

Slimbridge Primary School

Governing Body Annual Report to Parents

2016–2017

Life never stands still at Slimbridge Primary School, and this academic year has proved no exception.

‘Reading’ has been our focus area across the School, with a different approach to reading in classes, the development of our fantastic library – together with library cards and an after-school opening hours (thank you to Mrs Hall and Mrs Fairall) – our bedtime story/information evenings and the Readathon.

You may also remember the consultation and information about joining the multi-academy trust with Rednock and Stone with Woodford Schools. We submitted paperwork to the Department of Education in April, but are still waiting for an update on progress. We will keep you updated as soon as we know more.

Slimbridge Primary School is a place where every child really does matter, and there are many people who help that happen: the staff, who go above and beyond week after week; the Head, who can tell you about the strengths of and challenges for every child in the School; the volunteers, who come in to listen to children read and run activities, or to help with the admin; the marvellous FOSS team, who give up so much of their time to organise fundraising events, apply for grants, and tidy up the grounds; and the Governors, who volunteer hours and hours of their time to support the School. I thank you all for your support.

This report gives a brief snapshot of the School over the past academic year, and has some information about next year. I will be stepping down shortly as Parent Governor and Chair to make way for new Co-Chairs in September. It has been an absolute privilege to be a part of the Governing Body and to work to support Mrs Cooke and the staff as they help our children learn and develop in readiness for life. I wish the year 6s who are moving on to the next stage in their lives and, of course, Mr Clark and Miss Gilbert, good luck for the future.

Have a great summer



Laura Price
Chair of Governors

This report presents a mix of information about the school year – some of this *has* to be reported by the Governing Body to parents, and some of it we would *like* to share with you.

About the Governing Body

Our Governing Body is made up of volunteers, who are parents, staff or members of the local community. The body is strengthened by the wide range of experience of its individual Governors. We work closely with the head teacher, who also sits on the Governing Body. We decide the strategy and agree the policies of the School. No Governor has any individual power unless delegated to him or her by the Governing Body as a whole. The chair, however, has the power to answer letters, deal with emergencies and liaise with the head teacher without constant recourse to the full Governing Body.

Governing body 2016–2017

- Chair: Laura Price, parent Governor
- Vice-chair: Patricia Carrington, LA Governor
- Helen Tilly, parent Governor to Term 5; associate member, Finance and Premises Committee, from May 2017
- Emily Farnsworth, parent Governor from Term 5
- Alison Cooke, head teacher
- Rhiannon Randall, staff Governor
- Chris Meadows, parent Governor
- Adrian Peatman, co-opted Governor
- Steve Williamson, co-opted Governor
- Sarah Kiddle, parent Governor
- Vacant, co-opted Governor

Helen Tilly: We were very sad to say goodbye to Helen Tilly as a parent Governor towards the end of the academic year. Helen has served two 4-year terms as Governor, and during that time has taken responsibility for many areas, including special educational needs, literacy and modern languages, and has chaired the Teaching and Learning Committee. She was heavily involved with work to refurbish class 1 many years ago, becoming something of an expert on wet-pour surfacing and canopies... This year she was an important member of the working party on the multi-academy trust (MAT) application, which saw Slimbridge representatives working alongside Governors and heads from Rednock and Stone with Woodford. We have persuaded Helen to continue in this role for a little while longer, and the Governors voted in favour of her joining the Finance and Premises Committee as an associate member for 1 year, so we could continue to benefit from her knowledge and experience of MAT developments.

Chris Meadows: Chris will be stepping down as Governor at the end of this academic year, after 3 years in the role. Chris has brought his expertise and experience in project management and IT to the Governing Body, and we thank him for the time and enthusiasm he has dedicated to the role.

Contacting Governors: Dr Laura Price (Chair) and Mrs Nikki Elliott (Clerk) can be contacted by letter via the School; Laura can also be contacted via chair@slimbridge.gloucs.sch.uk. From September 2017, the Governing Body will have two Co-chairs, Steve Williamson and Tricia Carrington, subject to approval at the next meeting. They can be contacted in the same way.

Structure and way of working: The Governing Body operates a committee structure, with each committee managing, supporting and overseeing different areas of School life, including Little Otters. Individual Governors are also assigned different areas of responsibility, for example literacy, Maths, special education needs and disability (SEND), and they visit the School regularly to see work in these areas. These visits also allow the Governors to build relationships with staff and to monitor how the strategic objectives of the Governing Body are being met.

Teaching and Learning Committee, chaired by Steve Williamson

The Teaching and Learning committee dedicates a number of its meetings to in-depth scrutiny of the data available for the children's progress and achievement. It reviews the staffing structure in consultation with the finance and premises committee, and also checks that the School is delivering the national curriculum, monitors library provision, School trips and the School's website.

Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Welfare and Personnel Committee, chaired by Patricia Carrington

The Governing Body has delegated to this committee its responsibilities in relation to safeguarding/child protection and safer recruitment. The committee monitors online safety within the School, attendance, behaviour and discipline, and policies relating to children with special educational needs and disabilities. It also carries out health and safety inspections of the School premises and oversees repairs, maintenance and new builds, in conjunction with the finance and premises committee.

Finance and Premises Committee, chaired by Adrian Peatman

The role of the finance committee is to monitor the School's finances in line with the School's plan for improvement, and set the budget plan. The committee also has responsibility for ensuring work to improve the facilities and premises is undertaken in a cost-effective timely way. We are pleased to say that the School ended the financial year 16/17 with a balanced budget.

A note on our budget

As you will no doubt have heard, school budgets are being squeezed across the country. Through very careful management of the finances by Mrs Cooke and the staff at Slimbridge, overseen by the Governors, we have been able to keep our head above the water. But the situation will get increasingly challenging.

We are very lucky to have such a hardworking, talented and generous FOSS Committee that supports the School, and we are incredibly grateful to FOSS this year for all the financial help they have given to various projects. Of course, these thanks extend to all the parents, family members and friends who, in turn, supported FOSS events.

One area that is worth commenting on is parental voluntary contributions for trips and activities. The money from parents is supposed to cover the costs to the School, but we always have a shortfall as some parents do not pay. We have spent hours in Governors' meetings trying to decide what is the best course of action. With money so tight, we have a responsibility to ensure we have sufficient funds to cover staff salaries, premises work and educational supplies, which means we should be saying that trips and activities that end up as a cost to the School cannot go ahead. But we also strongly believe that these trips and visits benefit the children and give them a wider educational experience. To date, most trips have gone ahead, but we will not be able to continue in this way. If you are able to make that voluntary contribution, please please do so. Otherwise we have to use money earmarked for something else to pay for your child's participation. We get

additional funding to cover trips and activities for your child if you qualify for free school meals – if you're not sure whether you may be eligible, see Mrs Elliott in the Office or go to www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals for more information.

Staffing structure for 2017–18

From September, the teaching structure will be as shown below.

Class 1 (Reception)	Mrs K McNamara Mrs L Pearce (TA)
Class 2 (Y1/Y2)	Mrs Coope/Mrs Baird Mrs K Lucia (TA)
Class 3 (Y2/Y3)	Mr C Ford Mrs L Davies (TA)
Class 4 (Y4/Y5)	Miss Glover Mrs Priday (TA)
Class 5 (Y5/Y6)	Miss R Randall Mr G Macklin (TA) Mrs A Priday (TA)
Head teacher, Mrs A Cooke School Business Manager, Mrs N Elliott School administrator, Mrs K Webb	

Staff news

In last year's annual report, I wrote about how lucky we were to have had stability in our staff for a few years. I should have stayed quiet... We were very sad to lose Miss Murton to the University of Gloucestershire this year, but we welcomed Mr Clark to class 4. Mrs MacNamara moved to a co-head role with Mrs Cooke from May 16 to May 17, with Mrs MacNamara assuming the head's role on a Monday. We will be saying sad farewells to Miss Gilbert and Mr Clark at the end of the summer term, and we wish them all good luck in their new roles.

Staff professional development

Slimbridge Primary School invests in staff training for the benefit of its pupils and staff. Over the course of the year, teaching and support staff have attended many training sessions within the Tyndale cluster, with the Stroud Area Schools and nationally. All teachers have attended training session for the subjects for which they are lead coordinators for the School.

On the Inset day on 23 June, Slimbridge hosted a day led by Mike Askew, a big name in maths teaching, that was attended by all Slimbridge teachers and Teaching Assistants, as well as teachers from other local schools. This builds on work that School has done in recent years to look at different ways of helping children become confident with numbers and maths.

Staff have also attended Talk4writing training on developing writing skills across the School. And we are delighted that, thanks to funding from FOSS and elsewhere, we have been able to introduce the 'Thrive' scheme to School, with Mrs MacNamara and Miss Lucia attending Thrive training. Thrive looks at children's social and emotional development so staff can use different strategies for children behaving in different ways. If you are interested in Thrive, there's more information at www.thriveapproach.com.

Other training and development sessions attended by staff this year include:

- How to be brilliant (Mrs Cooke)
- First Aid and Safeguarding
- Mental Health First Aid (Mrs MacNamara)
- Heads' briefing days and curriculum development (Mrs Cooke and Mrs MacNamara)
- 'Bounce' workshop (developing a growth mindset) (Mrs Cooke)
- 'Pobble' global literacy initiative for sharing writing
- Talk for writing (all staff; Pie Corbett, training lead, taught children in the School).

Extracurricular activities

School clubs

The Governing Body recognises and thanks the staff, parents and, in some cases, children, for all the time they offer to out-of-school and lunchtime activities. This year the School has offered a range of clubs, including:

- coding
- cross-country and athletics
- cookery
- drama
- rounders
- rugby
- football
- gardening
- dance

Sporting activities

Staff from Superstars have provided children with PE and games lessons, and the School used Superstars as the provider of our after-school club once again this year.

This year, Slimbridge School children attended:

- the swimming gala (we won!)
- district athletics meetings
- schools cross-country meetings

Music

Music, in particular, has become an important part of life at Slimbridge. Our older children are fortunate to have Mrs Carter, a specialist music teacher, for their weekly lessons. Mrs Carter and Madame Tilly have also established the first Slimbridge School Orchestra this year. An extraordinary number of children now play an instrument, and the School Orchestra, recorder and ukulele groups have played at external events throughout the year. The School Orchestra, for example, competed in the Cheltenham Music Festival primary schools competition this year. We are very grateful to both teachers for the amount of time they have volunteered so the children could enjoy these activities.

Activities, visits and trips

A range of activities has been used to support class-based work this year.

- Class 5 looked at sustainability at the WWT
- Year 2 went to see some meerkats at a nearby wildlife park
- Year 5 had a French day at Rednock
- Some Year 5s took part in a technology competition
- This year's residential trip was at the South Cerney water park

- Pupils from Year 5 represented the School at a maths competition at Cheltenham College
- The School Orchestra performed at the Cheltenham Music Festival
- Class 5 went to an event linked with Cheltenham Literature Festival and involving an author they have studied in connection with their Shackleton project

All the children went to see the pantomime at Filton College before Christmas. All children have greatly enjoyed outdoor learning sessions at Redwood.

Our close links with the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust have been maintained this year with several whole-school and single-class activity days taking place. We are extremely lucky to have this wonderful facility on our doorstep and once again extend our thanks to all the staff there (and to Sue Belej, our ex-Governor and the WWT Learning Manager).

As I write this report, the drama production 'The Lion King' is in preparation for performances this week. It is great to see so many of our key stage 2 children involved in the acting and singing, and our thanks must go to Mr Ford, Miss Randall and Mrs Davies for all their hard work.

Children with special educational needs and disability

SENCo

Mrs Cooke is our SENCo, which means she coordinates the provision for children with SEND.

Support for children with SEND

As for all children identified as needing a boost in some areas, some children with SEND are withdrawn from class for one-to-one support, and/or work in small break-out groups and/or have in-class support as necessary. The School now uses various intervention programmes to help children, according to their individual needs; staff, and Governors on the Teaching and Learning committee, keep these interventions under regular review. The School also recognises that withdrawing children from curriculum learning can be disadvantageous, and staff try to ensure that a balance is achieved.

Helen Tilly and Sarah Kiddle have been the Governors with responsibility for SEND. The SEND Governor meets with the SENCo several times a year to monitor provision and progress in this area, and reports her findings to the Governing Body. The latest SEND report is available from the School's website.

Standards of behaviour

The conduct of pupils in the School is generally of a high standard. Our behaviour policy aims to provide a positive and consistent approach to behaviour management throughout the School. However, the parent survey highlighted concerns about the behaviour of a minority of pupils and the consistency with which the behaviour policy is applied. We have children with widely varying needs at school and, with our ethos of caring for all our children, sometimes different strategies are used for individual children. However, addressing concerns about behaviour is a priority and the staff are dedicated the Inset day at the start of the new academic year to developing a new behaviour scheme.

We enjoy celebrating success at Slimbridge, as you'll know if you've attended a Friday assembly! Children collect stickers in their 'passports' for effort and achievement in their 'Learning Powers' (Creativity, Perseverance, Communication and Reflection). When filled, these are exchanged for bronze, silver, and gold certificates. Teams meet regularly for assemblies throughout the year and this strengthens relationships across year groups. The whole School also celebrates individual successes with 'Proud of' certificates, which are presented, together with Learning Powers certificates, in front of the School and parents.

School security

We make every effort to ensure a safe and secure environment in which your children's education can take place. External doors are locked throughout the day. Access to the School can be obtained by ringing the bell at the main entrance. Note that pupils are under strict instructions not to open the front door to any adult, even if they are known (or even related) to them. Access to the playground and Little Otters playgroup is via an intercom to the office.

Complaints

Parents should discuss complaints with the class teacher in the first instance and then, if they consider the matter to be unresolved, with the head teacher. We have recently reviewed and revised our complaints procedure, and if you continue to be unhappy, there are further avenues to pursue. The policy is available from the School website and the School office.

Parents Forum

Following the annual parent survey last year, the Governors have established a Parents Forum, with representatives from each class, to strengthen the communication between the School/Governing Body and parents. Sarah Kiddle, a parent Governor, has been instrumental in setting this up. We are confident that the Forum will grow and develop as an effective means to strengthen the voice of parents and carers in developments at the School. For more information on the Forum, contact Sarah via Mrs Elliott in the Office.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, we are required to publish our equalities objectives, which include our Accessibility Plan and our Equality Policy. Equality Objectives 2016–19 can be found on the School website.

Public access to documents

Parents are entitled to have access to all the School's policies, copies of which are held in the School. Parents are also welcome to see the Standing Orders for the Constitution of the Governing Body and the terms of reference of the body and its committees. The latest agreed minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body are also available on request.

FOSS

FOSS have worked incredibly hard again this year, organising discos and film nights, the Christmas fair, the Easter egg hunt in Rosie's Wood and sponsored bike ride. They have applied for and been awarded the grant for the outdoor classroom, which will be a great addition to our facilities, and they have also applied for funding to improve the Little Otters play area. Their weekend of hard labour to tidy up the playground and prepare for the outdoor classroom and pollination area was greatly appreciated. We thank everyone who has given up their time to help and/or raise money that will benefit all our children.

School improvement plan

As part of the annual cycle of planning and reviewing for the School, the head and Governors analyse the current performance of the School ('school evaluation') and then agree a school improvement plan (SIP) for the forthcoming year (i.e. where are we and where would we like to be). Last year, some of our areas of focus included reading across the School and the development of the multi-academy trust to benefit Slimbridge pupils.

Attendance data

Our attendance has been 95.9% this year – the figure is lower than expected for reasons known and agreed by the Governors.

The Governors consider that children should be in school unless there is a very good reason for their absence. The School does not authorise absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. In these instances, a request for authorisation of absence should be made to Mrs Cooke.

Parking

Parking outside the School continues to be a source of irritation in the community. More worryingly, some parking puts children in immediate danger as they are forced onto the road to get around obstructed pavements. We continue to ask parents, grandparents and friends who are collecting or dropping off children to park responsibly, and we thank those parents who make the effort to park at the British Legion.

School holiday dates

The school term dates are on the School's website and are also available from the School office.

Financial statement

The School is on course to finish the financial year 2017–2018 within budget.

School session times

The school sessions are described in the School's prospectus. Parents and carers are reminded of the need for children to be at school on time to register and to start the day calmly.

Performance against national targets

The children who sat the tests this year coped brilliantly well. We try to make the whole process as stress-free as possible for the children taking the tests. Particular thanks go to the parents and staff who made breakfast for the Year 6s during their SATs week.

The children at Slimbridge Primary School are tested to allow direct comparisons between other children nationally in Years 1, 2 and 6.

Early Years

Children in Reception are assessed against the Early Years Foundation Stage. To achieve a 'good level of development', a child needs to be at 'expected' in communication and language, literacy and maths, personal social and emotional and physical development. This year, more of our children achieved a 'good level of development' than children did nationally (see Table below).

At the end of Year 1 children are tested on their phonetic knowledge using both regular and nonsense words. At Slimbridge, 80% of children reached the phonetics standard, which is in line with the national figure of 81% of children reaching the standard.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2016/17

% of pupils achieving good level of development		
	School	National [from 15/16]
All pupil (14)	84	66
Boys (6)	66	59
Girls (8)	100	74

KS1 attainment

At KS1 (Year 2) all assessments are based on teacher assessment, although Slimbridge School does use Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) in reading, grammar, punctuation, spelling and maths to support teacher assessments.

Attainment (17 children)			
% of children at:			
		Expected standard	Greater depth
Reading	Slimbridge	70	12
	National	74	24
Writing	Slimbridge	70	6
	National	65	13
Maths	Slimbridge	76	6
	National	73	18
Science	Slimbridge	87.5	-
	National	82	-

KS2 attainment

Most pupils are expected to achieve a standardised score of 100 or above by the end of key stage 2, this is an 'expected' attainment. Assessments are based on SATs results, except for writing, which is assessed by the class teacher.

	Attainment (16 children)			
	% of pupils at:			
	Expected		Greater depth	
	Slimbridge	National (interim)	Slimbridge	National (interim)
Reading	81	71	56	
Writing	69	76	12.5	
Maths	75	75	18.8	
Combined reading, writing, maths	63	61	12.5	5
Grammar and spelling	81	72	37.5	22
Science (teacher assessed)	72	81	–	–