

Devonshire Primary School

2024 - 2025 School Year

Annual Report by the Governing Body



Introduction

On behalf of the Devonshire Primary School Governing Body, as Chair, I'm pleased to share our short Governing Body Annual Report for the 2024-2025 school year. We produce this report to help keep the school community aware of the work that Governors do to support the school¹. We have made some further refinements to how we present this information to you all this year, we hope it is useful. It will be published on the school's website.

Every month we also highlight some of the activities governors have been undertaking in the Devonshire Dispatch 'Governor News' - please do keep an eye out for it!

If you have any questions about the work of the Governing Body or feedback on what you would like to see in this annual report going forward, please do reach out to me or any of the governors via office@devonshire.sutton.sch.uk (please mark it for the attention of Chair of Governors or Governing Body).

What does the Governing Body do?

The Governing Body is responsible for working with the school to ensure that it delivers a good quality education. Together with the Headteacher, who is responsible for day-to-day management, the Governors set the school's aims and policies. The key roles of Governors are:

1. To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. To ensure accountability for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
3. To oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure value for money. We provide support and challenge and undertake the role of 'critical friend'.

This school year, Governors have continued to focus on monitoring the delivery of the School's Development Plan priorities, in line with Devonshire's vision and values. We have reviewed and monitored the progress made by staff and pupils via meetings and our visits to the school. We receive regular reports on relevant performance headlines such as pupil progress, pupil attendance, behaviour and financial data. Monitoring of safeguarding arrangements and also inclusion are legal requirements and are carried out each term by the relevant Link Governors. Link governors have also been in school monitoring behaviour and seeing many examples of the school's provision for child personal development including outdoor play and learning and the woodland project. As Chair, and Wellbeing Link Governor, I am in school every month meeting with Miss Oastler and also the School Business Manager.

¹ Devonshire is a Local Authority maintained school and as such is not required to produce an annual report, however, the School Governance Regulations 2013 suggest that *"It is good practice for the board to publish an annual governance statement (as academy trusts are required to do through the Accounts Direction) to explain how it has fulfilled its responsibilities – particularly in relation to its core functions, including: • the governance arrangements that are in place, including the remit of any committees; • the attendance record of individual governors at board and committee meetings; and • an assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the board and any committees with details of any particular challenges that have arisen."*

Who are we?

We are all volunteers, except the Headteacher who sits on the Governing Body because of the role they hold in the school. The Staff Governor is elected by staff but their time as a governor is not part of their school role. We contribute to the school community on top of other work, family and life commitments.

The most up to date list of governors can be found on the school website: [Who's Who | Devonshire Primary School](#)

Many Governors have a 'Link Governor' role related to a priority area for the school. Link Governors visit the school regularly to see their area 'in action' and to report back to the Governing Body. Find out about the Link Governor areas and which Governors are responsible for which areas here: [Link Governor Responsibilities | Devonshire Primary School](#)

More information about the Governing Body can be found on the school website - [Governors | Devonshire Primary School](#)

There have been a number of governor changes this year and this has meant that we have been refreshing the membership of our Committees and our Link Governor roles. **We will be seeking to fill two parent governor vacancies in Autumn 2025.**

Governing Body Highlights

Committees

A lot of work is covered each term in our Committee meetings and we are grateful to Miss Oastler, Mrs Mackinlay (School Business Manager), Mr Bettis (Site Manager) and the 3 Assistant Headteachers (Mrs Elsey, Mrs Love, Mrs Scrivens), as well as Lynn Atkins our Clerk, who provide support across our Committees.

Our main Committees are Finance, Personnel and Pay, Premises and Teaching and Learning, supplemented by the Head Teacher Performance Development Committee and various ad hoc working groups, committees or panels on a specific issue as required. To find out more about our committees please visit: [Committee Structure | Devonshire Primary School](#)

Finance

The Committee continues to oversee effective financial management and best value. With hard work and prudent financial management, the school continues to be in a strong position financially. However, with the majority of the school revenue budget required for staffing costs, overall budget management continues to be challenging. The Finance committees works closely with the other committees, with representatives from each having input to our meetings.

- The committee is supporting the school and the Premises Committee in pursuing a new Sustainability Policy; in the long term this will improve efficiency and reduce energy costs
- The continued expenditure of Teaching and Learning Resources will ensure that the school offers the best equipment for all subjects supporting the School Development Plan.
- Supporting expenditure on training and staff wellbeing helps with staff retention, attendance and reduces recruitment costs.
- We also looked forward to upcoming projects and noted/approved planned capital expenditure and use of reserves with the Head and the School Business Manager, including additional grants.
- The committee continues to monitor risks that the school may face and how to best mitigate these.

Personnel and Pay

The Committee has been informed about, discussed and - where appropriate - approved the school's strategic and policy approach to a number of current and medium to longer term personnel and pay matters, including:

- Staff changes, resourcing levels and recruitment.
- Monitoring and implementation of Pay Policy.
- Staff attendance.
- Staff wellbeing and workload.
- Staff training and support.
- Staff engagement, including annual survey results.
- Completing the Headteacher's annual performance development discussion, objective setting and mid year review.

We are grateful to all the staff, for all that they do for the children and the school community.

Premises

The Premises Committee is responsible for ensuring that the school's buildings and grounds are well maintained and provide a safe and suitable environment for the pupils and staff. The Committee reviews and updates, where necessary, the school's risk and assessment and safety procedures. It plays a strategic role in ensuring the sustainable development of the buildings and grounds in response to the School's changing needs.

This year the work of the Committee has included:

- A review of Devonshire Primary Schools current position on sustainability focusing on culture, campus, community, and curriculum.
 - This is with the aim of developing a sustainable estates action plan.
 - Tours of the premises, with a particular focus on areas of the school that we have refurbished or hope to develop.
 - Review and approval of operational risk assessments including fire, asbestos management plan, emergency planning, first aid, H&S policy, lockdown procedures, OPAL, security, supporting children with medical needs, and COSHH.
 - Review of the contracts relating to admin, utilities, and premises.
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Teaching and Learning

The Teaching and Learning Committee have continued their work on monitoring the implementation and impact of the curriculum across the school.

Together we have;

- Been to the school and conducted book looks and tours of the classrooms to see the impact of the staff and students hard work
- Seen an increase in the number of visits to the school
- Seen the impact of a new writing framework for all learners
- Received updates from the leadership team on the progress and attainment of all pupils
- Seen the introduction of Zones of Regulation to the school and the improvements to the emotional literacy of the pupils

- Been involved in meetings with subject leaders to discuss the impact of their work and the benefits it's providing to the children they look after

We would like to send a huge thanks to all of the staff at Devonshire who work incredibly hard and have been so supportive of the work we do, as well as the young people whose work we see and are a credit to the school.

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Sustainability Working Party

The Sustainability Working Party at Devonshire Primary School is working to ensure we have a climate action plan in place this year developing the schools activities under categories of decarbonisation & efficiency, climate adaption & resilience, biodiversity & green infrastructure, and climate education & green careers'. We will be looking to engage with the wider school community for their input.

School Surveys

The most recent, and very positive, surveys of all parts of the school community will help us further support and challenge the School's Development Plan as we go into the 2025/26 school year and we appreciate the time that all respondents took to complete the surveys.

A note of thanks

We would like to thank Miss Oastler as Headteacher, the Assistant Heads, Premises and Office Teams, A-Z staff, the whole Senior Leadership Team and staff body at Devonshire and of course the children, for everything they do in and for the school community; Devonshire is very much a community and being a governor as one part of it and contributing to make it the best possible place to learn and work is very rewarding.

We wish all of you in the Devonshire Community a happy and healthy summer and look forward to seeing most of you again in September for a new school year. For those children and one or two staff moving on to the next stage of their education or life journey, please do take with you our best wishes for the future!

Colin Iddles

Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Governing Body

July 2025