



The Bellbird
Primary School



“This is a
good school.”
Ofsted 2019

ANNUAL GOVERNORS' REPORT

2022/23

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/carers to tell you about the things that Governors have been involved in during the year. This is our report covering the 2022/2023 academic year.



Tim Wreghitt, Chair of Governors

This has been another successful year for The Bellbird School, although we are still dealing with the consequences of the Covid pandemic. The Governors have held their regular meetings face-to-face. Following the resignation of Co-Headteacher Katie Kendall at Easter, we recruited and welcomed our new Co-Headteacher, Emma Clayton to the school in April. Several of the after-school clubs have now resumed post-Covid and the Governor-led Gardening Club was able to resume. Having failed to recruit a new Clerk to the Governors, we employed a Clerk from Judicium Education in September 2022 and although she works remotely, this arrangement has worked well and has strengthened our governance procedures. As you will see, our finances are in a good position and the school is full to capacity. Feedback from the Local Education Authority Advisor has been very supportive of the educational provision.

I would like to pay tribute to the hardworking staff and Governors for their hard work and dedication. In particular, I would like to thank Diane Baslington, our School Administrator

and Finance Officer and previous Clerk to the Governors, who retired in July 2023, for her incredible contribution to the school over many years.

Four Governors resigned this year. Katie Kendall (Co-Headteacher), Sally Barron (Staff Governor), Florence Roegiers (Community Governor) and Kimberley Campbell (Parent Governor). Katie Kendall was replaced by Emma Clayton in April 2023 and Sally Barron was replaced by Maja Rix in July 2023. Two new Parent Governors (Emma Mba and Steven Clarke) were elected in December 2022, but we currently have a vacancy for a Parent Governor.

All in all, a very good year. Let's keep it up!!

GOVERNORS

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Dr Tim Wreghitt | Chair, Local Authority Governor |
| Mr Duncan Macfarlane | Vice Chair, Parent Governor |
| Mrs Rebecca Pentney Mrs Katie Kendall (replaced by Mrs Emma Clayton in April 2023) | Headteachers |
| Mrs Emma Mba | Parent Governor |
| Mr Steven Clarke | Parent Governor |
| Mrs Maureen Tsentes | Parent Governor |

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|--|-----------------------|
| Mrs Nicola Frost | Parent Governor |
| Mr Andy Irons | Parent Governor |
| Vacancy | Parent Governor |
| Dr Katie Graham | Community Governor |
| Mrs Nerea Ibarra | Community Governor |
| Mr John Rimell | Community Governor |
| Mr Phil O'Dell | Community Governor |
| Mrs Florence Roegiers (now a vacancy) | Community Governor |
| Mr Henry Weir | Community Governor |
| Mrs Sally Barron (replaced by Mrs Maja Rix in July 2023) | Staff Governor |
| Mrs Jane Boyce (Judicium Education) | Clerk to Governors |

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

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Finance | Phil O'Dell |
| Safeguarding | Henry Weir & Florence Roegiers |
| Property and Safety | Andy Irons |
| Parent Consultation | Duncan Macfarlane |
| Assessment | Henry Weir |
| Environment | Tim Wreghitt |
| FABS | Tim Wreghitt |
| After School Provision | Steven Clarke |

HEADTEACHERS' REPORT

Mrs Rebecca Pentney and Mrs Emma Clayton



It is no understatement to say that the 2022 – 2023 school year has been a big one for The Bellbird primary school. Perhaps most importantly, an ongoing issue with the roof was finally resolved and leaks and subsequent classroom movement no longer affect the children and staff. We are extremely grateful to the local authority and the building team for their support in ensuring this work was completed a few weeks ahead of schedule, meaning we were able to begin the Summer term with all classrooms fit for use again. We now have a leak free building for the children to safely learn in. In the current climate the value of this is not to be underestimated.



Moving on to the learning, it has been an exciting year. Each year as we move further away from lockdown we have worked as a staff to plug gaps and ensure the children can make the best possible progress. Our primary vehicle for this has been strong transition information shared between teachers and curriculum coverage review. We have continued to use our pupil premium and catch up funding to allocate quality additional support for our learners in need. This may be through a teaching assistant providing in lesson support or from targeted booster groups in cohorts with most need. We continue to work hard to ensure our funding is used as effectively as possible. We are grateful that as a school we can still fund general teaching assistants for morning sessions across the school, as this is not a given in all schools and we work hard with the budget to protect this. Speaking of finances, we remain mindful of the cost of living issues that families face and used this to review our trips offer. We asked year groups to deliver one external 'coach' trip, with a visit in school and a local area trip as additional extras to keep costs down. We felt this supported us in broadening the curriculum and the children's experiences but also meant the financial implication wasn't too great. We know from the feedback how much the children enjoy their trips and the value of these experiences goes beyond the curriculum.

Attendance also began to become a focal point again with the emphasis on the importance of punctuality as well as being present. We are pleased that our attendance and persistent absence figures are stronger than national however, there is still much work to be done. This focus will continue into the new school year, we are determined to ensure that all children are in school, on time, unless they are unwell and unfit to learn. Every day counts and the evidence linking good attainment and attendance is clear as we shared in our cover letter with the spring term reports.

Finally, it was a year for goodbyes and welcomes. We were sad to see a number of very special staff leave us, many for career progression that currently wasn't available at The Bellbird or for retirement which was very well deserved! A special mention however must go to Mrs Kendall, co-headteacher and Mrs Baslington, office and finance manager. For a school, any departure is a recruitment challenge however for these two roles especially so as they are pivotal to so many school functions. We are delighted that due to careful planning we were able to recruit successfully for these roles in a timely manner. Over the summer we have welcomed Mrs Annette English-Matern as our new office manager. Planning meant that we were able to ensure a transition time for this role meaning the transition has been smooth. Finally, as you all know, Mrs Emma Clayton joined us as co-headteacher in the summer term, a great time to arrive for autumn preparation. We have been able to adapt and develop a number of school systems together ready for 2023-2024 using parent, pupil and staff feedback along with our data to renew our focus moving forward. We will continue to work together with the full team and the Governors support to ensure we can continue to help all of our children to 'soar to success'!

FABS

Dr Tim Wreghitt

FABS returned to a full year of events this year for the first time since COVID and raised a little over £8,500 for the school. Some



particular highlights were the return of the full Christmas Fair; Santa's visits; the discos; the quiz; bingo; Friday Fun and a soggy Summer Fair.

FABS donated money to the school for things such as: cycle helmets;

swimming lessons; library books; Christmas and Easter gifts; leavers' gifts and event and replacement of the school BBQs for events. FABS look forward to donating lots more this coming year.

They are always looking for more committee members and, if you don't have time for the committee, they always need volunteers to help out at events.

We owe them a sincere vote of thanks.

MONEY MATTERS

Mr Phil O'Dell

The school's total expenditure budget from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 is approximately £2.3m. 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. When we consider our spending pressures, we need to remember that they aren't purely for books, equipment and other direct items for each child. Spending also goes on our staff (teachers, teaching assistants, leadership, administrative and building

staff) and all the costs of the buildings, such as energy and maintenance.

This year we were able to set a very robust budget, which continues the provision of all the facilities and support that we offer our children and also set aside capital monies to purchase new laptops for both children and staff. In addition, we held back a further sum for in-year improvements while our Co-Heads considered the best way to address the need for further support on pastoral work such as attendance and behaviour. At its July meeting the full governing body debated and approved a new two-year pastoral teaching assistant role to deal with these types of issues.

On our funding side, we received an overall increase of £137,000 or 7.5%, which sounds very good but is at a time when inflation has been at even higher levels and industrial action by teachers seeking redress on their relative falling pay levels has resulted in a national pay settlement of 6.5%.

Overall, we are in a sound financial position, with a balanced budget (income vs expenditure), backed up by strong but not excessive reserves to cover future needs and contingencies. We hope that future increases in government funding will allow us to maintain this strength so that we may continue to provide the best we can for our pupils.

“...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 and our governors continue to compare our spending with similar schools and to seek ways to make us more efficient. We thank our staff for their financial work and in particular thank Diane Baslington, who has recently retired after many years as our Finance Officer for all her excellent work.

SAFEGUARDING

Mr Henry Weir, Mrs Emma Mba & Mrs Florence Roegiers

Safeguarding is a vital part of the Governors' role within the school. The role is to make sure that all statutory checks and balances are carried out. This keeps safeguarding at the core of the school and ensures the safety and welfare of all the children is the highest priority. All adults who carry out a role and are employed within the school including support staff volunteers and Governors must have a DBS check and are added to the Single Central Record (SCR). As such they must undergo a Safeguarding and Prevent training module which is updated throughout the year. The SCR is reviewed by Governors and is updated when any new requirements are placed upon the school.

The school places great emphasis on this area and information about this can be found on the Safeguarding pages on the school's website. Also included are policies and general advice under the parent tab. Staff have access to an on-line platform used to protect children within the school community and to raise any concerns they may have.

A nominated link Governor undertakes regular monitoring visits to ensure that Safeguarding has the highest possible profile priority it can. These monitoring visits include reviewing the Single Central Record making sure all requirements placed on the school are fully complied with. We are also supported in this by the Local Authority with particular respect to any changes in regulations and guidance, both locally and nationally, to ensure that all pupils and staff remain safe.

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



Mr Steven Clarke

The Wraparound Care provided by Premier Education remains an integral part of the provision offered at The Bellbird. There continues to be a range of Wraparound Care options to suit families requiring the service, as well as additional extra-curricular activities that support and enhance the children's wellbeing. There is a good range of active and sports-based activities, as well as quieter, less active activities such as arts & crafts, board games, and colouring/painting stations. There are also themed events around particular dates, such as Chinese New Year, Easter, Halloween, Christmas, etc. It is clear that there is a well organised and structured plan to the sessions with different daily activities provided.

At the busy drop off times, Premier Education staff welcome each child and there is a well-managed and co-ordinated pick-up procedure. Staff are able to provide brief verbal feedback for each child if requested by parents at pick up.

Premier Education provide weekly feedback and reviews to The Bellbird staff which provide details on attendance levels as well as the focus on the forthcoming week, positives and highlights and any amendments or adjustments required. Additionally, a recent internal quality assurance review carried out by Premier Education reported that it was happy with the quality of provision provided at The Bellbird.

There appears to be a consistent and structured approach to the care provided by the staff which provides a solid base for the children attending and provides confidence in the service provided.

In summary, the Governors, as well as The Bellbird staff are pleased with, and have confidence in the service provided by Premier Education and

would like to thank Premier Education for its support throughout the year.

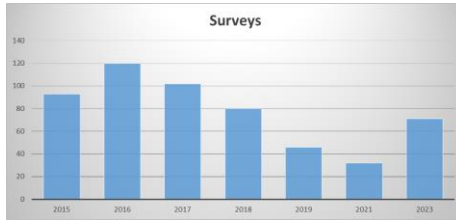
FEEDBACK

Mrs Duncan Macfarlane

This year's parent survey went out at the end of June with some changes. We have moved away from the paper-based survey in favour of an online survey which is better for the environment and hopefully more convenient to fill in.

"...with more engagement we get a more complete picture of parent/carers' views ..."

This year the number of responses we received has more than doubled compared with the previous survey.



This is great news, as with more engagement we get a better picture of parent/carers' views and can use that information to support decision making. I would urge all parents/carers to fill in the survey for each child next time.

This year we updated the survey statements, which are based on Ofsted's parent view statements, to include the recent changes Ofsted made to the list.

SHARING

To facilitate oversight of the various curricula areas, Governors pair with the

Teacher Curricula Leads. 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.



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.