

# Horningsham Primary School

## Governor's Annual Statement

### 2024-2025



Horningsham School is a flourishing rural primary school on the Longleat Estate with an excellent record of academic achievement, enhanced by the availability of a wide range of educational experiences, many developed in partnership with Longleat. This report aims to describe the work of the Governing Body in the academic year 2024-2025.

#### Who We Are

Horningsham Primary School is a maintained school within the Wiltshire Local Authority. The Governing Body consists of two parent governors elected by the parents, a staff governor, five governors from the local community and the Headteacher. More about the governors can be found on the school's website.

#### What We Do

The Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction
- Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Ensuring the voice of stakeholders is heard

The governors also ensure that the school complies fully with statutory safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding covers health and safety in the classroom and the children's physical & emotional wellbeing. We regularly monitor processes and procedures to ensure all school staff have been safely recruited; made sure that training of staff is up to date and procedures followed to maintain a safe environment for our children. We review the safeguarding audit completed by school which provides assurance on the robustness of systems and procedures. The lead safeguarding governor is the Chair of Governors, Stephanie Storrar. She meets at least termly with the Headteacher to provide support, to confirm that procedures are in place and being followed to keep children safe, and to complete the annual safeguarding audit. All Governors have attended online safeguarding training delivered by the Local Authority. All staff and Governors receive Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and a link to the full version. The Single Central Record is managed by the Admin and Finance Officer and is monitored by the Headteacher every half term.

In carrying out these responsibilities, governors work with our experienced, dedicated, and enthusiastic staff team to support and challenge ideas to ensure the children's educational experience and achievements are the best that they can be. The Governing Body continually seeks improvement in the provision of education at our school. We are outward looking and take a holistic approach when considering the development of all our children. Working closely with the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team and all members of staff, we are constantly striving to improve and develop the school in all areas.

This aim of this report is to share the strategic work of the governing body in relation to school improvement and the discharge of statutory duties. The day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the senior leadership team.

#### How We Organise Our Work

The Full Governing Body (FGB) meets four times a year. In between there are three sub-committees who meet as often as necessary to cover the tasks the governors are expected to do and report back on their work to the FGB.

**Resources:** Works with the Headteacher and the School Administrator to draw up the budget and monitor the finances throughout the year. The Sub-committee also keeps an eye on the school's premises ensuring that improvements and maintenance are completed efficiently and cost-effectively. It also supports the Headteacher and staff in communicating with parents and the wider community, monitors the website and organises the annual parent survey

**Standards:** Monitors the content of the school's curriculum and the attainment and progress of the children

**Staffing:** Oversees the recruitment of staff and any issues relating to pay and conditions

In addition, most governors undertake individual responsibility for particular areas of the school's work: special educational needs, safeguarding, health and safety and curriculum areas of maths and English. This work involves visiting the school and spending time with staff and children to understand more fully how these important areas are being managed and led. All governors are volunteers and give willingly of their time to support the school. Attendance at both FGB and the Sub-committees is excellent and reported on the school website

### **Impact of the Governing Body 2024-2025**

**Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction:** The School Development Plan (SDP) sets out the strategic aims and objectives for the year. The main targets for 2024-25 were to: develop a culture of writing for pleasure to raise standards and outcomes (this target was a collaborative one shared by all the Compass Group schools), to develop and finalise the curriculum mapping to ensure content and sequencing allows pupils to learn effectively and deepen their understanding of subjects, to share clear expectations around school attendance and punctuality and to build a culture of reflective practice that challenges staff to take ownership over their own development and improvement. All activities within the plan are fully costed and included in the budget. The governing body have regularly reviewed the progress of actions in the School Development Plan through monitoring visits and discussion in meetings.

#### **Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils**

The Governors look regularly and closely at the data which covers the educational attainment and progress of our children. At the end of Reception 82% of our children achieved a Good Level of Development, 14% higher than the National figures and 12% higher than Wiltshire as a whole. 100% of our Year 1 children achieved a score of 32 and above in the phonics screening test compared with 80% in schools nationally and 79% in schools in Wiltshire. Our Year 6 children achieved highly with 100% achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and grammar. 56% of children achieved the higher standard in reading, 26% above Wiltshire and 25% above schools nationally. 67% achieved the higher standard in grammar, 42% above Wiltshire and 37% above schools nationally. 89% of the children achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, compared with 59% in Wiltshire schools and 62% in schools nationally. The governors would like to thank all the staff for their passion and hard work in helping the children to achieve these results.

**A rich educational experience:** Scores in tests are important, but not everything. We are very fortunate to be able to work with staff at Longleat who visit the school, as well as providing opportunities to visit the estate and take part in projects such as the acorn collecting and planting for the Reception and Year 6 children. The school also provides a truly rich and rewarding programme of visits, activities, and projects to enhance their creative curriculum. The governors would like to thank the Headteacher and all the staff for their commitment and hard work in providing such a wonderful experience for our children.

**The effective and efficient performance management of staff:** Governors have overseen the operation of the school's appraisal policy considering the results of appraisals carried out by the Headteacher and agreed appropriate salary progression for eligible staff. A panel of governors worked with the local authority to recruit candidates for the headship at Horningsham. After a rigorous selection process governors were pleased to appoint the Acting Headteacher to the role of substantive headteacher from Easter 2025. Following this process, they interviewed the Acting Assistant Headteacher who was also appointed to the substantive role in the summer of 2025.

### **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent**

The Resources committee has worked closely with school to monitor income and costs against the budget which we approved at the start of the year, to ensure that our financial resources have been best utilised for the benefit of the children. The school's finances are carefully monitored to ensure that we minimise the risk of any overspends, which is a challenging factor given the shortage of funding. Our school has also continued to benefit in a significant way from the generosity of the Longleat Estate, who are also our landlord.

### **Ensuring the voice of stakeholders is heard**

Governors worked with staff to devise the parent questionnaire which was completed by 44% of families. 100% of parents who responded strongly agreed or agreed that: their child feels both happy and safe at the school, that the school supports their child's wider personal development and that the school instils values to promote positive behaviour from our pupils. 100% would recommend the school to others. The questionnaire gives parents the opportunity to identify areas that the school could improve. In 2024-2025 the identifiable actions were to: launch the new 'Festival of Friends' initiative to support children from Service Families, encourage parents to send snacks for children attending afterschool clubs, to introduce new non-physical playtime activities and resources to enhance breaktime experiences, to make greater use of the Village Hall field and to invite parents to focus groups to discuss key areas e.g. communication, learning. School has also worked closely with FOHPs again this year to provide more events for parents and children. FOHPs raised £10,438 in 2024-25 and is hoping to provide more events in 2025-26.

### **The Future**

Horningsham is a popular school as evidenced by the numbers of parents keen to get places. This is thanks to the commitment, enthusiasm and experience of the Headteacher and the staff team who have nurtured and developed a successful community school with a strong family feel where children feel valued and safe. We look forward to a productive year ahead and will continue to work with the Headteacher and all the staff for the benefit of all the children, staff and the school community.

Stephanie Storrar  
**Chair of Governors**

*Information about the use of Pupil Premium and Sports Grant can be found on our website.*