



**Values Education' is about understanding what is important to us individually, within our families and as a whole school community.**

## Annual Report To Parents

2019 - 2020

**Where possible we offer translation or explanation of written communication. Please contact the school office if you require forms/paperwork in any other format.**

## Chair of Governors Report – 2019/2020

The 1986 Education Act requires every Governing Board to present an Annual Report to parents, and I am therefore delighted to provide this report which outlines our work for the academic year 2019/2020

Our Governing board for 2019/2020

Governor	Committee	Specific Responsibility
Mandy Reddick Co-Opted Governor	All Committees	Chair of the FGB English International Schools Appeals Exclusions
Nicola Neale Parent Governor	All committees Chair of PCC SRPC	Vice Chair of FGB H&S Appeals Pay and staff grievance
Lorna Collins Co-Opted Governor	SRPC	Maths
Elaine Couzens Foundation Governor	PCC	EYFS Pay and staff grievance
Claire Johns Parent Governor	PCC	Website compliance Pupil Premium
Lucy Mayhew Parent Governor	PCC	SEND
Nicola Parker Parent Governor	PCC	ICT Science Staff Welfare
Ian Radford Co Opted Governor	SRPC	TBC
Jen Shields LA Governor	Chair of SRPC	Appeals Exclusions Safeguarding
Simon Stranks Foundation Governor	SRPC	RE Appeals Exclusions Pay and staff grievance
Siobhan Wright Staff Governor	PCC	Pupil Premium Champion
Sarah Boyle Head Teacher	All committees	
Sharon Keely Clerk to the FGB		

We began the academic year by welcoming our newly appointed Head Teacher, Mrs Sarah Boyle. The beginning of the year was very positive in many respects. For the first time, we opened with two classes in each year group. The children settled very quickly and data for the first half of the year was encouraging, showing that children

were making good progress and enjoying their learning. However, as the impact and government response to COVID 19 became apparent, our school, and all schools in England had to close on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2020. Throughout the school closure, children of keyworkers and vulnerable children from local schools were offered a place at the HAST Hub, located at Ramsey Manor in Barton-le-Clay. Staff from our school attended and supported this hub. Staff worked extremely hard, and quickly set up a remote learning tool, 'Google Classroom' as a means of ensuring the children had access to continue with their learning. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents who supported their children throughout and appreciate that facilitating home learning (whilst sometimes working from home themselves) was not always an easy task. May I also thank the teaching staff for their dedication and hard work and for the Administration Team who continued to work from home throughout. During lock down, teachers worked from home planning, preparing, scheduling, and marking work. They maintained contact with families and answered parental enquiries.

School reopened to vulnerable children and children of keyworkers on 1<sup>st</sup> June and to Year R and Year 1 on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Stringent arrangements were put in place to ensure that all guidelines were carefully followed, and the children were kept risk free and safe from infection.

#### Our Teachers for 2020/2021

EYFS	Natalie Bill (Acorn)
	Teresa Coles (Chestnut)
Year 1	Siobhan Wright (Hawthorn)
	Lucie Baker (Willow)
Year 2	Summer Ellis (Sycamore)
	Beth Ambler (Maple)
Year 3	Rianna North (Pine)
	Lauren Curtis (Palm)
Year 4	Nicola Parker (Oak)
	Emma Chandler (Elm)
Conifer	Sonia Shires

You may will note that we welcome three new teachers in September. These successful appointments were all made during lockdown via virtual interviews and we wish them every success.

It has been a difficult first year of Headship for Mrs Boyle and there have been some decisions to be made which even an experienced Head Teacher would have found challenging! We have both kept in touch regularly (albeit virtually) and I have been reassured to know that all relevant risk assessments have been considered and arrangements are secure for the return to school of all pupils in September. Mrs Boyle has kept up to date with all Government guidelines via the DfE and has maintained contact with other Head Teachers within the Harlington Schools Trust and the Local Authority.

We continue to work closely with St James The Great Church and are looking forward to welcoming our new priest. I was privileged to be able to attend the remembrance service last year which was a touching and moving experience. As always, the children show respect when in church and during worship in school. As we came towards the end of the Autumn Term, I attended Nativity and Carol Services which the children clearly enjoyed performing.

As well as making decisions regarding the strategic direction of the school, Governors also offer challenge and support. All governors make termly focussed visits to the school and generally report that these are thoroughly enjoyable and that they are constantly impressed with the learning they see. Visits to the school are an important part of monitoring the work of the school and ensuring that high standards are maintained. I look forward to visiting again as soon as possible.

As we begin preparation for the new academic year, I would like to assure you that the Governing Board will continue to support Mrs Boyle, especially knowing that things may be challenging as the school reopens to all five year groups. Governors have had sight of an extremely detailed and comprehensive risk assessment and are confident that all areas have been covered. There are plans to quickly assess where the children are in their learning and where there may be 'gaps' and there are detailed plans for interventions where necessary. A broad and balanced curriculum will be followed, prioritising English, Maths and Science in the first instance, following the guidance from the DfE that all subjects will be resumed by the end of the school year. Attendance at school is mandatory from September. All measures in place fully support our school mission:

*'To be an excellent, God-centred, values based, community focussed school  
where everyone is welcomed, encouraged, and included.*

*Our children will develop as creative, determined learners and responsible citizens  
inspired to achieve their God-given potential and live life in all its fullness.*

*We will foster understanding, tolerance and forgiveness within our caring*

*Christian community' (John 10:10)*

Mandy Reddick  
Chair of Governors

## **Pupils & Curriculum Committee Report 2019/2020**

I am sure parents will appreciate how challenging the academic year 2019/2020 has been for all schools nationwide, not least for Silsoe VC Lower School as we welcomed a new Head Teacher! However, I can report that prior to lockdown, Mrs Boyle presented this committee with a comprehensive data package showing that pupils were making expected progress overall and, indeed, many were exceeding expectations.

Our forecast KS1 SATs results were in line with national expectations, and Y1 phonics screening was progressing well. As always, individual or group interventions were fully established and those in receipt of Pupil Premium were being monitored closely, as were all vulnerable pupils including those in Conifer Class and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

During lockdown, the school responded very quickly, and this committee were pleased to note that staff had anticipated the challenges and were well prepared to deal with them. All pupils went home with a bespoke package of work to cover the final two weeks of the Spring Term. 'Google Classroom' was launched after the Easter break. The majority of pupils (and parents) responded positively. Any family which did not have access to digital technology, or the internet were fully supported by the school.

As September 2020 sees the full reopening of all educational establishments, assessments are planned to ensure that interventions are creatively used to accelerate progress where needed, and that any notable gaps in learning are addressed. Mrs Boyle anticipates that the curriculum should be 'back on track' by the Summer Term 2021.

In order to ensure that our school reopens safely in September 2020, all Governors have seen extremely detailed risk assessments and are confident that safety measures are as robust as they possibly can be. Following a virtual board meeting in June to discuss the priorities for school improvement for 2020/2021, the Pupils & Curriculum Committee will meet termly to review progress against these priorities and then report to the Full Governing Board.

Nicola Neal  
Chair of PCC

## **Strategic Resources and Personnel Committee Report 2019/20**

This year has been exceptional in several ways, firstly, it was the final year of Silsoe Lower School's expansion (and therefore the last year of growth funding); and secondly, our financial planning has (as in so many sectors) been subject to a lot of unknown factors. Mrs Boyle and Mrs Gidley have worked tirelessly to ensure that we are able to put in place a robust financial plan for the school going forward to make sure that we are prepared for whatever may come and I am pleased to say that we are in a strong financial position moving into the new academic year.

As always, expenditure and resources are deployed in support of the School Development Plan which is established prior to the start of the school year. The school year runs from September to July, whereas the school financial year runs from May to April, this means that the school closure from March 2020 will impact the 2020-21 budget, rather than the 2019-20 budget. The Strategic Resources and Personnel Committee (SRPC) review the School Development Plan in the context of ensuring resources are deployed effectively to meet the targets that have been identified, focusing on any areas for development and expanding on current success. The additional factors in play this year have added another layer of complexity in managing this process and so in preparing the 2020-21 budget in April it was agreed to create different budget scenarios. This allowed us to ensure that whatever happened in the wider context of lockdown, the school would be prepared to respond and continue to offer an outstanding environment (whether virtually or in person) to all of the pupils.

The committee continues to monitor and scrutinise the school's resources and how efficiently they are deployed to give the children at Silsoe Lower School the best quality of education. As we have now had three full years on the new site the true cost of running and maintaining the bigger building are becoming clear, this allows us to more effectively plan our resources for future years.

Specific areas of focus are outlined below:

### **Impact of School Closure**

As mentioned above, in order to ensure that the budget for the upcoming year accounts for any potential disruption, governors reviewed different scenarios before ratifying a 'worst case', this has ensured that the school is in a strong financial position going forward and will be well equipped to deal with any further unexpected events.

### **Staffing**

2019-20 was the final year of the school expansion and therefore this is the first year that there hasn't been a requirement to recruit additional staff for new classes. However, we have had some vacancies to fill and have been fortunate to be able to

appoint 3 new full time teachers for September 2020. This means that we have a full teaching staff in place for September. Mrs Boyle and the Senior Leadership Team have carried out an extensive review of how staff are deployed across the school and have been able to ensure that all of our children's needs can be met with the TAs and teachers that are in place for the new term.

### **Pupil Premium and Sports Premium**

Governors continue to monitor the use of additional government funding to ensure that it is deployed in an effective way to support those pupils who need it most. Silsoe is very lucky to have Mrs Wright as Pupil Premium champion who is passionate about ensuring that our Pupil Premium funding is used to its maximum and is supported by Mrs Johns as Pupil Premium governor who provides robust support and challenge as well as observations so that the rest of the governing board are well informed as to its use.

### **Carried Forward Revenue**

This year the excess funding carry-over is around 7%, within the permitted 8%. This figure is always scrutinised by the SRPC to ensure that current pupils benefit from the funding allocated to them. Over the past few years the school has received growth funding as part of the expansion which has allowed a higher than usual carry forward. This is expected to be the last year where the carryover is significant (although still permitted) and has meant that the school is in a stronger position than it otherwise might be given the challenging conditions currently faced.

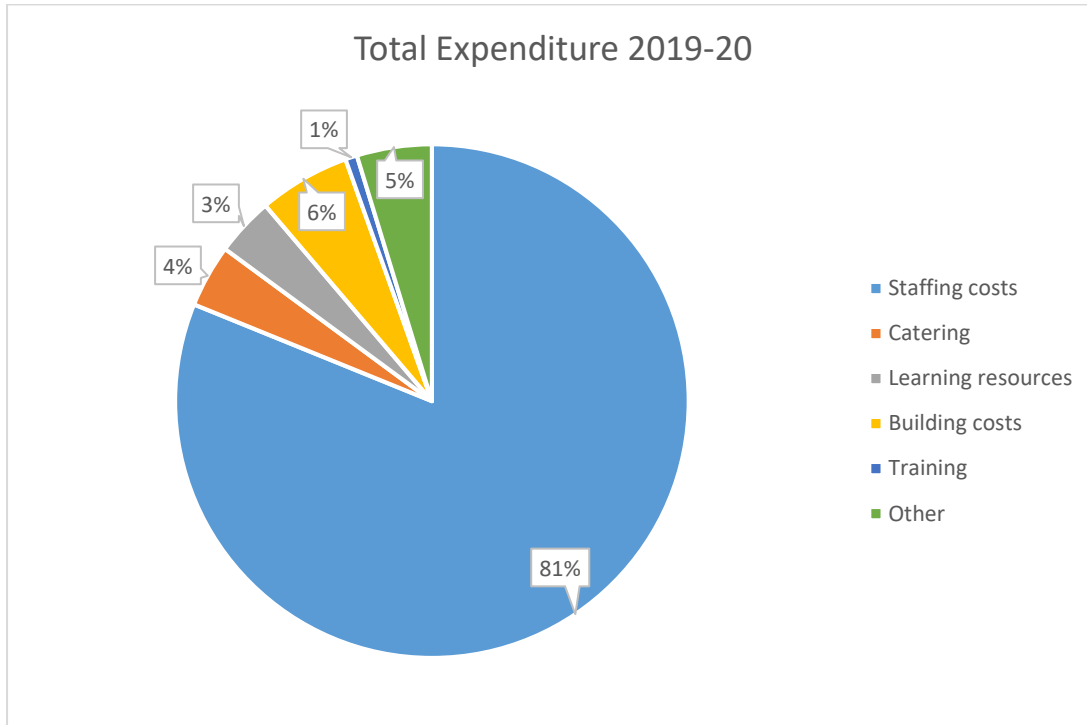
### **Value for Money**

The SRPC review the school's Best Value Statement every year, this sets out the commitment that the school makes to ensuring resources are deployed in the most effective way to achieve value for money. The committee also reviews the Schools Financial Value Standard which is a framework provided by the local authority to audit the financial decision making and processes that the school has in place. These two exercises add an additional layer of scrutiny to the financial management of the school and have both shown that we have robust processes in place.

### **Expenditure**

Below you can see the breakdown of the total expenditure for 2019-20. As will always be the case, staff costs are by far the biggest expense for the school. The fact that site and building costs now account for 6% of the overall spend shows the

additional cost of running the larger building. It should be noted however that a large proportion of this cost is rates which are reimbursed by the local authority.



Should you require more information on school expenditure or the budgeting process please contact Mrs Gidley, Office and Finance Manager.

### Conclusion

This has been an exceptional year in many ways, but thanks to the hard work and diligence of the whole school team, Silsoe Lower School is in an excellent position to continue to address the challenges ahead.

Jen Shields  
Chair of SRPC



