



Barton Church of England (VA) Primary School

Governors' Newsletter

Issue 26: Autumn 2023

We have started this academic year with a strong, cohesive and stable staff team, building on the successful induction programmes from last year and continuing curriculum development to meet the requirements of our changing cohorts and class structures. We have also been delighted to welcome so many new pupils, both within Reception and higher up the school, confirming Barton Primary as a school of choice for many villages beyond our immediate catchment.

Following the stakeholder contributions to the development of our new Three Year Strategic Plan last Spring and Summer, governors and staff are working together towards the agreed strategic targets, with governor monitoring and visits focused on our specific, identified areas for school development and improvement. We hope that this will bring even greater clarity of purpose as we work together to provide the best school experience possible for our pupils and within the wider community.

In September we started this year with our new "in-house" lunch provision, employing catering staff directly and with responsibility for menu planning, meeting regulatory requirements and ordering of ingredients for the first time. We thank the catering and office staff for their hard work to ensure the transition from our previous catering company was as smooth and successful as possible. These new arrangements have been put in place against a backdrop of increasing food prices, so we are grateful to those of you who responded to the recent survey on the lunches. We will be considering the responses carefully as we aim to provide a lunch for as many children as possible whilst meeting nutritional standards and running a financially sustainable service.

Finally, those families who were with the school last year will recall that we wrote to you highlighting the financial pressures that we are facing. These pressures continue into this academic year. We are so grateful for the responses we have received so far in offers of practical help, resources and donations. We ask that you continue to consider how you can support the school, and welcome your ideas over the coming year. If any of the new families to the school would like more information on how you can help and support the school community, please do get in touch.

The governors welcome comments about what we do and what we could be doing better. If you would like to contact us, please do so through the school office or 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:

- considering how governor monitoring visits will link directly to the targets within the Three Year Strategic Plan
- reviewing progress against the Equality Objectives to identify any

issues to be addressed in order to meet the desired outcomes

- establishing a sub-committee to discuss the viability of the swimming pool and investigate alternative use of facilities/provision to ensure that financial resources are spent as efficiently and effectively as possible
- keeping abreast of the ongoing issue of academisation, meeting with Andrew Read, Diocesan Director of Education to seek up to date information on the Diocesan and non-church Multi-Academy Trusts
- reviewing progress data for pupil premium children and strategies for improving their attainment to ensure that the pupil premium grant is being spent effectively.
- discussing pupil voice from the recent governor safeguarding visit and ensuring that initiatives have been put in place to address the issues raised, prioritising a robust safeguarding culture throughout school
- considering the ongoing pressures on staff in a small school, supporting the Headteacher in providing creative solutions to improve wellbeing
- examining the results from the recent governing body and individual governor audits, identifying training requirements to augment the existing skill set and ensure that the governing body is able to fulfil its statutory obligations.

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, curriculum plans and information available on the school website to ensure that Barton complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum
- discussing the strategic focus of governor monitoring visits so that governors are able to obtain the information needed to ensure consistency and effectiveness in their role of strategic overseers
- considering how to consult with pupils this year to ensure that their voice is heard as stakeholders and that they continue to take an active role in their own education
- looking at the baseline figures for pupil progress and attainment and discussing availability of additional resources to address the need of larger classes and provide the best possible support to assist pupils with their learning
- verifying that interventions and other measures are already in place for vulnerable groups to ensure equality of access to the curriculum
- discussing the library project with a view to creating a designated space which will enhance pupils' experience of reading and provide resources to improve progress and

attainment levels in English for the school as a whole

Report from the Resources Committee



*Cathy Martin is Chair of the Resources Committee and Vice-Chair of Governors.
Cathy is a Foundation 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 2023/24 and that they provide a suitable framework for governors to carry out one of their core functions of ensuring financial probity
- evaluating the effectiveness of the new catering provision to date, and planning a formal consultation with parents and pupils to ensure that school provides high-quality meals, variety of menus, value for money and the best level of uptake possible
- reviewing Sports Premium and Tutor-led Funding to ensure that resources are being spent wisely and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups
- receiving updates concerning premises priorities for buildings maintenance and new projects; agreeing how to proceed with the energy grant, and other streams of premises funding to ensure best use of available resources
- agreeing to ringfence donations for the library project to ensure that the governor contribution of 10% is in place and that works are able to go ahead as soon as

additional funding could be secured

- reviewing personnel policies to ensure that they comply with the latest legislation and guidance and meet the needs of Barton School

Foundation Governor – Vacancies

We are seeking to appoint a Foundation Governor. In addition to playing 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 able to offer this and are interested in becoming a governor at Barton, please contact Caroline Parsons at chair@barton.cambs.sch.uk