

## **Silsoe Lower School** **Governing Body Annual Report 2016-2017**

### **Governors' Annual Report to Parents For the school year September 2016 – July 2017**

The Governors of Silsoe Lower School are pleased to present an Annual Report to Parents. The Education (No.2) Act 1986 requires the Governors to present an Annual Report to Parents. If parents wish to discuss the report please contact the school office.

### **Introducing the Governors**

The function of the Governors is to support the work of the school. This means we are involved with all aspects of the school.

| <b>Governor</b>           | <b>Committee</b>           | <b>Specific Responsibilities</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Nicola Neal               | All committees             | Chair of Governors               |
| Stephanie McMenemy        | SRPC                       | Vice-Chair of Governors          |
| Matthew Dobson            | SRPC                       |                                  |
| David Semple              | Site & Buildings sub group | Health & Safety                  |
| Jill Liddle               | Pupils & Curriculum        | Child protection                 |
| Jonathan Steer            | Pupils & Curriculum        |                                  |
| Jennifer Shields          | SRPC                       | New build/Pupil Premium          |
| Sonia Shires              | Staff Governor             |                                  |
| Carly Gates               | Staff Governor             |                                  |
| Dave Bell                 | Pupils and Curriculum      |                                  |
| Susan Purdue              | All committees             |                                  |
| Diane Herbert (Associate) |                            | Finance                          |
| Owen Flack (Associate)    |                            | Site & Buildings                 |
| Colin Daniels (Associate) |                            | ICT                              |

### **Chair of governor's report**

As I reflect on 2016-2017 I feel nothing but pride in our school. As ever we finished on a high with fantastic results across the board and that achievement is all the more impressive because the children and staff had to deal with the challenges of our relocation part way through the year. Moving over the Christmas holidays meant that the entire staff had to work so hard to ensure we able to open on time and when we did open the doors the school looked fantastic.

Our Head Teacher, teaching staff, assistants, classroom volunteers, PTA, parents/carers and, of course, our children all worked harder than ever to ensure our high standards were maintained, despite the potentially unsettling change of environment, and so I would like to congratulate and thank them all. A special mention must also go to our office staff and of course

Mr Pearson. They are an exemplary team who work so hard to maintain the smooth running of the school. The move and our ever-increasing number of children meant they all had a massive workload and as ever they handled it like the true professionals they are.

The continually increasing number of children joining us each year has meant that we have had to recruit new members of staff and so we welcomed Miss Evans to the teaching team. She has achieved a fantastic set of results with her Year One class and it has been wonderful to see how the whole Year One team, teachers and assistants, have pulled together as a team supporting one another and guiding the children as they transition from reception into Key Stage One.

I am extremely proud to be able to say it wasn't just Year One that met with great success. As you will see below this year's results have proved that yet again the entire staff and all of our children have risen to any challenges they have faced.

Our Reception team, led by Miss Bill yet again delivered some outstanding EYFS results. Year 1 achieved a fabulous success rate in the phonics screening. Year 2 achieved highly in their SATS and Year 3 continued to make excellent progress. As ever it was with sadness that we said goodbye to a fantastic Year 4 cohort. Not only did they achieve highly academically, but they also developed into fantastic role models, working very hard in their additional roles as Buddies and Play Leaders demonstrating our values every day.

In addition to our academic success we also enjoyed some fantastic sporting achievements. Many of our children had the opportunity to represent our school at sports festivals and as ever, not only did they work hard and compete well but their conduct and sportsmanship was exemplary.

Now as we embark on another academic year and another year of growth we will continue to work together to ensure that the values and ethos of our school are maintained. We saw many visitors to our new school last year and I was congratulated many times on how we have still maintained our friendly, family feel despite our much larger size. The excellent behaviour of our children was also commented on many times.

The highlight of the year was certainly the dedication ceremony conducted by the Bishop of St Albans. The sun even came out as the blessing took place and it was a moment that anyone who attended will never forget.

2016-2017 was a very busy year for the Governors too. Particularly in the run up to the move and during the move itself. Everyone helped out where they could and did their best to ensure that all staff felt that they could rely on us if they needed us. We were delighted to be able to give this support and felt very privileged to be involved. Our Board of Governors is 100% committed to our collective responsibility as 'critical friends' recruited specifically to support and challenge, as well to provide strategic direction. I am proud to say we have an excellent team who work very hard to ensure that Mrs Purdue and the staff have the support they need.

Aside from new school business, the Governors also demonstrated their support throughout the year by meeting staff and witnessing learning during focused visits and learning walks. As ever we have all thoroughly enjoyed these visits and have been consistently impressed with the teaching staff and delivery of lessons.

These visits to school are important because each governor is responsible for various areas on the school development plan. We then report back to the various subcommittees with written reports on progress. This is how we play our part in ensuring our high standards are met.

As well as witnessing many successful lessons across the ages in subjects such as numeracy, literacy, humanities and RE many governors have also been able to attend and report back on enrichment events, such as street dance demonstrations, musical performances, Forest School, and sports festivals. It is always a delight to be invited and see the ‘proof’ that our children are receiving an outstanding and varied education and are given the opportunity to develop a variety of skills and interests.

The Governors have also continued to be active members of the Harlington Area Schools Trust (HAST). This trust consists of teaching and governor representatives from the ten schools that feed into Harlington Upper School. The vision of HAST is to ‘provide an exciting and innovative collaborative approach to teaching, learning and governance, in order to ensure that every child in the HAST family receives an excellent well-rounded education from age 3 to 19’.

Our school joined HAST several years ago to guarantee our voice is heard at major discussions about education in our area. I attend several meetings each term and report back to Governors during our meetings. You can read more about the work the HAST board does here <http://www.hast-education.co.uk/>

As we look forward to 2017-2018, I would like to assure you that Board of Governors will continue to do all that is required and more to ensure Mrs Purdue, the staff and children, receive the support they need and deserve. We could not be more proud of them all and I would like to end by thanking and congratulating Mrs Purdue on another year of inspirational leadership which appears so effortless, yet takes a staggering amount of time.

It is this strong leadership which ensures our school consistently achieves its key aims, ‘To serve the whole community by providing an education of the highest quality’ and ‘to promote Christian values and respect’.

**Nicola Neal**  
**Chair of Governors**

## **School Development Plan**

During 2016-2017 we had these key foci on our School Development Plan.

To plan the expansion of the school and the move to the new site in order to provide an excellent ongoing learning provision and outdoor play at the same time as designing, resourcing and organising the new building and learning environment.

To achieve high standards in writing across the school through the development of handwriting, spelling punctuation and grammar.

To secure the progress achieved between 2015-16 to raise standards in Key Stage 2 so that all pupils in the first two years of Key Stage 2 (Year 3 and Year 4) reach their potential and make sustained progress.

To embed the systematic and consistent teaching of phonics by all practitioners including newly recruited members of staff and to refine the assessment of reading to ensure all pupils become confident readers.

To encourage positive participation in the Forest School initiative

We are pleased to report that at the meeting with our School Improvement Partner in the last week of the summer term we were able to successfully demonstrate achievement of all of these priorities. We are already working on our new School Development Plan and are confident we will achieve our priorities again.

## **Security**

Our security measures are always of paramount importance to us and these have been assessed several times by the local authority again this year. Following this scrutiny we have completed risk assessments, reviewed and revised our lock down procedures and had several practice runs. The security of the new site was a key focus during the planning of the move and as you would expect the new systems we have in place are very advanced and robust.

## **Safeguarding**

At Silsoe Lower School the health, safety and well-being of every child is a paramount concern. We always listen to our pupils and take seriously what they share with us. Our ultimate aim is always to ensure that all children enjoy their time here. We remain highly committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to help each child achieve their full potential and make a positive contribution.

However, on very rare occasions concern about a child may mean that we have to consult external agencies, even before we contact you. We follow strict procedures, which have been laid down by the Local Authority Safeguarding Board. The school has adopted a Child Protection Policy in line with the government guidance 'Safeguarding Children in Education'. The Governing Body also continues to implement a rigorous approach to Child Protection which follows all of the government guidelines. We also have an enhanced vetting and disclosure system in place which is required by the Secretary of State. Staff DBS checks are registered on the Silsoe Single Central Register in line with Local Authority policy.

If you would like to know more about our procedures or the policy, please speak to Mrs Purdue, the Head-teacher.

### **Complaints**

Silsoe Lower School also has a complaints procedure. This can be found on our website, in our prospectus and is also available from the Headteacher.

### **Disabled Pupils**

All pupils are welcome at Silsoe Lower School. For those with physical difficulties, staff will make arrangements as required. All pupils are treated individually and sensitively – support is provided where needed. Ramped access to the school playground and classrooms is available. We also have an adapted disabled toilet which is wheelchair accessible.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.**

There was a significant change to the SEND code of practice which was introduced in September 2014. Following this we published our 'local offer' on our website. This explains to parents what the school can offer to children with additional needs. It also explains what our local authority, Central Bedfordshire, can offer to children and their families. If you have any queries about any of this please feel free to come in to school and ask for a hard copy of these documents.

Our inclusion policy aims to promote the individuality of each child, irrespective of their ethnicity, faith, attainment, disability, gender or background.

### **Pupils & Curriculum Committee Report**

This year we have focused on the school priorities which are listed above.

I am pleased to report the progress made across the key stages. We have continued to achieve both academic and sporting success.

This has been another challenging year for the teaching staff with an increase in cohort size and the increasing mobility seen in some year groups, which has demonstrated the importance of rapid initial assessment as the children often enter the school working at a level below that of their peers.

All the teachers worked together to develop the assessment and tracking system with Mrs. Ambler introducing the national curriculum descriptors, to ensure that the system is consistent across the school at a time when the national guidance has been conflicting, contradictory and confusing. Each teacher has a thorough understanding of each child's achievements, barriers to learning and preferred learning approaches.

Assessments for all year groups have been measured using the national curriculum approach.

The school continues to give children access to a variety of other sports including multi sports club, gymnastics, tri golf, quik cricket and netball plus the football club which is run by parents. As children proceed through the school there is the opportunity to represent the school at various concerts and festivals.

As a school we are proud of the partnership which we continue to build with our parents. We have enjoyed welcoming you in to school to share in our special days, sports events, musical concerts, performances and celebration worship. As a church school we are also delighted so many of you join us in church when we visit to celebrate Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

The termly meetings of the committee ensure that the priorities of the School Development Plan are monitored and reported to the other governors.

The analysis of the end of year results form the basis of the School Development Plan for 2016-2017.

Our end of year outcomes are very good. The children make good progress as they move through our school. This is a result of the expert teaching and excellent support they receive when they find elements of their work challenging. Below is a breakdown of the end of year outcomes.

The results in the tables below include all children in the year group including those from Conifer Class and children with statements or education health care plans.

### **End of Year results**

#### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The results for both Acorn and Chestnut are that 88.6% of the children achieved the government's threshold of a Good Level of Development, which means they achieved at least expected levels in all of the Early Learning Goals in the three prime areas and literacy and mathematics. By comparison the local authority result for 2015 was 64%, the national figure for 2015 was 66% and the school result for 2015 was 77.8%.

#### **Key Stage 1**

##### Year 1

81% of the children achieved the expected level in the Phonics test. The involvement of parents via the "phonics finder" and weekly newsletter, introduced by Mrs. Coles, together with work in the classroom has inspired the children to try more at home and engage their parents in their practice.

| Subject  | % achieving expected level or above | % achieving expectation in Early Years    |
|----------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Speaking | 90.4%                               | 92.6% (2 new children have impacted here) |
| Reading  | 94%                                 | 92.6%                                     |
| Writing  | 97%                                 | 89%                                       |
| Maths    | 94%                                 | 89%                                       |

Year 2

The results in the table below demonstrate the outstanding progress achieved across Key Stage 1. Matched data indicated a 6 or 7 % increase in pupils achieving at the expected level or above in all areas except science.

| Subject | % achieving expected level or above | % achieving expectation in Early Years (marched) |
|---------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Reading | 87%                                 | 81%  |
| Writing | 80%                                 | 73%  |
| Maths   | 80%                                 | 73%  |
| Science | 93%                                 |  |

**Key Stage 2**

Year 3

The children have made excellent progress. However, the results for this cohort are now in line with the national curriculum criteria, whereas the results for the end of Key Stage 1 were based on the previous criteria such as 2B. The local authority has decided that moving from 2B to below ARE (age related expectation) is expected progress.

| Subject | % achieving expected level or above | End of Year 2 – 2B plus |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 81%                                 | 87%                     |
| Writing | 78%                                 | 87%                     |
| Maths   | 78%                                 | 87%                     |
| Science | 94%                                 | 91%                     |

Year 4

This cohort is small with a lot of mobility plus three of the children are from Conifer Class. The new National Curriculum, introduced in September 2014 has meant that the children have been faced with more complex concepts at a younger age in Key Stage 2, especially the increasing demands of spelling, punctuation and grammar have proved challenging. The use of the “grammar hammer” tool has been beneficial and will be further embedded next year.

| Subject | % achieving expected level or above | End of Year 2 – 2B plus |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Reading | 89%                                 | 81%                     |
| Writing | 67%                                 | 81%                     |
| Maths   | 77%                                 | 76%                     |
| Science | 90%                                 | 86%                     |

It is a huge accolade to the expertise, dedication and commitment of Mrs. Shires and her team, Mrs. Purdue and the mainstream teachers that two of the children from Conifer will be leaving to go to mainstream school. The third child is transferring to a provision attached to a middle school.

**Jill Liddle**

**Chair of Pupils and Curriculum**

**Strategic Resources and Personnel Committee (SRPC) Report – 2016- 2017**

*The committee continues to monitor the school's resources and how efficiently they are allocated to give the children at Silsoe Lower School the best quality of education. Resources include staffing, technology and buildings at a particularly interesting time as we look to transition to the new school in early 2017. Another key area for discussion had been around the increased integration of Preschool. This has been carefully monitored and planned for to ensure the best possible outcome for children progressing through the Early Years Foundation Stages, but importantly has also assessed the impact to the resources and funding for the wider school, this will continue to be a key focus of the committee.*

*Resources are deployed in support of the School Development Plan which is established at the start of the year. The committee and governors review this plan in the context of keeping the school moving forward, focussing on any areas which have been highlighted for development or indeed replicating and expanding on the success from the previous year.*

*Staffing – With the increase in pupils at the school and the resultant additional class intake in reception (Chestnut) the staff has increased with additional full-time teaching and teaching assistant staff. In addition, the committee has met with the Head Teacher to discuss the proposed structure for the new school to meet the needs of the larger intake with the two class format moving from reception in to year one. With the changing pupil profile, further investment on staffing structure in relation to supported learning and development for Special Educational Needs (SEND) has also been introduced, to provide yet further support and expertise in this area.*

*Pupil Premium and Sports Premium – One of the key areas of focus for the committee has been in regard to the efficient use of the additional government funding that has been received to support both in class learning and sports related activities. Although there is less evidence in later years, there is a well-documented link between the deployment of Teaching Assistant (TA) staff and improvements in achievement in Early Years and Key Stage 1 and this is proving to be invaluable at Silsoe Lower School in support of progressive learning for all pupils. Another effective use of the Pupil Premium has been the funding of Forest School, which has had a clear positive impact for children, giving a wider opportunity for participation, recognition and fostering of confidence in support of learning. In addition Sport Premium funding has enabled a number of additional sporting activities both at the school and externally which has enabled the children to experience a wide range of physical activities from tennis, cricket through to street dance.*



*Carried forward Revenue - This excess funding carry-over is very unusual (typically a maximum of 8%) due to the large growth funding and capital provided by the local authority for spending on setting up the new school. However, the school leaders have been careful to ensure the current school and its pupils are invested in. The redecorating and updating site related equipment and the development of the Children's Centre to support the Year 4 class is clear evidence of this. In some cases, (such as some items of large fixed play equipment) it has been necessary to delay the refresh of larger fixed play equipment until the move.*

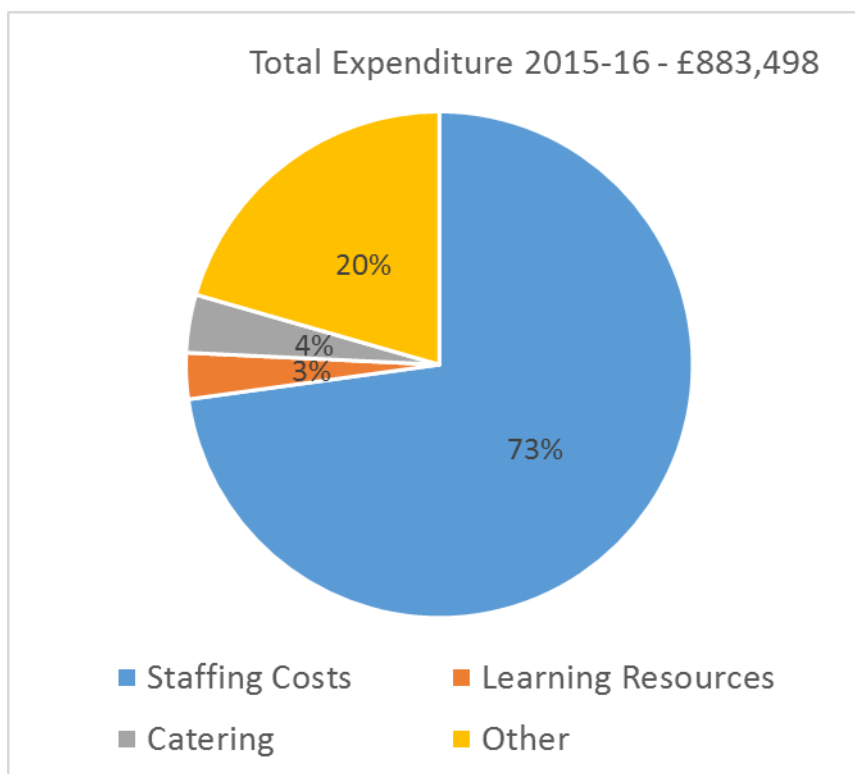
*Investments - The school has been careful that, as much as possible, investments are transferrable to the new location such as new mobile classroom IT (laptop & tablet PCs), outside of this sustainable investments in training to enhance the skills of the teaching and support staff that will benefit the learning of the pupils.*

*PTA – The Parents Teachers Association continues to be a huge support for the school, raising significant funds through various activities which have enabled the purchase of additional items for both in class benefit such as library books, dictionaries and even higher expense items such as laptops. In addition, resources have been purchased to support PE and lunchtime activities but also external sporting activities such as swimming at Flitwick Leisure Centre.*

*Value for Money – Another key area that the committee monitors and discusses with the school finance team is to ensure that for major items of expenditure, best value is achieved. Examples of this have been leveraging local authority buying power and that of the Harlington Area Schools Trust (HAST). Whilst it is inefficient to tender for all purchases the team have been grouping together purchases where possible to get economies in the procurement process. All of these activities relate to both existing school purchases and those in relation to the set-up of the new school.*

*School Expenditure - The School's 2015-2016 expenditure is summarised in the pie chart below.*

*As you will notice the bulk of expenditure is related to staff costs, this will always be the case. Total Expenditure is at £883k up from £803k the previous year, which is due to the increase in number of pupils, the extra class in Reception (Chestnut) and the associated increase in Teaching and Teaching assistant staffing associated.*



*Should you require them, further details of the final accounts for 2015/16 are available on the VLE or from the School Business Manager, Mrs. T Villiers.*

*The focus in this coming year again will be to continue to track the expenditure in relation to the School Development Plan and pay particular attention to the preparations (increase in staffing etc.) for moving to the new school in early 2017. These are exciting times!*

*Matthew Dobson  
Chair – Strategic Resources and Personnel Committee*