

Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

Governors hold an important public office, and in the interests of transparency, their identity and arrangements for governance should be known to the school and the wider community.

The Governing Body

Name	Date of appointment	End of office	Role/type
Tim Fairbairn	1/5/14	12/4/27	Co-opted
Rev'd Daniel Whiffin	22/8/22		Foundation
Vacant			Local Authority
James Thompson	26/1/22	25/1/26	Parent
Ruth Slater	1/9/17	31/8/23	Headteacher
Simon Knight	22/2/23	21/2/27	Co-opted
Sarah Fairley	13/7/22	12/7/26	Staff
Heather Whittle	20/2/23	19/2/27	Foundation
Leighton Hammett	25/3/20	24/3/24	Parent
Phoebe Piper	26/1/22	25/1/26	Parent
Sam Baker	27/1/21	26/1/25	Co-opted
Ross McCrory	12/7/23	11/7/27	Co-opted

The Governing Body maintains a skills matrix which demonstrates the diverse skills held by the Governors. This document helps inform any appointments to ensure the Governing Body maintain the skills required to be effective. Current Governor details can be found within the Governor profiles on the website.

During the year we said farewell to Bill Box, Nicola Wilby, Helen Main and Adam Kendall; Adam notably for two terms of office. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them all for their contribution and commitment to our school. During the year we have welcomed Daniel Whiffin and Heather Whittle as Foundation Governors, Sarah Fairley as a Staff Governor and also Simon Knight and Ross McCrory as a Co-opted Governors.

Clerk to Governors

Laura Benns continues as our Clerk, a position she has held for a number of years.

Committees

Remits for the Committees of the Governing Body are available on the school website within the Governing Body's Terms of Reference. Some committees and named Governors receive specific training to be able to carry out their functions effectively.

Area of Governance	Named Governors
Training	Tim Fairbairn
Health & Safety	Leighton Hammett

Pupil Premium / Looked After Children	Sam Baker
Special Needs	James Thompson
Safeguarding & Online Safety	Daniel Whiffin
Finance	Tim Fairbairn

During the year Governors have been delighted to see children learning in school and to attend events such as Celebration Assemblies, the Christmas and Harvest celebrations, Sports Day and the Year 5/6 production of Peter Pan at the Quay Theatre.

Attendance

Attendance records for the Governors can be found on the school website.

Training undertaken by Governors

During this academic year, Governors have attended training sessions run by Schools Choice, the National Governance Association and e-learning modules. When considering the skills and training Governors require, particular attention is given to three core strategic functions of the Governing Body:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

By carrying out our strategic monitoring role, as Governors, we enable the senior leadership team to focus on the day to day running of the school. We continue to review policies and procedures to ensure that these are fit for purpose and meet not only our legal responsibilities, but also our vision and aims for the school and our pupils. The children and staff remain at the forefront of our decisions as we strive to provide the best educational environment for them.

We continue to monitor closely the school budget. We work hard to ensure we have the right staffing levels and resources so that the children's learning and development continues to be of the highest standard.

The school development plan for 22/23 will be approved by the Governing Body later in the Autumn term as part of our cycle of continuous school improvement.

Chair's Statement

Early this academic year we were delighted to unveil our strategic vision to all school stakeholders, and latterly at the Annual Parish Meeting to the wider community.

Together we experience every day as an exciting adventure that never stops. We treasure time close to home but are ready to expand our horizons, exploring beliefs, visiting different lands, and celebrating cultures. We discover characters who have made a difference, both great and small. Side by side we wrestle with mathematical monsters and scientific beasts. We create the unimagined – works of pure beauty. We savour the victory when we accomplish each quest before moving on to the next. We learn to fight the fear of failure and joyfully celebrate every success.

At Bures, we dare to dream big – embracing the adventure within.

‘I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me
heavenwards in Christ Jesus.’
Philippians 3 v 14

This is such a rich statement, on so many levels, and demonstrates our high aspirations for all of us here at Bures; so ably supported by our dedicated and talented staff team.

In that regard we must pay special tribute to Ruth Slater, who leaves us at end of this academic year. When appointed in 2017 we set out to look for a Headteacher with a number of attributes.

- An individual who engages well with staff, parents and the community. Someone with excellent interpersonal skills;
- An individual who is open-minded and receptive to change;
- A good leader who will drive gradual change. Not a passive leader;
- An individual with experience of leadership and managing people;
- An individual who will drive up academic standards;
- An individual with high expectations of staff, pupils and parents. Someone who is inspirational;
- Someone who knows every child and parent;

Looking back, it is very clear to see what a great choice we made and the huge impact Ruth has had for our school. Not least from all those hours spent at the school gate, in all weathers, she has helped us re-establish our key focus on quality teaching and through her hard work, strong leadership and dedication, she leaves us richer in so many aspects of school life. I know that we will continue to benefit from the legacy she leaves and we certainly wish her, and Adrian, a long and happy retirement, on and beyond the Suffolk coast, along with our heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

Therefore, after Christmas, we faced the important task of finding a new Headteacher and we were delighted to appoint Mrs Michaela Harris into that position with effect from the start of September 2023; although hopefully all staff and most parents will have had an opportunity to meet her before then. We look forward to working with Michaela as she takes us forward on the next stage of our journey.

No sooner had we concluded our Headteacher selection, we were told that the long-anticipated Ofsted visit was to happen later that week. The solid good outcomes you already know and the full report is available on the website. But I thought it worthwhile repeating Ruth Slater's commentary again in this regard. "It would be an entirely reasonable question to ask why I am so pleased when the overall judgement has moved from Outstanding to Good since the previous inspection in 2007. The answer to that is that both our school community and the educational landscape have changed significantly in the 16 years since our last inspection. Alongside this Ofsted has raised its expectations significantly making it far harder to gain the top grades. My own thoughts are that this is entirely the right thing to do. Schools need to be challenged and it is quite right that the standards demanded from us are as high as they can be. To be a 'Good' school in 2023 you have to achieve incredibly well in all areas."

Enjoy the summer break. For the children leaving we wish you and your families well, and for the children joining us from September, a big welcome to you and your families.

Meetings

The Governing Body meets twice a term, the Pay Committee twice a year and the Executive Committee met twice. Other committees meet as required.

Other Documents

Other documents are available from the school website:

- The Governing Body's Terms of Reference
- The Instrument of Government
- Governor profiles, including their Business and Pecuniary Interests

Tim Fairbairn,
Chair of Governors,
1st July 2023