



Barton Church of England (VA) Primary School

Governors' Newsletter

Issue 29: Autumn 2024

We have been delighted to welcome a number of new staff members this year, who have quickly integrated into a strong and cohesive staff team. Curriculum development is ongoing, adapting to the requirements of our changing cohorts and new class structures. In particular, a new "spiral" RWE (religious and worldviews education) curriculum has been introduced, ensuring pupils revisit and build on their learning of world faiths and non-religious world views year-on-year.

We are also pleased to welcome so many new pupils this term, both within Reception and higher up the school, demonstrating that Barton remains a school of choice well beyond our immediate catchment area. Within this context, our five-class structure for 2024-25 is proving to be a great success.

The school's financial situation remains challenging and budget pressures continue to increase. We are enormously grateful to families, wider community members and to FOBS for their support and fundraising efforts to date and look forward to many more events and sponsored activities in the new year.

Staff and governors are eagerly anticipating our SIAMS inspection which is due some time this academic year. The school is in a strong place to demonstrate our lived vision and values and their impact on our flourishing school community.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome two new governors this term. Katie Norman has joined us as a parent governor and Charlie Lankester as a new Foundation Governor. We look forward to working together to support Barton in the coming years.

The governors welcome comments about what we do and what we could be doing better. If you would like to contact us, please email:

chair@barton.cambs.sch.uk or clerk@barton.cambs.sch.uk

Report from Full Governing Body (FGB)



*Caroline Parsons is the Chair of Governors.
Caroline is a Co-Opted Governor.*

This term in their FGB meetings the governors have raised standards by:

- discussing wellbeing, ensuring that new teachers and pupils are settling in well and that high quality teaching and learning continues to be provided for all cohorts
- electing new chair, vice chair and link governor roles to most effectively share the responsibilities of the Governing Body and ensure effective monitoring of the curriculum
- discussing governor recruitment, how best to fill vacant roles and

identifying the skills needed to ensure that the governing body achieves its strategic priorities

- examining the new Yearly Operational Plan for 2024-25 and considering how monitoring visits planned from this will support the aims within the Three Year Strategic Plan
- discussing music provision and how to ensure that music is given a high priority within school following the departure of the previous music leads
- examining the options to re-design the school website to ensure that it reflects the school's vision, values and ethos, is easy to navigate and is attractive to prospective families
- looking at attainment data for pupils across the school, welcoming the strong foundations in reading and maths and ensuring that focus is given to improving outcomes in writing in line with the objectives in the Three Year Strategic Plan
- reviewing the appraisal documentation for the Headteacher, Teachers and TAs to ensure that the targets are SMART and have a coherent strategic focus to drive the school forward
- examining the responses to the recent governor individual and whole-board self-evaluations, identifying training requirements to augment the existing skill set and ensure that the governing body can fulfil its statutory obligations
- acknowledging the success of the five-class structure this year and the challenges of reverting back to a four-class structure for 2025/26

Report from the Standards Committee



*Louise Bowes is Chair of the Standards Committee.
Louise is a Foundation Governor.*

This term in their Standards Committee meetings the governors have raised standards by:

- examining the national curriculum requirements and whole school curriculum plan to ensure that Barton complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum and provides an enriching and stimulating curriculum meeting the needs of our changing cohorts
- welcoming the comprehensive induction programme and support given to new members of staff to ensure that they settle quickly into their roles and feel part of a cohesive team
- looking at baseline information for pupil progress and attainment, welcoming the in-depth discussions that are taking place to review pupils' progress, including the significant number of new pupils to the school, to ensure they are provided with the best possible support to assist them with their learning
- agreeing to focus this year's pupil consultation on the experience of pupils new to the school as well as gaining feedback from existing pupils on how the Barton values impact the way in which they treat others, to ensure that pupils' voice is heard and that they are able to take an active role in shaping decision-making within school
- welcoming the introduction of the new RWE spiral curriculum combining elements from

“Understanding Christianity” and the “Emmanuel Project” to ensure that it complies with the requirements for Voluntary Aided schools and provides pupils with a rounded and stimulating learning experience

- examining data relating to attendance, ensuring that parents are aware of the new statutory guidance and Attendance Policy, and the impact of low attendance and lateness on pupils’ learning and attainment
- welcoming the opportunities for pupils to participate fully in school life, taking on additional roles to develop personal skills such as leadership, communication and teamwork
- discussing the importance of resourcing and providing a “language-rich environment”, particularly for EAL pupils, to ensure that teaching and learning is accessible for all

Report from the Resources Committee



*Andy Higgins is Chair of the Resources Committee.
Andy is a Parent Governor.*

This term in their Resources Committee meetings the governors have raised standards by:

- reviewing annual financial statements to ensure that they are up-to-date and relevant for 2024/25 and that they provide a suitable framework for governors to carry out one of their core

functions of ensuring financial probity

- reviewing Sports Premium Funding to ensure that resources are being spent wisely and addressing the needs of the school
- receiving updates concerning premises priorities for buildings maintenance and new projects; agreeing how to proceed with streams of premises funding to ensure best use of available resources
- reviewing personnel policies to ensure that they comply with the latest legislation and guidance and meet the needs of Barton School
- reviewing our pay policy following the conclusion of negotiations between government and unions and agreeing its implementation
- considering changes to IT systems in order to maintain continuity of service, minimise disruption to office staff and obtain best value
- scrutinizing new broadband provider options in anticipation of local authority provision ending and deciding on the best contract option for Barton based on an agreed scoring system
- scrutinising the latest budget reports to ensure that we are making the best use of financial resources in a challenging financial year
- reviewing expiring contracts to identify whether savings can be made whilst balancing the impact of change on school staff and procedures
- reviewing personnel policies to ensure that they comply with the latest legislation and guidance and meet the needs of Barton School.

Governor Vacancies

We are seeking to appoint three Foundation Governors to our Governing Body. Governors play a vital part in setting the vision and strategic direction for the school, and a key role in ensuring financial and educational accountability. Foundation Governors have a further responsibility in promoting the school's religious character and are an active link between the Church and school.

If you are interested in becoming a governor at Barton, please contact Caroline Parsons at chair@barton.cambs.sch.uk