

2020 -2021



#### Your Governors

Sue Bradley-Jones (Chair)  
Peter Hall (Vice-Chair)  
Mary Blogg  
Julie Collins  
Junior Fowlin  
Emma Frith  
Jules Miller  
Tom Merrifield  
Charlotte Parker  
Mark Perry  
Jude Saunderson  
Fiona Yarrow  
Rebecca SurrIDGE (Staff Member)  
Paul Batchelor (Head Teacher)

## NORTH NIBLEY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS' ANNUAL REVIEW

I have to start this annual round up with an apology for the lack of our usual termly governor newsletters this year– the last one was in the autumn term back in 2020. The stop-start nature of this school year has been disruptive of many routines. But meanwhile the school's weekly newsletter has included updates on governor activities, and if you are really keen you could 'follow' us through the minutes of our Board meetings on the website!

However, the lack of newsletters certainly does not reflect a lack of activity on our part. We have held all our usual regular meetings throughout the year, both at Board and at committee level, as well as extra meetings to discuss strategy, the school budget, admissions, pay and other matters. The smaller groups have occasionally met in person, sometimes outside, but the bigger meetings have been held of course by Zoom, which we have got used to, but we so look forward to meeting in person again next term. We have reviewed the school's many policies when required, and individual governors have delegated oversight of safeguarding, health and safety, SEN provision and attendance. We also benefit from the expertise of individual governors, especially on finance, and this year on the heating scheme and the IT upgrade. We have welcomed one new governor this year (Mark Perry).

One important part of our role that we haven't been able to carry out this year is governor visits to the school, apart from seizing moments to observe a few parts of the school's life such as school meals and sport. But as half of our Board are current parents we are not out of touch with what is happening in school, and hope next term to resume our classroom monitoring visits.

The three statutory requirements of school governors are to hold the Head Teacher to account, to monitor the school budget, and to set the strategic direction for the school.

For the first of these requirements our twice termly Board meetings contain a comprehensive report from the Headteacher on all aspects of school life, from safeguarding to learning, and we have the chance to question him on these and other matters. The Chair has frequent contact with the Head, and if you have seen me and Mr Batchelor walking round the village on Friday lunchtimes this is work! A bit of fresh air helps the thinking.

On the second requirement our finance committee, working with the school's finance administrator, maintains ongoing scrutiny of the school's finances throughout the year, and carries out a thorough exercise in setting the forthcoming year's budget to ensure the school stays on a sound financial footing. We can reassure you that that is the case.

On the matter of setting the strategic direction the governors, after consulting all our stakeholders, have put together some strategic priorities for the next few years. Having a longer term strategy is about driving school improvement and deciding where we can best do that. We will be issuing our finalised strategy document at the beginning of next term.

Below are reports from the Chairs of the two main committees on their year:

## The Finance and Resource Committee

The F&R committee has responsibility for financial management, personnel, premises and health and safety. Whilst this would normally mean that Governors were seen frequently in the school, the restrictions have meant that a lot of the work has been carried out remotely; reviewing and updating numerous policies, preparing and monitoring school budgets, providing advice and guidance on staff pay, conditions and appraisal. Last year, Governors approved an IT strategy which will ensure the school has up to date and sufficient hardware and software on an ongoing basis; FONNS kindly donated sufficient funds to provide 16 new laptops during the year and the next year will see upgraded hardware for teaching staff.

The three-year financial plan was approved by Governors and submitted to the Local Authority in May. Consideration was also given to looking at alternative providers for catering; as parents will be aware, the school cannot currently cover all its costs through the current system and subsidises in the region of £800 annually; this is predominantly for the “kitchen charge” which also provides a member of staff over lunch. The request made last year to parents to contribute towards these costs was not universally supported, but our thanks go to those who did. As a result, the governors have listened and decided not to renew their request. Paying the 'kitchen charge' will continue to use funds intended for all children, regardless of whether dinners are taken. We would encourage any parents who feel they would like to continue contributing to make this donation to FONNS.

One success was the award of the Salix grant which enabled the school to replace all the lights with more carbon-efficient bulbs. This has made a significant difference to the illumination, mood and atmosphere in the classrooms, corridors, offices, cupboards, toilets and hall, as well as being better for the environment (and the school's budget!)

Most significantly, during Autumn 2020, the Finance and Resources Committee prepared and submitted an application for a School Condition Allocations (SCA) grant from the Diocese. The SCA grant is funding for eligible bodies responsible for maintaining school buildings and grounds. The application included a 5-year premises development plan, a prioritised maintenance survey and a health and safety checklist.

The Governors are delighted to confirm that this application was successful and it has resulted in the School being awarded in excess of £150,000 to overhaul the existing central heating system.

The grant covers all work to include two new boilers, replacement heat emitters, a replacement hot water tank, associated pipework, making good, refurbishment and development asbestos survey and the Diocese' professional fees. The Governors are responsible for contributing 10% of this cost in addition to £5k from the Devolved Formula Capital (an annual allocation of devolved capital from the Department of Education based on pupil numbers).

Numerous meetings have taken place with consultants and contractors, acting on behalf of the Diocese, to ensure the work meets the School's requirements. Preparation is currently underway to prepare the school for this work. The overhaul of the heating system is scheduled to take place during the summer holiday and it will be overseen by the consultants acting on behalf of the Diocese together with the Governors.

In the meantime, the Governors are looking to work with the Diocese to overhaul the windows and doors around the School, which will go further to mitigating heat loss from the building.

All in all, a really successful year and we look forward to being able to return to the school in September.

Jude Saunderson, Chair, Finance and Resources Committee



## The Teaching, Learning and Community Committee (TLCC):

Throughout yet another turbulent year, TLC have continued to monitor and support the school, including six TLCC committee meetings held via Zoom.

September 2020 welcomed the whole school back, alongside a revised School Improvement Plan (the SIP), which includes the school's 'catch-up' priorities. TLCC have monitored the implementation of the SIP at each meeting, including the use of the Government's catch-up funding, Physical Health & Mental Wellbeing, and the 2021 revised Safeguarding Action Plan.

January saw another lockdown, unfortunately with just 24-hour's notice. At North Nibley online teaching resumed, with keyworker children attending school in-person. Nationally, teachers recorded high stress and anxiety.

TLC have reviewed a number of curriculum-related policies including, for example, the Remote Teaching policy, the SEND policy, Children Missing Education policy, the E-Safety policy.

Adhering to Covid-restrictions, Governor visits have been limited to outdoor PE and a review of Class Dojo. Since the lifting of some restrictions and two Governors recently having other roles within the school (music teaching and lunchtime support), Governor visits have also included School Assembly and Lunchtime. The SEND Governor and SEND teacher have recently met in person, albeit with no pupils present.

When school has been open for all, North Nibley School has recorded some impressive attendance figures with 98.5% attendance recorded at the end of November and exceeding 98% by the start of May.

Overall, TLCC have continued to scrutinise the school's endeavours to support high standards of teaching and learning for all children equally, through this turbulent and challenging school year.

Charlie Parker  
Chair, Teaching, Learning and Community Committee

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*Finally, our thanks and appreciation go to the Head Teacher and the staff for their unstinting and successful efforts to give the children the best school experience possible in yet another very difficult year. We admire their resourcefulness and determination on the children's behalf. They must certainly be looking forward to their well-earned holiday.*

*Well done to parents and carers too for your support in what have been equally difficult times for many of you.*

*And my thanks to governor colleagues for their work and commitment to the school.*

***Happy summer holidays everybody!***

Sue Bradley-Jones, Chair of Governors  
July 17, 2021.