

Governor's Annual Report 2022/23

The governing body is pleased to report on the progress the school made in 2022/23 under the management of our headteacher, Vicky Dangerfield and Caroline Powell, School Manager, with the staff working well together. This report summarises the accomplishments and challenges for the school from the point of view of the Full Governing Body (FGB) whose roles are to set vision and strategic priorities, to hold the headteacher to account, and to provide financial oversight.

I. Ethos/vision/strategic focus

Strategic priorities as below were set by governors in 2021 for the five years up to 2025. Our motto has been in place for longer, and our discussion last year concluded that it could remain in place as there was no obvious reason to change it.

Our motto is to create '*an inspirational setting, where all children flourish*'.

Our vision is for a school where children actively engage with local and global communities and develop the confidence and skills, they need to have an impact on the world around them in years to come.

Ethos. Every activity involving the whole school community is strengthened by being caring, thoughtful and reflective.

Strategic priorities. To achieve our vision of encouraging children to engage actively in local and global communities now and in the future, our priorities are to:

- develop skills that empower our children and support participation, creativity, innovation and problem-solving
- nurture positive relationships supported by effective communication and collaboration and reaching out to others
- foster sensitivity that values and protects the local and global environment for future generations

II. Accomplishments

2022/23 was an excellent year when the school consolidated much of what it has set out to do (see annex I for the comparative summary of key performance areas/indicators).

Staff and collaborative ethos. We have an excellent staff team working together. The year started with Mrs. Dangerfield, our headteacher, spending some time each week away from our school as she was requested to assist a neighbouring school in Miserden. The staff stepped up to the challenge, supporting Mrs Dangerfield in the day-to-day running of the school, managing subject leadership, and ensuring teamwork. In our first Staff Wellbeing Survey conducted in the Spring term, we found that our school is doing well, with staff feeling well-supported by the management team, and given many opportunities to develop professionally, several members of staff working towards higher qualifications.

Four class structure. This was the first year of implementing 4 class structure, facilitated by Sparsity funding, which provided a better framework for mixed year group teaching, simplifying staff arrangements. We hope to continue with this in the future years, so long as our finances allow.

Curriculum development was the most important academic endeavour the school undertook in 2022-23. Subject leaders stepped up to the challenge and the school completed the most comprehensive curriculum documents including an outline of all our thematic schemes. Governors played their part by working with staff to write Sheepscombe's curricular overview statements for all subjects - to clarify our educational vision. The year's work culminated in a Curriculum Day for parents in June, where the subject leaders provided detailed displays explaining the shape of our curriculum and a glimpse of how much work goes into the planning of teaching. New materials were introduced in maths and phonics, along with new assessment tests this year. Our teachers' ability to assess children's learning has been externally moderated with excellent results for the second year in a row.

Enrichment activities. This was another successful year of hugely diverse enrichment activities – another hallmark of our school. The year aptly ended with a production of *The Tempest*, a theatrical and musical feast, which showed how much our children can do and what rich opportunities they are given. This was very much a community event as parents made critical contributions to the production ably aided by the technical expertise of Mr. Richard Dangerfield, Mrs. Dangerfield's husband. Mr. Dangerfield has been a hidden contributor for our school as he attends to much of the maintenance needs, we have. It has been another successful year where the school offered a full range of enrichment activities from Stroud Mock Trials, numerous sports activities (which won us the Gold Award), Wildlife Quiz, Cheltenham Festivals (Jazz, Science, Literature), expeditions to museums/cultural places and a residential visit to Morfa Bay. We are proud of such a track record: all these require significant effort and confidence on the part of the staff – how many school would take on such an adventurous residential trip?

Environmental Sustainability. This was the first year in which the school's environmental sustainability action plan, developed jointly between the Governors and the school management, began to lead to a real change. Environmental sustainability was embedded in our curriculum in all the subjects – as a 'golden thread.' We are already doing much to ensure 'green supplies' in all that we do. We also started a webpage to highlight progress in our sustainability journey. Our children are already showing that they have values and knowledge that often exceeds our expectations. We have had positive feedback from a visiting teacher on environmental education, and the children continue to show excellent awareness and knowledge, for instance in the annual wildlife quiz. Another example is our experience in Morfa Bay beach, where our children spontaneously initiated a beach clean-up, unprompted by adults, much to the surprise of the Morfa bay staff who said no other group has ever done this.

Attendance. Attendance has been slowly improving and at 94% in July, this is an improvement in line with national figures for last year. It reflects the arduous work the school has put in this year, and we hope to maintain it with support and collaboration from parents. Children missing classes are not the only ones to miss out in their own learning. Any absence has an impact on the rest of the children, as the staff attention will be taken away by the need to fill gaps and catch up. In a small school with mixed year classes, having sporadic absences with knowledge gaps amongst children adds to the complexity of teaching.

Parent feedback. Parent feedback was sought both habitually through our informal encounters but also formally through a survey during the curricular event. We are pleased to note that the level of satisfaction is extremely high. We were also pleased with the number of returns (50) and the fact that the satisfaction we see is widely shared.

Finance. Mrs. Powell's diligent work led us to have a healthy and large surplus of £30K in 2022-23. Little Lambs raised £25k leading to a carry forward of £2760. Sparsity Funding helped us move to 4-class. FOSS's support provided invaluable contributions including: £4500 for music lessons, £3750 for new books for the reading scheme, and £900 for new benches for the orchard. Pupil Premium funding has helped us achieve all of our goals with 100% of PP children more positive about themselves and their ability, with access to technology and same access as other children to all opportunities. PE and Sport Premium funding has enabled us to dramatically enhance our sports offers with excellent access to diverse sports opportunities – leading to our winning a Gold Award.

III. Challenges

Finances for all schools continue to be tight nationally with uncertain environments. Small schools such as ours are vulnerable to external shocks. While we are managing to keep this structure under careful management of Mrs. Powell, continued due diligence is essential as many factors are not under our control. We are in the process of stepping up the governors' capacity to oversee and support finance.

Challenges in environmental sustainability. We recognize that reducing carbon footprints in buildings and transport is a challenge. We are aware that parents are doing what they can to share rides, and that other transport options such as cycling are not feasible given the geographical spread of our children and the village. This year, we hope to explore possibilities to call on community support for a major upgrade of buildings, particularly, the upper classroom.

IV. Governance

We are pleased that we continue with a 9-member governing body despite the departure of two long-standing governors (Seth Johnson and Chloe Turner), filling key gaps left by them by bringing on board two new governors in buildings (Simon Fraser) and finance (Phil Davies), though the formal skills survey will be conducted in 2023/24. Since September 2022, we moved to a co-chair arrangement with Debby Thacker and Sachi Hatakenaka. The four-member Finance and Resource Committee continued to take overall responsibility in financial oversight under an competent chair ship of Chloe Turner, who stepped down at the end of the year. Each governor took up key 'elements' such as safeguarding and 'subject championships' both to provide additional in-depth oversight, particularly through regular visits.

Two longstanding governors, Seth Johnson and Chloe Turner, have ended their terms, having provided excellent support and diverse inputs into the school over the years. Our heart-felt thanks to both of them. Tessa Lentel has developed a structured oversight on safeguarding and SEND issues this year – two key areas that all schools monitor continually. Matt Stanway was elected as a parent governor for his second term, and continued to provide a lead to our collaborations in orchard management with our benefactor neighbour and in Forest School with National Trust . We were delighted to welcome Richard Crocker who joined as a new staff governor in September 2022 and Simon Fraser as a parent governor in June 2023, bringing fresh energy and insights.

(For the profiles of governors, roles and attendance records see Annex II and III).

V. Looking into 2023/24

We look forward to another year of success, working with challenges as listed above and ensuring that we continue to improve and thrive. We are hoping to co-opt another governor

shortly, and to work with staff to engage with the Teaching and Learning review planned for this year, as preparation for an OFSTED visit. Governors and the community will be joining with staff to organise a Maths celebration in the summer term. Further plans to improve sustainability and to engage parents will also be developed. A governance review is planned for the Summer Term.

Annex 1

Criteria	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<i>Pupil numbers</i>	72 (plus Little Lambs)	70 (plus 7 Little Lambs)	73 (plus 8 Little Lambs in May)
<i>A good rating from Ofsted</i>			
<i>All procedures are in place for good governance</i>			Yes
<i>The best possible level of attendance</i>	95.6%	92.3%	94%
<i>Pupils reach age-related expectations in attainment and progress (reading, writing, maths)</i>	Attainment data was on track to meet all of Mrs. Dangerfield's challenging targets for reading, writing and maths until April 2021. SATS tests in May were cancelled therefore there will be no national data for 2021. Governors will monitor the evidence of the impact of school closure in Terms 1 and 2 of the 2021/22 academic year.	While pupils made progress to return to pre-Covid levels of attainment, there was evidence that the impact of Covid continued, particularly for those pupils who had been late starts and whose attendance was poor. The results of the KS2 SATS, which returned in the summer, were disappointing, but appeared to have more to do with the resilience required to engage with the testing, rather than a lack of knowledge, as other measures, such as formative assessment, gave a more encouraging picture. KS1 SATS were very good and results confirmed by external monitoring.	Attainment was on track though KS2 SATS Maths results were disappointing for the second year in a row. The follow up analysis indicates that this owes to a small number of children falling just a little short. The outcomes for KS1 were excellent, performing well above the national performance expectations in reading, writing, maths as well as science. The process of monitoring attainment through the year looks robust with the use of NFER tests and successful assessment review by LA of KS1 last year and KS 2 this year. SATS results can be surprising given small numbers. Nonetheless, the school plans to focus on mathematics in 2023-24.
<i>Expectations of excellence in teaching</i>	Governors and Mrs. Dangerfield continue to have high expectations of teachers including the provision of materials for home-schooling and contact with children during the COVID-19 crisis. However, at the same time, governors were concerned for the physical and mental well-being of staff during the lockdown especially where staff were simultaneously home-	Governors and Mrs. Dangerfield continue to have high expectations of teachers, and all welcomed the return to face-to-face teaching in 2021/22. Sharing the subject leadership has helped to develop a strong and cohesive teaching team. With one member of staff with an NPQH, and one about to complete his, and another with many years' teaching experience, the team is highly skilled, with the capacity to	Subject leaderships developed significantly this year. Upon completion of the curriculum, they have each developed subject specific action plans based on SWOT analysis, with classroom observation as a regular feature of monitoring. Staff continue to receive good opportunities for CPD in subject specific training, and for their own developmental interest.

	schooling their own children.	support and mentor new members of staff. All have been involved in writing the new curriculum and continued with CPD to enrich their subject knowledge, including Phonics.	
Sound financial management	Mrs. Powell is always impressive in the way in which she manages a restricted budget to provide the best possible benefits for children and staff. The governors are also grateful to FOSS for their fundraising activities and consequent financial contributions.	Being granted the Sparsity funding has helped increase the confidence with which Mrs. Powell, the SBM, has been able to plan the budget for the school, and governors appreciate and applaud her ability to find financial solutions that enable the pupils to have a rich school experience. FOSS continues to support these activities and we are grateful for their efforts.	Mrs. Powell, the SBM, continues to plan and manage the budget for a 4-class structure, and diverse and rich enrichment activities, which is not easy given the difficult context. The school, and governors appreciate and applaud her work. FOSS continues to provide key support and we are most grateful for their efforts.

ANNEX II. Governing board: members and responsibilities

Name	Type of governor	Committee membership	Any link roles
Vicky Dangerfield	Head Teacher	FRC	
Jon Clarke	Co-opted Governor		PSHE/RHE, Staff Well-being, Art
Simon Fraser (from June 2023)	Parent Governor	FRC	TBC
Sachi Hatakenaka	Co-opted Governor	FRC	Co-CoG, Music, Geography, Science, Environmental strategy
Seth Johnson (till Feb 2023)	Parent governor	FRC	Indoor and outdoor premises, Health & Safety; Website
Tessa Lentel	Local authority governor		SEND, Safeguarding, RE
Matt Stanway	Parent governor	FRC	Deputy Chair, Geography, Science, Sport
Debby Thacker	Co-opted governor		Co-CoG, English, EYFS
Chloe Turner (till July 2023)	Co-opted governor	FRC	FRC Chair; Maths; History, Pupil Premium

ANNEX III. Governor attendance

 SHEEPSCOMBE SCHOOL - GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE 2022 - 2023										
	CATEGORY	Full Governing Body					Finance and Resources			ATTENDANCE %
		20/09/22	08/11/22	21/02/23	02/05/23	11/07/23	22/11/22	14/03/23	16/05/23	% YTD
Chloe Turner	CO-OPTED	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Debby Thacker	CO-OPTED - CO CHAIR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Jon Clarke	CO-OPTED	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Matt Stanway	PARENT GOVERNOR	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88%
Richard Crocker	STAFF GOVERNOR		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%
Sachi Hatakenaka	CO-OPTED - CO CHAIR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	100%
Seth Johnson	PARENT	✓	✓	✓						100%
Tessa Lentel	LA GOVERNOR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				100%
Simon Fraser	PARENT GOVERNOR					✓				100%
Vicky Dangerfield	HEADTEACHER	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%

KEY	In attendance	✓
	Absent	✗
	Not obligated to attend	