragmatic approach will be made into what is needed to keep schools adequately funded and able to provide our children with the education they rightly deserve.

On a positive note, following the improvements made to the school as part of the ex-caretaker house being converted to our administration hub with the addition of a further classroom space, we are renting out parts of the school during weekends and holidays, which has provided much needed additional income.

We have also conducted benchmarking of costs with other local schools of similar size, to ensure that we continue to achieve best value for money.

Staff welfare has continued to be a top priority for the GB, Tracy Evans our Welfare Governor has worked extensively with the SLT and teaching/support staff to review welfare needs and expectations.

I would like to express the GB's appreciation of the Parent Association support over the year, funds provided have enabled the purchase of many new tablets for the children to use.

After many months of advertising a vacancy, I was delighted to welcome Supriya Shekhar as our Local Authority Governor during May. Supriya has hit the ground running and taken on the role of Data Protection/GDPR governor.

During May, I was pleased to learn that we had received 255 applications for the new reception places (30) in September, again well over subscribed. I believe this continues to reflect the high esteem in which Gresham is held by the local community.

In recent years, I have noted an increasing prevalence of parents/carers challenging actions and/or disciplinary decisions that have been taken. I would like to take this opportunity to remind our community that the Headteacher is the final arbitrator over matters relating to a child attending Gresham.

Governor visits for each foundation subject continue to be linked with a governor and the teacher leading the subject to aid feedback to both the GB and staff senior leadership team and aims to provide meaningful feedback and aid confidence for the teaching subject lead.

This also helps the GB to monitor pupil feedback and wellbeing.

The overall feedback from these visits has been extremely positive from both staff and children.

Although working behind the scenes, I would like to thank Mrs Broder and her administration team for all their hard work to ensure the school operates smoothly.

Attendance over the whole year averaged just shy of 97% (96.5% last year), when we consider the terrible impact of post COVID, this level of attendance is commendable and I thank all the children, parents and carers for their continued support in achieving this.

I was again extremely pleased to note year 6 outstanding results in their end of Key Stage 2 SATs.

As you can see below, they outperformed the national results considerably. This was an amazing achievement, especially considering the disruption to learning over the past few years.

So, a massive well done to the children for all their hard work and my grateful thanks to all the staff, throughout the entire school, who have helped these children achieve such amazing success. We wish them all every success in the future as they leave us to enter secondary education.

Subject	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard		Average scaled score	
	School	Nationally ¹	School ²	Nationally ³
Reading	90%	74%	109	105
Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling	87%	72%	108	105
Maths	87%	73%	108	104
Writing	74%	72%	N/A	N/A
Science	87%	81%	N/A	N/A

1. percentages for Reading, Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling, Maths, and Writing teacher assessment (TA) are based on provisional headline information on the 2024 national curriculum assessments.

2. Scaled scores guidance: <https://gov.uk/guidance/scaled-scores-at-key-stage-2>.

3. Average scales scores for Reading, Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling and Maths are based on provisional headline information on the 2024 national curriculum assessments.

Kim Durling – Chair of Governors – September 2024.