Furzedown Primary School
Flourishing from a Firm Foundation
Headteacher: Mrs D Morris
70 Beclands Road, London, SW17 9TJ
t: 020 8672 3480
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www.FurzedownSchool.co.uk

Governors' Annual Statement
Academic Year 2023/2024

Introduction

The past two years have been a period of significant change at Furzedown as we welcomed a new Headteacher in Dionne Morris. As a board of governors our role is to be responsible for overseeing the management side of the school: strategy, policy, budgeting and staffing. Our role hopefully enables the school to run as effectively as possible, working alongside our senior leaders and supporting teachers to provide excellent education to children. It has been a delight as a governor team to see the school go from strength to strength; retaining the strong sense of community that has always been present at Furzedown, but bringing this up to date with the modern environment within which the school exists. Whilst change can be challenging, we have seen members across the school community step up to embrace new ways of working, new expected standards and new structures, all of which have led to better outcomes for pupils, a more inclusive environment across the community, and a firming financial footing for the school.

This report details the governing board's membership, structure and activities across the year and our summary of the school's activity and development during the year.

1. **Governing Board Members and Structure**

The make-up governing board has been through significant change this year. A number of longstanding members had stayed beyond the end of their term to support the school the transition to a new head. The departure of this cohort in 2023/2023 led to us needing to recruit a number of new members to ensure we were fully staffed. Following a successful recruitment drive during the summer term of 2023, using Governors for Schools, local authority events, school and local social media, we welcomed six new governors to the team for the start of this academic year. During the year, we were left by Simone Uja, Ishbel Maclean and Deborah McFarlane who all resigned due to work commitments, and we said goodbye to Sophie Anderson and Charley Jarrett whose terms ended. We extended particular thanks to Charley who had completed two full terms and an additional two years (ten years in total) to provide continuity. Charley's commitment to the school and contribution to the committees he chaired has been greatly appreciated.

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Governor	Status	Term Expires	Link Responsibility
Adnan Bajwa	Parent Governor	05/09/2025	Staffing and Professional Development
Dominic Barnet	Teacher	01/09/2027	Staff Member
Laura Brown	Co-opted	05/01/2028	Special Educational Needs & Disability
Edwin Bellamy	Co-opted	01/09/2027	Pupil Premium
Sandra Brekalo	Co-opted	01/09/2027	Finance
David Jones	Co-opted	05/01/2028	Curriculum, Enrichment and Standards
Carmen Harabagiu	Co-opted	01/09/2027	School Development Plan
Bennet Morris	Co-opted Vice Chair	01/09/2027	Safeguarding
Rebecca Wilson	Parent governor, Chair	05/09/2025	Governance and Compliance
Catriona Watt-Smith	Co-opted	01/06/2026	Community and Parental Engagement
Clare Harkey	Co-opted	5/9/2025 - resigned	
Charley Jarrett	Co-opted	24/6/2024 - term ended	
Sophie Anderson	Co-opted	13/12/24 - term ended	
Ishbel Maclean	Co-opted	03/01/2025 - resigned 20/6/2024	
Deborah McFarlane	Local authority	21/11/2025 - resigned 20/6/2024	
Simone Ujah	Co-opted	01/06/2026 resigned 23/1/2024	

The headteacher, Dionne Morris, also sits on the board, and Annaliese van den Berg attends meetings in her role as Deputy Headteacher.

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Committees, Meetings and Attendance

The board is structured into two committees:

- Curriculum and achievement;
- Finance and Resources.

Two sub-committees are convened during the Autumn term to cover the Headteacher's appraisal and teacher pay.

The board has a regular pattern of meetings each term:

- Each subcommittee meets once, held remotely;
- Governor working morning, held in person in school;
- Full governing board, held in person in school.

In addition to these:

- An annual business meeting is held in September to plan the year;
- Link governors are expected to meet with key stakeholders each term;
- Sub-committee meetings held during the Autumn term.

Committee Members as of July 2024

Finance and Resources Committee	**Curriculum and Achievement Committee**
Sandra Brekalo - Chair	David Jones - Chair
Edwin Bellamy	Catriona Watt-Smith
Carmen Harabagiu	Adnan Bajwa
Bennet Morris	Laura Brown
Rebecca Wilson	Dominic Barnet
	Rebecca Wilson

Recruitment

The governors will be conducting a skills and diversity audit early in the Autumn term of the next academic year and will do a further round of recruitment to fill any specific gaps and increase numbers on each committee to ensure they can remain quorate if some members are absent. We will be looking to recruit 2-3 more governors.

Clerking

The clerk to the governors is Janelle Henry, via Wandsworth Clerking Service.

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Training

The following training has been undertaken by some or all members of the governing board during this academic year:

Subject	Provider
Induction for maintained school governors	Governor hub
Finance basics pathway	Governor hub
Safeguarding for Governors	TES
GDPR	TES
Safeguarding Link Governor Training	Governor hub
Governance of Safeguarding'	TES Educare site
Budget Setting - A Best Practice Approach SCHFIN130 (Wandsworth)	SCHFIN130 (Wandsworth)
The effective governance of safeguarding - culture, context, & compliance (NGA)	NGA
Governors' Essentials: Induction for new & recently appointed governors SCH GOV210 - half day training.	Wandsworth - SCH GOV210 - half day training.
Understanding governors' responsibilities around digital safeguarding with Smoothwall	Smoothwall
Understanding Epilepsy - Mandatory	TES Educare site
Understanding Anaphylaxis - Mandatory	TES Educare site
Understanding Asthma - Mandatory	TES Educare site
Budget Setting - A Best Practice Approach SCHFIN130 (Wandsworth)	SCHFIN130 (Wandsworth)
Using the SFVS to identify improvement opportunities	Wandsworth
Governance of Safeguarding	TES Educare
Keeping Children Safe in Education	TES

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2. **Statement from the Board**

School Development Plan

There is a comprehensive school development plan in place which is shared regularly with parents and drives all activity across the school. As a board, we regularly assess how the school is progressing in delivery of this plan and support the leadership to prioritise and determine their focus. We recognise the ambition of the leadership team

Staffing

The governors are continually impressed by the dedication of the staff and their ambition for every child. A staffing restructure was completed in the summer of 2023. Amongst other things, this now brings all teaching assistants onto regular contracts including INSET days, allowing more training and improved communication between staff. We have been heartened to see the programme of continuing professional development lead by the Head to ensure every teacher receives regular feedback and coaching, and opportunities to develop their own teaching techniques and standards. During the year we have said goodbye to two members of teaching staff, and will be welcoming a new Assistant Head, Early Career Teacher and music specialist for September.

Budget challenge

The school budget continues to be the biggest challenge for the school. No additional central funding was provided for teacher pay-rises when they were awarded, and as with all of us, the school has faced inflationary pressures on general costs. Long-term underspending on school premises and facilities has also come into focus and significant infrastructure spending has been required to ensure the building is safe and fit for purpose. The budget was further fit with additional costs to transport meals in from a local secondary school due to the on-site kitchen being deemed unfit at the start of the year due to health and safety concerns.

The governors would like to thank the Head and the School Business Manager for their prudent budget management throughout the year which has enabled spending where it is needed (curriculum provision, building maintenance and improvement) whilst moving the school into a more stable financial situation long term. The school ended with an in-year deficit but has a clear three-year plan to move into surplus.

The greatest source of income for the school is the per-pupil grant which is directly related to pupil numbers. External marketing of the school has been key and we were delighted to learn that we have two full classes of children for September 2024 intake, having previously had to reduce to single form entry in September 2022.

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EDI

The governors have been fully supportive of the school's focus on equity, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of the school during this academic year. Whilst of course there is much still to achieve, the school is now recognised within Wandsworth as being highly proactive and well regarded for its work in this area.

The partnership between Lindsay Snook, School Inclusion Manager, and Hayley Godden, the Child and Family Link Worker has supported improvements in attendance across the school, with overall numbers regularly hitting our target of 96%, and a significant improvement in attendance by children who had previously been persistent non-attenders. The work Ms Snook has been doing has also widened the number of children able to receive additional support to enable them to access the curriculum.

Curriculum

The governors have this year taken deep dives into reading, maths and inclusion on our working days. Much work has been done across the staff team to ensure there is a leader in place for every subject, with personal mastery and lead staff championing standards across the school.

The curriculum continues to be brought to life in creative ways for the children; the governors were particularly pleased to be in school for World Book Day where we saw the whole school parade in their costumes with their favourite books.

Teachers are ambitious for every child and governors have seen how each child's potential is mapped and monitored throughout the year. Furzedown pays particular attention to how more vulnerable groups within our community are served with specific strategies in place to ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to achieve academically.

Furzedown Primary School Results Overview 2024

Our results at the end of Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 continue to remain above National Standards *(KS1 is compared to previous years as national data is still unavailable)*

	Furzedown EXS (at or above Expected Standard)			**National EXS (at or above Expected Standard)**	**Furzedown GDS (Greater Depth)**				**National GDS (Greater Depth)**
KS2	**2024**	**2023**	**2022**	**2024**	**2024**	**2023**	**2022**		**2024**
Reading	**80%**	80%	85%	74%	**33%**	37%	25%		28%
Writing	**80%**	80%	81%	73%	**35%**	17%	8%		13%
Maths	**75%**	83%	73%	72%	**27%**	28%	19%		24%
GPS	**80%**	89%	80%	72%	**33%**	33%	32%		32%

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KS2 Combined RWM (Reading, Writing, Maths)	Furzedown 2024	Furzedown 2023	Furzedown 2022	National 2024
% EXS	63%	65%	67%	61%
% GDS	10%	9%	4%	8%

	Furzedown EXS (at or above Expected Standard)			National EXS (Expected Standard) 2024	Furzedown GDS (Greater Depth) 2024			National GDS (Greater Depth) 2024
KS1	2024	2023	2022	TBC	2024	2023	2022	TBC
Reading	80%	71%	79%		21%	22%	20%	
Writing	73%	73%	71%		14%	14%	5%	
Maths	77%	71%	71%		31%	14%	11%	

Y1 Phonics pass	Furzedown	National
2024	66% ***76%** after chn who did not sit the test are removed*	80%
2023	84% **91% after chn who did not sit the test are removed*	79%
2022	57% **64% after chn who did not sit the test are removed*	76%

EYFS GLD (Good Level of Development)	Furzedown	National
2024	69%	67%
2023	66%	67%
2022	65%	65%

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Parents and Community

Communication and engagement with parents has grown through the year with termly parent forums offering an opportunity to gain an update on key themes in the school and ask questions of the school leaders. Governors have also been available for parents through playground presence at their termly working days.

Conclusion

The Governors would like to thank the whole school community for their contributions to making Furzedown Primary School such a special place.

In a borough facing declining pupil numbers in most schools, we are delighted that Furzewdown is one of very schools bucking this trend and that more and more families are choosing to join us for their children's education. Whilst there is always more work to be done across curriculum, inclusion, premises, and financial management, we are confident that the school has the right vision in place and solid plans to support that vision in order to continue their work in all of these areas to deliver the best outcomes for our children.

October 2024