

Annual Review of the Governors 2018-19

Furzedown Primary School: Our Mission

We aim to become an inspirational school to produce good citizens for the future in an atmosphere that promotes confidence, high academic achievement, physical health and emotional well-being.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Role of the Governing Body is to (1) Provide strategic direction for the school; (2) Act as a critical friend to the Head Teacher; and (3) Ensure accountability and financial oversight.

The Governors

Rebecca McIlroy, Chair of Governors

Alastair Cowie, Co-vice-chair and Chair of Extended Provision and Premises Committee

Simon Hill, Co-vice-chair (re-elected as a Parent Governor)

Chris Coates, Chair of Finance Committee

Katherine Williams, Chair of Pupils and Curriculum Committee

Charley Jarrett

Jack Talbot

Clare Harkey

Nicholas How (Joined as a Community Governor, Summer 2019)

Staff Governors

Monica Kitchlew-Wilson

Caron Heywood

Nick Dutton

Melanie Jamieson (Clerk to the Governors)

What we do

Three sub-committees meet once every term:

- Pupils and Curriculum
- Finance and Staffing
- Premises and Extended Provision.

The sub-committees receive updates on progress in key areas and ensure that agreed developments are on track. Governors' attendance at meetings has been 89% this year (up from 76% last year). We are pleased to welcome Nick How as our newest governor from Autumn 2019. The sub-committees also perform a key role in ensuring the School's policies and procedures comply with our statutory obligations. The Full Governing Body meets once a term. Its agenda includes an update on agreed priorities from the Head Teacher and reports from the chair of each sub-committee.

Governors also spend a day each term at school meeting staff and pupils, looking at their work and receiving updates from subject leads on areas of focus.

Key Stage 2 Results for the year ending in July 2019 were published over the Summer. The percentage of children reaching Expected Standard in core subjects was as follows:

	2019	2018	2017
Reading Test	65%	72%	79%
Writing (Teacher Assessed)	85%	87%	75%
Maths Test	67%	80%	82%
Reading, Writing, Maths Test / Teacher Assessed	57%	65%	72%

Governors and the senior team will be spending time this (Autumn) term digging into the data in more detail. We will be looking into the results for the 2019 cohort (all now at secondary school) in order to understand the context of students who didn't meet the expected standard.

Our school's broad curriculum continues to focus on the key skills of reading, writing and maths. Developing reading, improving writing in different contexts and ensuring all students achieve their full potential in maths continue to be prioritised.

Wandsworth shared the local authorities manifesto commitments in the autumn term 2018. It's particularly encouraging to see many of our school's longstanding strengths among these:

- Mentoring for those falling behind – At Furzedown we pride on ourselves as a school that seeks to support children to achieve their potential whatever their starting point.
- Arts and opportunities to showcase achievements in these – Furzedown's music and arts continue to shine brightly with opportunities for all.
- The next generation of leaders – We have a clear plan for succession within the staff team at Furzedown. Our children know what it means to lead by example, too.
- Investment in outdoor play – for us, the link between outdoor play and outdoor learning is clear to any visitor to the school.
- Primary schools to offer outstanding nursery provision – A recent visitor to our school commented on the warm welcome they received from children and the wide range of purposeful activities on display.

Pupils and Curriculum

This year Outdoor Learning has clearly been a priority for teaching and learning at Furzedown. Children have taken a lead role in the redevelopment of our garden and outside space. Whilst the school has always made the most of the local area for trips and visits, the most noticeable development for us, as governors, has been to see the development of the grassy area at the centre of the school site. It has been wonderful to see the whole school playing a part in designing and creating their outdoor classroom. Additionally, teaching staff have devised a checklist of 50 things to do outdoors, which the children have been ticking off.

Despite continued budget constraints, Furzedown continues to be a school which values a creative curriculum. Art, Music and PE continue to be taught by specialists and remain a strength of the school. Every child from Year 1 to Year 6 enjoys a weekly swimming lesson, which continues to be subsidised from the school budget. The school believes that swimming is an essential life skill, not to mention the benefits of physical exercise.

A highlight for all governors are our termly days in school. This year these have included updates from subject coordinators for Geography, History and English to name a few. It's inspiring to hear particularly the training and development that teachers get out of it, and how it sits across the curriculum. It's always fascinating to hear what the children think about their learning and also having the opportunity to join them for lunch.

As governors, we are proud of the broad and balanced curriculum that Furzedown offers its pupils. We are confident that children leave the school having had many, many opportunities and experiences to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. It is heartening that this high quality provision is recognised by outside agencies. This year, our gold marks in Science and Geography have been successfully renewed.

One of our responsibilities as governors is to ensure the school's mission statement is up to date and relevant. This term we have written to the School Council and asked them for their help in making sure that our vision truly reflects the ethos of the school. We are looking forward to meeting with them next term when they will share their thoughts and findings with us.

Chair, Katherine Williams

Premises and Extended Provision

Despite continuing funding constraints the school has been able to address a number of pressing areas of maintenance and development in 2018-19. In particular, after considerable effort to ensure we obtained value for money, capital funding was used to complete repairs to the flat roof. We have also been able to make a number of necessary renovations to the playground to ensure a safe and stimulating area for the children and to improve our facilities, for example by fitting new electrical points outside. We have also made good progress on the project to develop the garden space in the school's central courtyard - a project which the children have been very much involved in planning and delivering! We are grateful to the PTA for their fundraising efforts to support a number of the maintenance and development work this year and to all those who have donated, and given up the time to help keep the school at its best. The Summer Fair in July was a real highlight of the year once again. As in previous years, school staff and parents have made a valuable contribution again this year with various decorating work and gardening around the school.

The school continue to pride itself on its extended provision additional to the core the school timetable. Our longer, one-hour breakfast club introduced last year is now bedded in and is well attended, as are the variety of after school clubs which provide opportunities for the children to experience a range of sporting, musical and other extracurricular activities at relatively modest cost.

Chair, Alastair Cowie

Finance and Staffing

It was with great sadness we learned of the death of Clare Tweedley a much loved and long serving member of staff. Clare's contributions to the school were many, varied and of great importance to the school. She will particular missed for her work with the youngest children

in the Early Years Foundation Stage where she excelled over the all the years she was with us.

Next term we will be saying goodbye to David White who will be retiring as school caretaker. Huge thanks to David for all his work over the years. We wish him well.

The budget shortfall continues to be problem but the rolling deficit is diminishing at the predicted rate, this does of course cause problems year on year until resolved. Having said that we would not be able to make the progress we have were it not for the help, support commitment of our wonderful staff.

The contributions of the parents and support of the PTA mean that essential materials and the activities that we at Furzedown consider to be essential parts of the educational opportunities for our young people continue to be provided.

Our solar panels continue to make a substantial contribution to the energy bills this year.

We have supported the school journey and funded the minibuses, we are grateful to the Variety Club for our sunshine bus.

The future of Cedars Hall and the dinner hall were part of our discussions throughout the year. We look forward to seeing the works completed.

Regular and close scrutiny of the school's budget with information from the head and finance officers help us keep running as efficiently as we do.

Chair, Chris Coates

Looking ahead we know that schools in Wandsworth and nationally will come under greater continued scrutiny for how they link the way they use their resources to have the greatest positive impact for every child. We know there will be tough decisions to make, but are incredibly excited about the opportunities that exist for Furzedown and every child we have the privilege of welcoming through our gates.

The governors can be contacted via the school office on 0208 672 3480 or at admin@furzedown.wandsworth.sch.uk