

## THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD 2021-2022

Dear Parents and carers,

Yet another very busy and successful year for Purley Oaks. The school continues to go from strength to strength under Mr Griffin's strong and able leadership. Success has continued this year despite high adult and pupil absence in the Winter and Spring terms because of COVID. The whole school community pulled together during this difficult time - staff, parents and pupils.

The Governors are very proud to fully support the school vision for excellence for all our children through:

- strategic overview
- support and challenge for the headteacher and senior leaders
- financial overview to ensure the school finances are well spent.

We do this in our seven full Governing Board meetings and through our committee meetings - finance (twice termly), premises (termly) and teaching and learning (four times a year). As Chair of Governors, I regularly meet with Mr Griffin to catch up on school events. Other Governors visit the school to keep themselves updated.

### Teaching and Learning Committee

We spent a morning in school looking at the new Design Technology curriculum in action. The Governors observed the children carrying out their DT projects with great enthusiasm. The children were proud to show their DT booklets and were able to articulate what they were learning.

We met with senior leaders to hear about successes and the next priorities. Progress on priorities is always updated at committee meetings. Meetings with subject leaders included reports about English, maths, special needs, Early Years and the wider curriculum.

The school completes the monitoring of attainment and progress for each year group every term. This data was provided by the headteacher in a very detailed termly report. All groups are identified and scrutinised e.g. special needs, gender, high, middle and low attainers. Trends are noted and action put into place by the school if needed. For example, last year the school focussed on phonics. Next year the focus will be on writing.

Overview of school priorities are in the school improvement plan. This year our focus has been on phonics and developing the wider curriculum.

Overall pupil attendance is monitored.

Year six writing was moderated by the Local Authority, who were VERY complimentary about the standard of the work and the accuracy of judgements by the teachers.

### **Premises Committee**

Major investment in the outdoor areas has been completed and continues. Year 1 have an amazing new outdoor learning area with a canopy and artificial grass. The junior playground has also had a makeover – will be greatly enjoyed by the children when they return in September. And the arena will be redeveloped in September.

Governors participate in regular health and safety walks around the school with the premises manager. We received regular updates on work carried out in the school. This year's improvements were more window and lintel replacements in the summer holidays carried out by the Local Authority.

We receive regular reports from School Business Leader including fire, safety and external premises inspections.

A three-year action plan was reviewed and updated to determine priorities - budget allowing.

### **Personnel matters discussed at Governing Board meetings**

A focus has continued to be on staff well-being.

The staff structure has been reviewed and agreed taking into account school finances. A new Deputy Headteacher, Miss Ellery, was recruited and she has had a great impact on the school. A termly personnel report has been received including staff training, staff absence and Headteacher performance management (carried out with the school Local Authority Advisor).

### **Finance**

Finances are very well managed enabling the school to invest in our children's learning.

The annual school budget was agreed. Half-termly monitoring of budget carried out. Half-termly reports were received from the school business manager including any over spending and under spending. Quarterly monitoring returns sent to the Local Authority.

Earlier this year Mr Griffin and Mrs Si Ahmed were able to secure our gas and electric at a fixed price valid for two years which given the current concerns regarding energy prices has proved to be a good decision.

This year the school decided to do the catering for school lunches internally and in so doing cut costs by removing the "middle man". This has been hugely successful and there has been a huge increase in pupils having school lunches.

Benchmarking exercises were carried out to compare Purley Oaks spending with other schools.

A new business leader, Mrs Murphy, was appointed and she starts employment in September.

All Governors undergo regular training according to their areas of responsibility e.g. new Governors have a two-day induction. All Governors took part in self-evaluation training and mental health and well-being for staff and children.

### **Full Governing Board**

All statutory policies were regularly updated including Early Help and Safeguarding.

A parent questionnaire was sent out by the school at the end of last term. The comments were largely very favourable. The two issues to address are: the use of Weduc and parents wishing to see children's work now that COVID restrictions are no longer in place. Mr Griffin has already planned how these two areas will be improved and will communicate with you how these issues will be addressed.

I hope this gives you a flavour of the work of the Governing Board.

If you have any suggestions for Governors please do not hesitate to contact me in writing via the school office or alternatively speak to our parent Governors: Stephanie Clarke and Ken Bazley.

This has been another successful year, albeit with its challenges. Under Mr Griffin's expert leadership and guidance, very ably supported by Miss Ellery, the staff have all worked incredibly hard to give the children the best possible education. The children themselves have worked extremely hard and with great enthusiasm. The Governing Board wishes to sincerely thank the whole team.

Finally, we also wish to thank Mrs Si Ahmed, business leader, for her hard work and commitment to Purley Oaks. We wish her happiness and success in her new role.

Also, thank you to Mrs Griffith for her 13 years as a teacher at Purley Oaks and for inspiring children in art. We wish her a long and happy retirement.

Thank you all for your continued support of the school.



Jan Kennard  
**Chair of Governors**  
August 2022