



The Bellbird
Primary School



“This is a
good school.”
Ofsted 2019

ANNUAL GOVERNORS’ REPORT

2021/22

The Governors of The Bellbird Primary School are the group of parents, staff and members of our community that decide on school policies, hold the Headteachers to account for the school’s performance, and ensure that the school’s budget and other resources are best used. The Governors meet as a full group each half term, with some additional subcommittee meetings. Every year we provide a report to parents to tell you about the things that the Governors have been involved in during the year. This is our report covering the 2021/2022 academic year.

A CHALLENGING YEAR!



**Dr Tim Wreghitt,
Chair of Governors**

Although the last year has been another challenging year for The Bellbird School, because of the continuance of the Covid-19 virus, the staff have adapted to the challenges splendidly and continued to provide the excellent learning experiences under the changed circumstances. The Governors have held most of their regular meetings remotely, with additional update meetings with the Headteachers to monitor our specific school environment. Whilst only a few essential meetings have been held at school, Governors have been able to meet remotely with the subject leaders, and in-house visits will resume later this year. At the end of the year, the Governor-led Gardening Club was able to resume. Following the resignation of our excellent Clerk, Mrs Diane Baslington, we had been unable to recruit a new Clerk to the Governors. Governor meeting minutes were taken by the Chair and other Governors. As you will see, our finances are in a good position and the school is almost full to capacity. Feedback from the Local Education

Authority Advisor has been very supportive of the educational provision. All in all, a very good year. Let’s keep it up!!

GOVERNORS

Dr Tim Wreghitt	Chair, Community Governor
Mr Duncan Macfarlane	Vice Chair, Parent Governor
Mrs Katie Kendall Mrs Rebecca Pentney	Headteachers
Mr Nick Silk	Parent Governor
Mrs Kimberly Campbell	Parent Governor
Mrs Elizabeth Taylor	Parent Governor
Mrs Maureen Tsentides	Parent Governor
Mrs Nicola Frost	Parent Governor
Dr Katie Graham	Community Governor
Mr John Rimell	Community Governor
Mr Phil O’Dell	Community Governor
Mrs Florence Roegiers	Community Governor
Mr Henry Weir	Local Authority Governor

Mrs Sally Barron	Staff Governor
Mrs Nerea Ibarra	Community Governor
Vacant	Clerk to Governors

Among our Board of Governors, we have various members who take a lead in key areas, including:

Finance	Phil O’Dell
Safeguarding	Henry Weir & Florence Roegiers
Property and Safety	Nick Silk
Parent Consultation	Duncan Macfarlane
Assessment	Henry Weir
Environment	Tim Wreghitt
FABS	Katie Graham
After School Provision	John Rimell
Art, DT & Music	Liz Taylor

There were, at the beginning of the year, two vacancies for Community Governors on the Governing Body, with one of these positions being filled by Mrs Nerea Ibarra in January 2022.

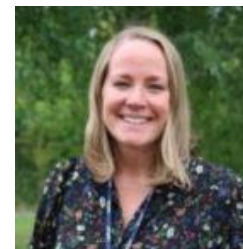
The second vacancy was filled in July 2022 by Mr Andy Irons. Unfortunately, two of our Parent Governors, Nick Silk and Elizabeth Taylor, resigned in July 2022 after many years of dedicated service and commitment. There will be elections for four Parent Governors in the Autumn term, so look out for the notifications of the election.

HEADTEACHERS' REPORT

Mrs Katie Kendall & Mrs Rebecca Pentney, Headteachers



The 21/22 academic year was another positive one for The Bellbird Primary school. While covid-19 still presented many challenges, more and more we were able to refer to a more 'normal' school year overall. We look forward to this continuing over the next academic year. As we look ahead, we are in many ways driven by what has gone before and recognise the ever increasing need to support children who have been in many complex ways, affected by the sudden and abrupt



changes the pandemic presented them with. As a school we were fortunate to have a well-managed budget to be able to support our children in managing these challenges. We worked with the Governing body to develop this area of need with a wellbeing working party established to drive the work.

Two ways to support our children were identified and developed;

Firstly, a dedicated member of staff to support children with their emotional needs. The aim of this new school role was to support children who our robust PSHE curriculum was not enough for and, in some more complex cases, bridge the gap between school and external support, which invariably involves long wait times. Work such as social skills groups, anger-, anxiety- and resilience-related support have all been offered so far and the work is tailored to need. The development of the role also involved the launch of relaxation station, a calm lunchtime space that children can go to if they need a break from outside or find the playground a little overwhelming on a daily basis. Children can request or staff can signpost for use of this element of support.

Secondly, to support the above work we wanted to develop a space in which these sessions could happen so it felt safe and secure and mirrored the therapeutic nature of the work. Although we have a large school building, a permanent space for this work was desired to ensure it felt like valued time, timetabling of spaces in any school is always a challenge and we wanted somewhere that the children knew was consistent. It needed to feel separate to class learning time but within our school provision. We worked with Cambridge Garden Studios to develop what we are now calling 'The Nest'. You will have seen the studio building if you have ventured to the KS2 side of the school as it was being built and now as it becomes an invaluable part of our school building that the children will be using.

We are extremely proud of this development in the school's provision, already it has had a hugely positive impact. Examples include children feeling more able to access their learning, feeling happier and more included at lunchtime and perhaps most importantly parents feeling empowered and supported to further help their children at home. This is perhaps the most positive outcome of the above work as it helps the learning become a part of the child's life long term. It echoes the strong value we place on the collaboration between home and school to help the children 'soar to success'.

FRIENDS & FUNDS

Dr Katie Graham

After a challenging year, FABS have been able to reinstate some favourite fundraising events, bringing both a wonderful sense of community to the Bellbird and funds to support the children of our school. Santa and his elves once again visited lots of children at their homes, spreading Christmas magic. The ever popular FABS Quiz returned, Fun Friday saw the children enjoying the bouncy castles on a sunny afternoon, and the Summer Fair was a great success – it was fabulous to see so many staff among happy families enjoying all

that was on offer. They have raised over £6,000 this year, despite the constrained circumstances.

Despite reduced funds as a result of the pandemic, FABS were still able to support the school in paying for cycle helmets for all new children, selection boxes and Easter eggs, a fantastic send off for the year 6 leavers, and a coach to send our school choir to sing at the O2 as part of the Young Voices concert. We owe them a sincere vote of thanks.

MONEY MATTERS

Mr Phil O'Dell

The school's total expenditure budget from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 is approximately £2.1m. Most of the funding for this comes from the government and county council using a formula, though we also receive money from letting our premises out of hours and benefit from the fundraising of our local community via our active FABS group to whom we are very grateful.

This year was a pivotal one regarding setting our budget. We are getting close to our maximum capacity of 420 pupils and will not benefit from too many more boosts to our per pupil funding based on the numbers on the roll. We will however benefit from

any government dictated rises in the sum we receive for each pupil (£4,265 each for the current financial year).



When we consider this sum per pupil, we need to remember that it isn't purely for books, equipment and other direct items for each child. It goes

towards the cost of our staff (teachers, teaching assistants, leadership, administrative and building staff) and all the costs of the buildings, such as energy and maintenance.

Like all schools, we took particular note of the imminent likely increases in energy costs and built in appropriate provision based on guidance from the county council. Similarly, we took the county council's approach to provision for staff pay awards.

“...we managed to make some important increases in certain budgets ...”

In amongst our prudence, we managed to make some important increases in certain budgets. These included 60% of a new teaching post on a two-year contract from September 2022 to assist with 'catch-up' work, a new permanent post of school gardener for 10 hours per week, and one year increases of £10k to our building maintenance budget as the school gets older, £20k for ICT and minor building works and £15k to our curriculum budgets.

Earlier this year governors considered a very long report which included 38 charts comparing our expenditure and income over detailed headings against similar schools both in Cambridgeshire and nationally. In virtually all cases we were in the middle to lower quartiles on costs while having the same Ofsted rating as the other schools. We are looking further at the few areas where this was not so and are seeking to work with other schools to improve our financial performance.

“...we consistently meet the requirements of the county council, the government and Ofsted...”

We consistently meet the requirements of the county council, the government and Ofsted in the way we set our budgets and administer our finances. We thank our staff for their work in these areas.

SAFEGUARDING

Mr Henry Weir & Mrs Florence Roegiers

Safeguarding remains at the heart of the school and both governors and all staff are committed to promoting the welfare of children. All employed and peripatetic staff, and volunteers at the school have a DBS check which forms parts of the school's Single Central Record. All staff and volunteers have induction training to include Safeguarding and Prevent training, this is followed by pertinent updates and training.

Please view our Safeguarding page including policies and general advice on the Website under the Parent tab. The staff have access to an online platform to protect pupils in our school community.

A link governor undertakes regular monitoring visits to ensure Safeguarding stands at the core of our care of pupils, which includes reviews of the Single Central Record and compliance with requirements. Over the course of the year, we have been supported by the Local Authority with particular respect to any changes in regulations and guidance, to ensure that all pupils and staff remained safe.

Find out more at
<http://www.thebellbird.cambs.sch.uk/safeguarding/>



Mr John Rimell

In the prior year, the Governing body reviewed and formally supported the establishment of the Premier Education Wrap Around Care service. Now it is in place, we wanted to follow up on this and see how things were going. Was it really an improvement for the children? Did the children like the service? Did the parents? Had we made a horrible mistake? To check on this, John Rimell, the link governor for this area, grabbed his clipboard and spent an afternoon with the service. He met with the management and all the staff, seeing the planning in action, how the days were structured and the range of activities in the works. Then as the time came, observing the Wraparound Care staff as they welcomed the children and managed the different age groups. Finally supporting the pickup process. He also met with Bellbird staff for their views and talked to former FLASH staff who had transitioned over to Premier for their views. The outcome from all of this was very consistent and to quote from John's report: *“Overall the service looked excellent. The children were clearly having fun and enjoyed the activities and food. There was clearly a good degree of organisation being put into the service, with structured planning. I spoke to members of the school staff. They felt the service was very good and clearly better than the old FLASH service. They made a point to say that what I was seeing that day was entirely normal and standard for every day and not anything special just because I was there. They were delighted with the service.”*

Additional to this a survey of parents had a similar positive view. Of the 39 responses, 38 rated the service overall as good or excellent, 1 rated it as average.

In summary the governors are pleased at how the service has started its first year at the Bellbird and would like to thank Premier, and the parents who gave feedback.

SHARING

To facilitate oversight of the various curricula areas, Governors pair with the Teacher Curricula Leads. Due to the restrictions of Covid-19, these meetings have not been so frequent

this year, but will resume fully in the Autumn term. We are always particularly keen to discuss resource matters with the teachers and how any additional funds we might manage to afford can be put to best use to help the children.

THANK YOU

The Governors would like to thank all the school staff who have worked tirelessly over the last year to make

The Bellbird School an excellent successful environment for learning. Their achievements are plain for all to see and they and our pupils are a credit to the school. Thank you also to our wonderful parents and carers for your help and support.



'The Nest' – Outside and inside



HOW TO CONTACT US

Governors are contactable via the School Office and website. Any matters regarding day to day issues, including complaints, should be discussed with either your child's Class Teacher or the Headteachers.