



Governors' Annual Report

2016-2017



INTRODUCTION FROM CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

I am very pleased once again to introduce this year's annual report of the Governors of Beetham School. How time flies! It seems merely weeks ago since last summer when I described an excellent year for Beetham School, growing to meet the needs and demands of the families it serves. What has changed? The excellence continues, with a team of Staff, Governors, Parents and Pupils all striving for improvement year on year - and all the evidence points to success on many fronts.

This report is primarily for the benefit of Parents and Carers, but will we hope also serve as a record of the past year for the general interest of all in our community. Please regard it as a short guided tour of some aspects of the School that you may possibly not have previously encountered.

My name is John Lomax: it is currently my privilege to serve as Chair of the Governing Body. We are fortunate indeed to have such a talented, committed and willing group of people who help to ensure that our School maintains its central role in our community.

The School Community comprises:

- **the Staff** of the School: the Headteacher, the teaching and support staff
- **the pupils** who are always so willing to help and kind to one another
- our pupils' **parents and carers** who reinforce the school's teaching and values at home
- the **Governing Body** - as representatives of the entire community of Beetham and around.

What does the Governing Body actually **do**? First of all, let me say what it **doesn't** do: interfere with the day-to-day running of the School. That is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Staff of the School.



Our duty as a Governing Body is

- to establish policies for the running of the School
- to monitor the execution of those policies, and
- to evaluate their effectiveness.

The last of those three is perhaps the most important. Constant self-evaluation of what, why and how we function is the road towards improvement. We have to challenge our own and each other's decisions to justify or amend our policies. We have a **good** if not **outstanding** School (to quote the language Ofsted uses, of which more below) - but we dare not fall into the trap of complacency!

You will read elsewhere in this report of the work of the various committees of the Governing Body - the Finance and Resources Committee ensuring that the budget is managed to meet our priorities, the Curriculum and Staffing Committee to make the detailed arrangements for advertising and filling such posts, and the Community and Welfare Committee which seeks to ensure cohesion between school and its entire constituency, whilst having careful regard for those essential **values** which mark out the distinctiveness that we believe our school has to offer.

The following pages will, I hope, offer a flavour of the past year. From the Governing Body's viewpoint, this has been another happy and successful year. Our meetings - usually two each term as a full Governing Body - aim to inform us all of the School's progress and to hear of any problems and pitfalls that may have arisen. We have **not** found ourselves in deep division or argument, although searching questions **are** put forward at our meetings which stimulate healthy debate. What is more, our meetings are concluded in good time and end in good spirits! We conduct other, more detailed business, in the three committees which each meet once termly.

The School has an open door policy and any parent or carer is free to raise any concerns they may have. Enquiries can be put to the Headteacher (regarding routine school matters) or, when appropriate, to any one of the Governors, including myself. Alternatively, an enquiry may be addressed to the Governing



Body through its Clerk (*see contact details below*). Unless it is a very simple yes/no matter, an enquiry will usually be directed to the next meeting of the Governing Body where the matter will be raised and a decision reached. All decisions are made by the Governors as a single corporate body: no one Governor is empowered to speak for the Governing Body as a whole.

The Governing Body is constituted to have twelve members:

Seven Foundation Governors - as a Church School, the majority of the Governing Body is nominated by the Parish Church Council and appointed by the Diocese. This year Jenny Beresford-Jones, Julian Handy, John Lomax, Jenny Marks, Viv Stirrup and Antony Wood, together with Reverend Linda as Vicar, have filled these roles. The regulations also require that, at the time of their appointment, at least two of the above are Parents/Carers of a pupil on the school roll. Currently Jenny, Julian and Antony all meet this criterion.

Two Parent Governors - these are elected by all registered parents/carers of the school's pupils: currently Chris Christou and Claire Kinnear serve in this role.

One Local Authority representative: Cumbria County Council has nominated Brian Smalley to serve in this capacity.

One Staff Governor elected by the teaching staff: Mrs Kirsty Klijn and additionally, the **Headteacher** is a Governor - Ms Wendy Nicholas.

Of the above, Julian Handy and Antony Wood both stand down this summer at the end of their periods of office after lengthy and valuable service to the school over recent years. Also, we shall lose the wise counsel and ministry of Reverend Linda who is taking retirement to return to Cheshire. We say farewell to all three with enormous gratitude for all they have done for Beetham School.

Steps have already been taken to complete the Governing Body and I expect to be able to announce the names of the three new Governors very soon now.



The Governing Body's business is administered by its Clerk Mrs Sally Coyle: in particular, she is responsible for taking down notes as minutes of the meetings, and dealing with correspondence. She can be contacted via the School or by e-mail at beetham.clerk@hotmail.com

Perhaps the major focus of the Governing Body this past year has been to ensure all was ready for the visit of the Ofsted inspector. We knew that we would receive less than 24 hours' notice of the visit so all had to be in readiness at all times. "On your toes" has to be the motto! The Inspector came in January for one very full day's inspection and Mrs Denah Jones, HMI, in her covering letter said:

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and it was an absolute pleasure to meet and talk with such enthusiastic children, staff and parents.

We were last inspected in January 2013, when the Ofsted report headline read:

"This is a good school".

Four years on, and **this** inspection outcome is:

"This school continues to be good".

This is an excellent result for Beetham School, testimony to the enormous hard work of the Headteacher and Staff, the tremendous support the school enjoys from the parent body and, of course, our delightful pupils!

It must be remembered that, in the four years between 2013 and the present, Ofsted gradings have been radically revised by the Government: there has been a significant "raising of the bar" - so this report does indeed bear witness to a school going from strength to strength.

Another happy outcome during this past year has been the securing of the Beetham Sports Field for use as the School Field. The very happy atmosphere in July this year was further testimony to the goodwill in the community: as



soon as it became apparent that the field was to become available on the open market, parents began to discuss ways to secure it for School use. As it turned out, it was secured very quickly by one local buyer who is determined that it remains available for school use, rather than go for commercial redevelopment which would be totally unsuited to our village. The Governing Body is delighted with this outcome and stands ready to play any necessary future role.

The results from national curriculum tests, often known as SATs, sat by 11-years-olds earlier this term, were published on 4th July. Nationally, 61% reached the expected level in the "three Rs", an improvement on [last year's score of 53%](#). This year's cohort was the second to sit new tougher tests in line with a new national curriculum introduced in 2014. Last year, the percentage of primary school leavers making the grade fell to 53% on the new curriculum from 80% in 2015 on the old-style tests.

This July we have received the SATs results for our leavers in Key Stage 2. **The overall success rate at Beetham School this year is 80%.** Well done to the pupils, their teachers and of course parents and carers who do so much to encourage the children's learning!

Amongst all this good news there is, however, one less positive remark I feel should be made. School attendance for pupils is, for fairly obvious and well-argued reasons, compulsory in the UK. Absences are sometimes unavoidable, for illness or medical appointments. Any other absence is required to be registered as "unauthorised". The Headteacher is empowered to allow occasional absence **only in extraordinary circumstances**. If children miss a week or two, not only do they miss the curriculum content covered in that period but this also puts a strain on teachers aiming to fulfil all the learning expectations - including reaching the standards mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is a sad fact that the small percentage of absences marked "unauthorised" has risen noticeably in the last year or two and, with the cooperation of parents and carers, the Governing Body would wish to see this minimised.



To return to positive news, the governors were delighted to be able to endorse the School's plans to open a Nursery facility from September 2017. This is a most exciting step and one which will consolidate the pattern of school admissions at a healthy level in future years.

The overall picture, then, is of a thriving School within a supportive community. Long may this continue!

John Lomax

CURRICULUM AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

Chair: Mrs Vivien Stirrup

School development plan

The Staffing and Curriculum Committee ensures that the National Curriculum is delivered and its assessment procedures are carried out in line with any legal frameworks. It reviews relevant school policies and development plan priorities and makes amendments where necessary. It receives reports from the Head Teacher in order to monitor, review and evaluate standards of achievement in pupils. It is responsible for the recruitment and appointment of staff. The Committee has met regularly each term throughout the academic year.

Staffing Issues

During the past year the Curriculum and Staffing Recruitment team have appointed Fenella Macmillan to the part time position of Early Years/Nursery Teaching Assistant. Mrs Macmillan has settled in well and she is successfully contributing to the work of the school. In order to facilitate this she has undertaken a formal training and induction programme which resulted in a speedy introduction to all aspects of school life.



We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Horsman has completed her Level 3 training and is qualified in her role as Deputy Child Protection Officer.

We are sad to report the resignation of San Richardson from the lunch staff team. San has been a well-loved and hardworking member of staff at Beetham School and she will be sadly missed by staff and children alike.

Last year, in order to further encourage the development of staff within the school we introduced, for each member of staff, a record of personal development which includes information relating to lesson observation feedback, training undertaken both in school and externally, and any feedback received from parents and others.

Mrs. K. Klijn (Staff Governor) was allocated the responsibility of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) officer for the school and development for all staff is linked to the School Development Plan and logged onto the centralised ScholarPack system and closely monitored alongside appraisal and target setting information. I can report that twelve months on, this is working successfully and achieving the aims that we set for the scheme.

Appraisals for all staff within the school have taken place in this current school year.

School development plan

The Staffing and Curriculum Committee reviews the School Development Plan at every meeting. The Governing Body request detailed reports on progress at each of their meetings. Great importance continues to be placed on numeracy, literacy and handwriting.

Subject Reviews

Rigorous subject reviews have been carried out by nominated Governors during the past school year. Governors observed lessons, questioned teaching staff, evaluated session plans and monitored progress of children in class. The Governors pledge to maintain high standards in reviewing subject areas. Reports



have been compiled by each Governor Reviewer and the contents discussed during full Governor Meetings. No areas for concern were raised in any of the subject areas and the Governors were delighted with the standards of lesson preparation, teaching methods and styles demonstrated by the teachers and the attentiveness, contributions, progress and behaviour of the children. All subject areas are regularly reviewed.

All reviews have been carried out during the last school year according to the plan previously set.

Pupil Support

The Staffing and Curriculum Committee is satisfied that additional support is being given to any pupils who are not predicted to meet their age related targets. Governors regularly review the targets and predictions for each year group and insist that it is always an agenda item for Full Governor's meetings. Information related to targets, predictions and progress is collated on a central support tracker. Governors regularly review the tracker in detail and are satisfied with the level of detail included.

Policy Updates

All policies are up to date and are held in a central file and published on the website. A policy tracker has also been compiled.

Pupil Questionnaires

As in previous years, all children, Reception, KS1 and KS2 will be involved in responding to a Pupil Questionnaire before the end of term. The question sessions will be led by the Chair of the Curriculum and Staffing Committee. The children have always been very enthusiastic about taking part in this event and the information gathered is collected verbatim, compiled into a report and shared with the Head Teacher and appropriate members of staff. The children's contributions are taken very seriously and any action taken wherever it is deemed appropriate.



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

From September, 2017 our school will be within the timeframe for an inspection by Inspectors from the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. The four key areas against which our school will be measured are:

- How well does our school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all the learners?
- What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?
- How effective is religious education?
- How effective is the leadership and management of the school as a Church School

Recently, as part of the preparation for this inspection, the Governing Body was privileged to welcome Penny Hollander from the Diocese, an ex SIAMS inspector who led an informative and useful meeting. Penny outlined the process and procedures of the pending inspection and answered questions put to her from the Governing Body.

Church/School Activities

The School/Liaison group continues to arrange learning opportunities and services for the children based on the Church calendar. The school has taken every opportunity to use the church as an active learning environment. An example of this was when children came into church for a Religious Education lesson and learned first-hand from Reverend Linda just what Holy Communion was all about. The children were able to see everything that was used in communion and asked some wonderful and intelligent questions. They experienced what it would be like to celebrate Holy Communion (blackcurrant juice for wine!) and Ms Nicholas made this experience the basis for the children's next RE lesson.

Edward Bear Club is still active in church and we are grateful to Reverend Linda and helpers for making this club so successful.



Volunteers from the church have generous hearts and willing hands and share their talents, skills and patience with the children on a daily and weekly basis. We are sincerely grateful for their help and support, please do continue as you are a most valuable asset for our school.

In Conclusion

This school year has, as always, been exceptionally busy. I have no doubt that the next school year will be exactly the same. As always the teaching staff have been dedicated and committed in their work with the children across all the curriculum areas and this is recognised and applauded by the Staffing and Curriculum Committee. All other workers including support staff, trainees and volunteers continue to have Beetham School and the children at the heart of everything in which they are involved and our sincere thanks go to all of them.

Vivien Stirrup

COMMUNITY AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

Chair: Mr Brian Smalley

The *Governors' Community and Welfare Committee* aims to provide a strategic overview of those aspects of school life which concern the personal wellbeing of members of the school community (pupils, staff, volunteer helpers, parents, governors themselves) and the School's links with the wider community. As with all governors' committees our responsibility is to assist the Head Teacher and the *Governing Body* as a whole in ensuring that agreed policies and procedures work in practice and to deal with any issues that arise from the implementation of those policies.

A major responsibility of the *Community & Welfare Committee* is to ensure the safety of all those who work in and for the school - pupils, staff, parents, volunteers, visitors and governors themselves. Safeguarding and child protection come high on our list of priorities and we are sure that parents and



carers will have been pleased to note that the OFSTED Inspector was completely satisfied with our Safeguarding arrangements.

Governors undertake appropriate training to ensure that we are up-to-date with developments in the educational (and wider) world: this year members of the Community & Welfare Committee have attended training courses in Health & Safety, Understanding British Values (promoting British Values is a statutory requirement for schools) and Evaluating the role of Governors in the school. In addition, we have monitored the implementation of the Government's Prevent Policy which ensures that pupils learn how to recognise the distortion of the truth which can lead to radicalisation.

We continue to promote the school both locally and in the wider community by publicising the school's achievements. Items are regularly submitted for inclusion in the Community News section of the Westmorland Gazette, and the School Corner in the monthly Parish Magazine ensures that school activities and pupil achievements reach a wide audience.

An important part of our work is to ensure that the School Development Plan reflects our responsibility to actively incorporate Christian values in the ethos of the school. We have worked hard to support regular school/church events and we are confident that this has helped to further strengthen the links between us. Pupils have participated in church services and there is a regularly updated display of pupils' work in church which is much appreciated by the congregation. The Bonnets for the Bennetts and Cameo silhouettes the pupils made as a contribution to the Church Flower Festival were much admired by the hundreds of visitors to the church. The Edward Bear Club has continued to provide an important and valuable link between the school and the wider community. Every year the Nativity Play is a much anticipated event in church and this year, as always, the pupils showed their confidence and talent in re-telling the much-loved story of Mary and Joseph. Other important occasions celebrated in church include end-of-term assemblies, with the always memorable and emotional Leavers' Service in July, Mothering Sunday, Ascension Day and the Pre-Easter service when the pupils process to church following a



donkey. Unfortunately this year, owing to a misunderstanding, Pepper the donkey was not available, and so the pupils followed Wispa, a chocolate Labrador belonging to Anne Fielden, stopping at the stocks en route for a reading of the Bible story about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Pepper later made a much appreciated appearance to lead the pupils to school for their Ascension Day service! Church members are regularly to be found in school helping with the gardening club, the handbell group, listening to pupils read and attending Celebration Assembly.

This year we sadly say goodbye to Rev'd Linda Lonsdale who is retiring and moving back to Cheshire. Rev'd Linda has been an inspiring member of the Community & Welfare Committee and everyone connected with Beetham School is immensely grateful to her for all the work she has done to promote co-operation and mutual support between the school and St Michael & All Angels. Edward Bear Club, the Lent After-school Clubs, mock Baptism and Communion Services in church to introduce young people to some of the rituals of worship and church life as well as regular attendance at school assemblies - all these and more tell of Linda's commitment to the school. Her presence will be missed and we are extremely grateful for her enthusiasm and leadership over the past three years.

It would be impossible to name all the individuals who have helped our work during the year, but special thanks must go to Wendy Nicholas, supported by her staff, for her unfailing inspiration and energy.

Brian Smalley



FINANCE & RESOURCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Mr Chris Christou

I am one of the two Parent Governors at Beetham School and have been a governor at the school since January 2014. I am also the chair of the Finance Committee which is formed in part from the Board of Governors at Beetham C of E School.

My daughter Lily is currently in Year 3 and my son Samuel is in the Reception class. I have a Finance and Legal (Property) background. I am the Chief Executive Officer for a local property group after many years working and consulting in businesses worldwide.

This report is aimed at providing you with some valuable and understandable insight into the role of the Finance Committee at the school. If you feel it can be improved in any way please do not hesitate to approach any Governor or write to the 'Clerk to the Governors' at the School or email:

beetham.clerk@hotmail.com.

The primary role of the Finance Committee is to ensure that the school is able to provide a good quality education for all its pupils by managing the financial aspects of reconciling income with expenditure. This can be challenging at times and requires a somewhat different approach to that found in private business.

The school must produce a budget detailing the income allocated from the Local Education Authority and the projected expenditure, for a forward projection of 2 years. The school has submitted its current forecast which sees it returning to a surplus position within the projection timescales mentioned above. In addition to careful financial management alongside continuing to ensure that the infrastructure is well maintained, the school has funded further developments including, although not exclusively, 'The Beehive' and new IT equipment.

Our prospect for the financial stability and growth of the school is very good, primarily due to the extremely high level of quality teachers we have at the school and as a result of to this the numbers of pupils that are attracted to study here.

Another important part of the school's ability to return to surplus is the wonderful work that is done by the parents & carers, grandparents and friends in ensuring that all the fundraising activities are completed successfully whilst ensuring all people involved enjoy themselves as well. I feel the school is extremely fortunate to have such committed, dedicated and proactive



individuals that can drive this essential part of income for the benefit of the children.

I feel my personal skills have added depth to a well-equipped board of governors and I sincerely hope to continue in my role for many years to come.

Chris Christou

SAFEGUARDING

The school takes all aspect of Safeguarding and Child protection very seriously in order to ensure the wellbeing of both children and adults at school. The school constantly reviews the Single Central Record which ensures that all adults involved with school have been checked and go through an induction process. All staff have termly Safeguarding training and teaching staff meet on a weekly basis to discuss child protection and the general welfare of pupils.

Wendy Nicholas is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Louise Horsman is the Deputy Safeguarding lead, both of whom are fully trained to Level 3. All other staff and governors are also trained to at least Level 1 in Safeguarding and Child Protection. Jenny Beresford Jones is the Governor for Child Protection. Vivien Stirrup and Wendy Nicholas lead on all staff recruitment and have completed the Safer Recruitment Training.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Beetham School follows the SEN Code of Practice in order to support children who have special educational needs.

This year we have twelve children on the SEN register, two of whom have Education Health Care Plans (EHCP), this means that they receive additional funding from the Local Authority to support their needs in school. All children on the SEN register have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which details their long and short-term targets, together with information on how the school is helping the child to meet them. Parents are involved and consulted over the IEP's and have areas that they are asked to work on at home to support their child.



Brian Smalley is the Governor for Special Educational Needs and Wendy Nicholas is the school's SEN coordinator.

Wendy Nicholas is the named Child Protection member of staff and Jenny Beresford Jones is the Governor for Child Protection.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Governors are responsible for Health and Safety at school but this is managed on a day to day basis by Wendy Nicholas with the support of Janet Bradshaw, who carries out the weekly safety tests.

All staff are involved in making sure that health and safety procedures are rigorous both in school, in the school grounds and when children are taken off the premises.

All children are involved in Health and Safety within school and are taught how to keep themselves safe at school, at home, on line and when they are 'out and about'. This year we have had visits from our Police Community Support Officer and Lake Warden. Children in Yr 6 took part in a Junior Citizen Workshop and cycle training took place for children in Years 5 & 6.

Rigorous risk assessments are carried out for all activities which take place off site. Cumbrian schools use 'Evolve' as their online risk assessment tool. This ensures that all aspects of any visit are covered and assessed and where the visit is 'residential' or involves 'adventurous' activities the risk assessments are submitted to the local authority for approval. This secures Local Authority support for the school in the event of an emergency. The governor for Educational Visits is Claire Kinnear.

The school employs Gary Turner, a Health and Safety consultant, who offers advice, helps to update and collate all relevant documentation, monitors training and safety checks and ensures that the Health and Safety standards within the school are in excess of the requirements. A full inspection of the building and grounds by the Governing body takes place annually, and a follow-up action plan ensures that any issues are addressed promptly.



The Headteacher provides a report on Health and Safety at each term's governor's meeting. The governor for Health and Safety is John Lomax.

SCHOOL CLUBS

After school clubs are an important part of the broad curriculum which we offer. School staff, church volunteers and sports coaches provide a wide variety of clubs e.g. sports, lego, sewing, gardening, craft, handbells, drama. The school breakfast and tea clubs continue to be very successful, well attended and excellently managed by Jeanette Coates and Christine Sharples.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

This year the School Councillors from Yr 5 & 6 have taken part in the South Lakes Pupil Parliament...



The South Lakes Pupil Parliament was formed in September 2015 with the purpose of bringing local school children together to develop their skills and knowledge in the area of pupil voice.

Many of the schools in the South Lakes are small rural schools with less than 60 pupils. The Parliament gives the children the opportunity to meet with others, be part of a large organisation, develop confidence in meeting/speaking in front of an audience and learning about democracy and Parliament.

The SLPP now has 16 schools involved. Each school sends four Yr 5 & 6 children and a member of staff to the meeting which is held at the Netherwood Hotel. Meetings take place termly and always require an input /presentation from schools, which they prepare in advance.



