



# Devonshire Primary School

2022 - 2023 School Year

## Annual Report by the Governing Body

### Introduction

1. As Chair, on behalf of the Devonshire Primary School Governing Body, I am pleased to present our Governing Body Annual Report for 2022-23. This is the second Annual Report we have produced to help keep the school community aware of the work that Governors do to support the school<sup>1</sup>.

### The Role of the Governing Body

2. 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:
  - a) To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
  - b) To ensure accountability for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
  - c) To oversee the financial performance of the school and ensure value for money.
  - d) To support and challenge and undertake the role of 'critical friend'.
3. **More information about the Governing Body, including our Membership and Committee structure can be found on the school website -**  
<https://www.devonshireprimary.org/governors-1/>
4. The Governing Body returned in September 2022 to a number of changes to our membership, including the retirement of our previous Chair, Chris Eley, who we thanked for his many years of contribution to school life. I was appointed Chair in October 2022, alongside Anne Arnold and Jenny Brooks as Co-Vice Chairs. We filled two parent governor vacancies following the election of Smitha Kondajji and Will Hallam and we also reappointed Gill Griffin (our Safeguarding Link Governor) and Amin Mirza (Premises Committee Chair). The non-staff members are all volunteers and contribute to the school community on top of their other work, family and life commitments. The commitment and interest from all our Governors continues to be much appreciated.

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<sup>1</sup> 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."*

5. At our Spring Full Governing Body meeting, we also marked the sad and sudden passing of Martin Kearsy, Devonshire's previous Headteacher, who retired in 2017. Our thoughts were with his family and friends.

### **Our School Aims and Progress**

6. This school year saw the conclusion of a review of Devonshire's vision and values, formed taking into consideration results from pupil, parent/carer and staff surveys and discussions within the governing board and senior leadership team. It has been rolled out within the school since January 2023 and updates provided in the school's newsletter 'Devonshire Dispatch'.
7. Giving children the best possible education and opportunities is at the centre of all that we do. Everyone has high expectations of themselves and others, in order that all children succeed academically and socially. We provide children with opportunities that enhance and enrich their learning, both inside and outside of the classroom. Our school vision and values run through all elements of school life. We believe they are behaviours that are essential for everyone to reach their potential and develop into active and inquisitive learners.
8. You may have heard the children talking about:
  - a) 'D.P.S' - Our school is a community that is:
    - **D**etermined to be lifelong learners.
    - **P**ositive in our outlook, showing pride in all that we do.
    - **S**upportive of everyone in our community.
  - b) Our **6Rs** which are our School Values. We are: Respectful, Resilient, Resourceful, Risk takers, Reflective, and have good Relationships.
9. Staff and pupils have been focused on progressing our key objectives, and we as the Governing Body have been kept informed of how this has been happening, reviewed the progress and monitored it via our Link Governor visits. **Devonshire's 3 year objectives are:**
  - Embedding our ambitious new curriculum: we aim to ensure that our curriculum is engaging, effective and meets our children's needs.
  - Providing children with opportunities to apply, embed and extend their knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence in themselves as learners.
  - Promoting our emotion-based behaviour management approach throughout the school and using this to support social, emotional and mental health needs, strengthening wellbeing and resilience in the school community.
  - Enhancing effective engagement from all stakeholders, ensuring that everyone contributes to the achievement of our school vision.
10. We have also received regular reports on relevant performance headlines such as pupil progress and pupil attendance. We thank all staff and parents for helping support the school to achieve our strategic aims. We will be reviewing this year's SATs results and other pupil progress data at our Autumn term Full Governing Body meeting and in more detail at our Teaching and Learning Committee.
11. The most recent 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 2023/24

school year. It remains important to recognise there are ongoing challenges to the school operationally, due to the wider economic situation nationally and the associated increases to our running costs and uncertainty over future staff pay rises. However, we are in a stronger position than some schools due to careful budget management to ensure it is used as effectively as possible to support pupils, resources and the school's priorities. The Governing Body's Finance Committee carefully reviews financial data and plans every term.

12. As a Governing Body, alongside maintaining our regular activities such as oversight of school safeguarding and financial management, we have strengthened our collective and collaborative approach to carrying out our responsibilities by:
  - implementing the results of our Link Governor strategic review (carried out in 2021-2022) so that our monitoring work and meetings are focused on our key priorities;
  - introducing a clear Action Plan for our activities, with progress reviewed every term. The Action Plan links to the School Development Plan priorities as well as our strategic responsibilities as a Governing Body in a Local Authority maintained school;
  - sharing responsibility for Committee Chair roles among a greater number of people and reviewing the policy responsibilities of each Committee, in particular for our new Teaching and Learning Committee which has a more specific remit than its predecessor 'Curriculum' Committee; and,
  - Continuation of training support to all governors to ensure we are able to carry out our roles as effectively as possible.
  
13. We have evolved the format of this report to include short summaries from each of our main Committees to help improve awareness of how we ensure that we are carrying out our core responsibilities as a Governing Body - these **Committee statements can be found in Annex B**.
  
14. Some **additional highlights from the work of the Full Governing Body** this year include:
  - Holding the school leaders to account as 'critical friends' throughout the whole school year, at the termly Full Governing Body (FGB) meetings as well as in Link Governor visits and meetings at school. The Link Governor visits are reported to the FGB and discussed further as necessary. The list of Link Governors is on the website.
  - Continuing to monitor the school's embedding of the new Devonshire Curriculum and also arrangements for use of Covid related catch-up funding to target and support children's progress and attainment in core curriculum areas, including Pupil Premium grant spending.
  - Reviewing and agreeing the School Budget and associated financial management, during particularly challenging economic times and ongoing pressure on school funding, to ensure delivery of high quality learning to children and a safe and supportive school environment.
  - An increased emphasis on engagement with parents and children, via attendance at a variety of school workshops and events as well as promoting the annual Parent/Carer Survey and supporting the PSA fund raising.

- Supporting the Head and Senior Leadership Team in ad hoc panels or meetings as required, for example, in relation to child behaviour, recruitment of new staff and consideration of a new energy contract for the school.
- Reviewing and discussing regular reports from the Headteacher about staff wellbeing and workload.
- Overseeing risk assessments for Health and Safety and approving spend on premises improvements to ensure the school site continues to be a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- As Chair and Wellbeing Link Governor, I also enjoyed spending a day in school in June, meeting and talking with children of all ages (incl. School Councillors) and a range of staff, observing break time and lunchtime play, discussing survey results with Miss Oastler and being shown the facilities used by the pastoral team for supporting children during the school day.

## Conclusion

15. We would like to thank Miss Oastler as Headteacher, the Assistant Heads, 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.
16. The remainder of this Report provides information on the specific sub-Committees to the Governing Body, as well as Governor attendance data for 2022-23 meetings.
- 17. We will be publishing this report on the school website, as well as providing a link to it in a Devonshire Dispatch.**
18. As we look forward to next school year (2023-24) we will continue to have a focus on child and staff wellbeing and we also hope, via our ongoing focus on our engagement and communications, to continue to celebrate the successes within the school community and help improve the understanding of what the Governing Body does. We will continue to monitor the implementation of the new Curriculum and the children's progress as lifelong learners.
19. If you have any questions about the work of the Governing Body or feedback on information that you would like to see in this annual report going forward, please do reach out to me or any of the governors via the school office - [office@devonshire.sutton.sch.uk](mailto:office@devonshire.sutton.sch.uk) (please mark it for the attention of Chair of Governors or Governing Body).
20. 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 staff moving onto the next stage of their education or career journey, please do take with you our best wishes for the future!

Emma Lavery,  
Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Governing Body,  
July 2023

## **Annex A - The Governing Body - Who We Are - 2022- 23 School Year**

The Devonshire Primary School Instrument of Government signed by the Local Authority in 2015 states that the governing body shall consist of:

- a. Five parent governors
- b. One Local Authority Governor
- c. One staff governor
- d. One Headteacher
- e. Five Co-opted governors.

Total number of governors permitted is **thirteen**.

<b>Governor's Full Name</b>	<b>Category of Governor</b>	<b>Appointed by</b>	<b>Term of Office From</b>	<b>Terms of Office To/ Date stepped down if appropriate</b>
<b>Umair Ahsan</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>20/9/2021</b>	<b>19/9/2025</b>
<b>Anne Arnold **</b>	<b>Co-opted</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>16/11/2021</b>	<b>15/11/2025</b>
<b>Jennifer Brooks**</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>20/9/2021</b>	<b>19/9/2025</b>
<b>Gillian Griffin</b>	<b>Co-opted</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>01/04/2019</b>	<b>31/03/2023</b>
<b>Gillian Griffin</b>	<b>Co-opted</b>	<b>Reappointed by the Governing Body</b>	<b>01/04/2023</b>	<b>31/03/2027</b>
<b>Will Hallam</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>12/11/2022</b>	<b>11/11/2026</b>
<b>Smitha Kondajji</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>12/11/2022</b>	<b>11/11/2026</b>
<b>Emma Lavery *</b>	<b>Co-opted</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>12/11/2022</b>	<b>11/11/2026</b>
<b>Amin Mirza</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>06/07/2019</b>	<b>05/07/2023</b>
<b>Amin Mirza</b>	<b>Co-opted</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>06/07/2023</b>	<b>05/07/2027</b>
<b>Fiona Oastler</b>	<b>Headteacher (ex-officio)</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>01/09/2017</b>	<b>Ex Officio</b>
<b>Trudy Sumner</b>	<b>Staff Governor</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>8/2/2021</b>	<b>7/2/2025</b>

\* Appointed as Chair of Governors Oct 22, previously a parent governor until 11/11/2022

\*\* Appointed as Co-Vice Chair of Governors Oct 22

**Associate Members** - three Assistant Headteachers, the School Business Manager and the School Site Manager (Premises Committee only).

**Clerk to the Governing Body** - Mrs Lynn Atkins

## **Annex B - Governing Body Committee Structure 2022-23**

Our main Committees are Teaching and Learning, Finance, Premises and Personnel and Pay, supplemented by the Head Teacher Performance Development Committee and various ad hoc working groups, committees or panels on a specific issue as required. Below are short summaries of the main areas of focus this year for each of our Committees, including their current membership.



**Finance** - Chaired by Anne Arnold. Members - Umair Ahsan, Amin Mirza, Smitha Kondajji, Will Hallam, Fiona Oastler, Trudy Sumner, School Business Manager

A key role of school governors is “overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.” (School Governance Handbook 2022). Previously the Finance Committee was combined with the Premises Committee, this year the two committees were split to provide a further level of assurance in relation to expenditure. The new Finance Committee comprises at least one representative from each of the other committees as well as the Headteacher, the School Business Manager and any other governors that wish to attend. The Finance Committee reports back to the Full Governing Body.

The committee undertakes statutory reviews such as the Schools Financial Value Standard and has sight of large contracts that the school signs – most recently for Gas and Electricity. The committee receives regular reports of performance against agreed budgets and also discusses any risks that the school may face and how to mitigate these. The committee also noted/approved planned capital expenditure and use of reserves.

The school continues to be in a strong position with prudent financial management in the past ensuring that we are prepared for the continuing challenges that we face in the future. The committee will continue to work hard with school staff to maintain this.



**Personnel and Pay** - Chaired by Emma Lavery. Members - Anne Arnold, Gill Griffin, Fiona Oastler, School Business Manager.

The Personnel and Pay Committees were merged into one this school year. The combined remit covers all formal governance responsibilities for school personnel and pay and a sub-committee is responsible for overseeing Headteacher Performance Development, supported from this year by a new external advisor (TT Education). The Committee does not have responsibility for operational matters but has been involved in the recruitment of certain key staff posts in line with delegations from the Full Governing Body.

The Personnel and Pay Committee has been informed about, discussed and - where appropriate - approved the school's strategic 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. Arrangements for managing industrial action (information only).
- Staff wellbeing and workload.
- Staff training and support.
- Staff engagement, including survey results.

The Committee has also taken action where required in liaising with the LA education team.



**Premises** - Chaired by Amin Mirza. Members - Umair Ahsan, Jenny Brooks, Will Hallam, Smitha Kondajji, Fiona Oastler, Trudy Sumner, School Business Manager, School Site Manager.

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 planning 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:

- participation by the Chair in the LA led Health and Safety annual audit and monitoring subsequent actions.
- touring the premises, with a particular focus on areas of the school that we hope to refurbish or develop, including the ground floor toilets.
- the review and approval of numerous risk assessments including for the Woodland Project, PSA Disco and contractors working on site.
- Consideration of the school's new energy contract requirements and reviewing of the associated tenders as well as plans for further energy efficiency measures within the school.



### **Teaching and Learning -**

Chaired by Umair Ahsan. Members - Amin Mirza, Anne Arnold, Jenny Brooks, Gill Griffin, Will Hallam, Smitha Kondajji, Emma Lavery, Fiona Oastler, Trudy Sumner, 3 Assistant Headteachers.

This was the first school year for our new Teaching and Learning Committee after we reviewed the structure of our committees and replaced the previous Curriculum Committee with the current Teaching and Learning Committee to better help the Governing Body hold school leaders to account for both learning content and the teaching of it.

The Committee has specific responsibility for ensuring:

- the curriculum offered meets all statutory requirements;
- the highest possible quality of education is provided and that within the prevailing financial constraints, the curriculum meets the needs of all the pupils in the school;
- testing and assessment are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and in a manner that allows the governing body to monitor and evaluate the standards of pupil attainment and quality of education being achieved. This includes that the provision for all groups of children can be monitored to check that the needs of specific groups have been identified and addressed and their progress and achievement can be evaluated;
- the school discharges its wider pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities to the best of its ability;
- the provision of extra-curricular activities is encouraged and that they are appropriate and as varied and numerous as can be achieved practicably;
- compliance with the Equality Act 2010 including the public-sector equality duty under that Act;
- regular reports are received from individual governors who have taken responsibility for specific areas of provision and have visited the school;
- consideration of and action on the results of the views of pupils and parents/carers in the annual surveys;
- consideration of reports from the headteacher from any external reviews of the school and recommendations of any appropriate action as consequence of such reports;
- teaching and learning input to the school development plan and the self evaluation statement when appropriate.

Some of the key considerations this year have been in relation to the embedding of the new school curriculum, the associated monitoring and assessment of impact as well as how to share information about it with parents, the ongoing delivery of the school's writing action plan, progress of pupils in receipt of free school meals, and all results data from the last academic year.



## Annex C - Governor meeting attendance information 2022-23

### Devonshire Primary School Governing Body Meeting Attendance 2022-23 School Year

Y = Attended,  
N = Apologies  
Accepted,  
Block Grey = Not  
a Committee  
Member

Governor	Governor Type	Governing Body 20 Sep 2022	Extraordinary Governing Body 18 Oct 2022	Premises Committee 18 Oct 2022	Finance Committee 18 Oct 2022	Personnel Committee 04 Nov 2022	Teaching and Learning Committee 08 Nov 2022	Headteacher's Performance Development Committee 18 Nov 2022	Full Governing Body 22 Nov 2022	Premises Committee 20 Feb 2023	Finance Committee 20 Feb 2023	Teaching and Learning Committee 28 Feb 2023	Personnel Committee 10 Mar 2023	Full Governing Body 14 Mar 2023	Headteacher's Performance Development Committee 24 Mar 2023	Personnel Committee 19 May 2023	Premises Committee 23 May 2023	Finance Committee 07 Jun 2023	Teaching and Learning Committee 13 Jun 2023	Full Governing Body 20 Jun 2023
Umair Ahsan	Parent governor	Y	Y	N	N		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			N	N	Y	N
Anne Arnold	Co-opted governor	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y
Lynn Atkins	Clerk	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jenny Brooks	Parent governor	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y		Y		N			Y		Y	Y
Mr Chris Eley	Retired Sept 22	Y																		
Gillian Griffin	Co-opted governor	N	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
William Hallam	Parent governor								N			N		Y			Y	N	Y	Y
Paula Harrison	Associate Member	Y	N				N		N			Y		Y					Y	Y
Smitha Kondajji	Parent governor								Y	Y	Y	N		Y			N	N	Y	Y
Emma Lavery	Co-opted governor	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
Laura Love	Associate Member	Y	Y				Y		Y			Y		Y					Y	Y
Sherie Mackinlay	Associate Member	Y	N	Y	Y	Y			N	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y
Amin Mirza	Parent governor	N	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y	Y	Y
Fiona Oastler	Headteacher	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bethan Scrivens	Associate Member	Y	Y				Y		Y			Y		Y					Y	Y
Trudy Sumner	Staff governor	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			N	Y	Y	Y