



**“Be courageous.
Be strong.
Do everything in love.”**
1 Corinthians 16 v13-14

The Governing Board of Grazeley Parochial (C of E) Primary School

Review of our work in 2023-24

Thank you for visiting the Governor section of the school website. In this document we have outlined our key achievements and actions for 2023–24.

We are very pleased with the progress made by all pupils over the past year with many of the year groups achieving results above those nationally attained. This is within the context of another challenging year as we manage a significant financial deficit and continue to embed the curriculum changes across the school. Again, governors would like to thank Mrs Critchlow and all of the staff team for the professional way they have coped with these challenges and have continued to put the needs of the children at the centre of all their activities. The school has made significant positive changes over the last two years and as we enter what we expect to be an Ofsted inspection year we look forward to showing them what a wonderfully caring school community we have. We would also like to celebrate our successful SIAMS inspection over the last year – we were delighted that the inspector saw what we see every day – a school full of courageous learners who demonstrate clear values of love, hope, peace and courage.

Clare Payne
Chair of Governors (2nd October 2024)

What do we do?

The governing body works alongside the Headteacher and the senior leaders to support and challenge their work. We are responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. We aim to ensure that children are attending a successful school that provides them with a good education and supports their well-being. Governors of community schools have three core strategic functions:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the education performance of the school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Strategic Function of	Challenges and Achievements	Review of our Effectiveness
<p>Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting the vision, values and objectives for the school; • agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets; • meeting statutory duties. 	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruited a Clerk to the Governing Board • completed the policy review process • agreed the Headteacher’s performance targets early in the year, allowing them to be cascaded consistently to other staff • embedded the Wellbeing Policy and Wellbeing Governor role, introducing regular staff consultation opportunities • considered and changed the staffing structure to support deficit management strategies; • as part of the budget-setting process for 2024-25, reviewed and challenged the proposed changes in spending; • supported the school’s ethos of collaboration and investigation of future options through creation and strengthening of links with other schools; • created a working party who have explored academisation options and recommended a preferred partner • shared in the school’s successful SIAMS inspection; and • improved our income generation opportunities and pupil experiences by engaging a new wraparound care provider 	<p>We consider our overall effectiveness in this area to be Good *.</p> <p>Next year we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the wording of the school vision; • prepare a 3-year strategic plan; • contribute towards setting the School Development Plans for 2025-28 and consider how governors will have impact, in line with the above plan; • adopt/develop an induction programme for new governors; • seek to improve how we identify and improve pupil support in mental well-being; • recruit a Staff Governor to the Governing Board; • complete the terms of reference review; • further increase governor skills through training, networking and collaboration with other schools; • continue to assure ourselves that the school’s continued improvement will contribute towards a solidly ‘Good’ judgement at the next OFSTED inspection.

Strategic Function of	Challenges and Achievements	Review of our Effectiveness
<p>Holding the Headteacher to account for the education performance of the school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appointing the Headteacher; • monitoring progress towards targets; • appraising the Headteacher; • engaging with stakeholders; • contributing to school self-evaluation. 	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducted the Headteacher’s appraisal in consultation with an external adviser; • established a link group, led by an experienced educational professional, which meets frequently to monitor results and progress of pupils, with specific focus on vulnerable groups; • created the role of Inclusion Governor; • commissioned external consultants to support the school on curriculum development and assessment; • met regularly with LA school improvement partners to enhance mutual understanding of improvements made and still desirable, and any barriers preventing progress; • together with the wider team of education professionals, robustly challenged, supported and sought evidence on progress made against the Rapid Action Plan; • continued to strengthen the governing board through training and development opportunities. • introduced curriculum link visits by governors 	<p>We consider our overall effectiveness in this area to be Good*.</p> <p>Next year we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create the role of Admissions Governor • continue to closely monitor the progress against the targets on the Rapid Improvement Plan 2023-24; • further improve visibility and communication with parents and the community • continue to attend training and development opportunities • embed curriculum link visits by governors to ensure strong scrutiny of data • expand our Education Performance meetings so that they are formally recorded and progress clearly highlighted

Strategic Function of	Challenges and Achievements	Review of our Effectiveness
<p>Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent, by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting the budget; • monitoring spending against budget; • ensuring value for money is obtained; • ensuring risks to the school are managed. 	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created a KPI dashboard which incorporates all the financial headlines, and which enables governors to identify forthcoming challenges quickly, and clearly details controllable and uncontrollable variances against budget; • established a link group, which includes several experienced finance professionals, and which meets frequently to monitor income and expenditure against budget; • monitored the insurance claim resulting from the lightning strike, considering any asset upgrades proposed by the Headteacher; and • continued to spend resources on EHCP children with high needs, despite the shortfall in funding expected to exceed £100k in 2022-24. • Created a financial risk register • Started work to gain access to unlock historic bank accounts • Reviewed feasibility of establishing a charitable trust for the school to raise money for necessary equipment in light of public spending cuts; 	<p>We consider our overall effectiveness in this area to be Good*.</p> <p>Next year we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor SEND funding to ensure the school receives the correct allocation from the Local Authority • re-introduce a Resources Committee to review financial, staffing, ICT, Health & Safety, and premises activities and ensure good value principles are adhered to across all school activities • gain access to historic bank accounts to unlock and spend funds held within; • consider upgrading the school’s computer server; • explore income generation opportunities including regular donations, grants and gift aid donations • purchase budgeting software to support long-term planning, including deficit recovery • purchase a new MIS system to help reduce workload in the school office

*** KEY**

For each of the categories in the above table, the available judgements are: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. These judgements are in line with the Ofsted framework (2023).