



## Governors' Annual Report

2017-2018



## 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 an outstanding School (to quote the language Inspectors use, of which more below) - but we are all too aware that this only comes about by the hard work and commitment of all concerned.

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 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 yet another happy and very 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 also have to be pro-active, planning ahead to develop new policies to meet ever-changing demands of modern times. 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. All governors have equal rights and responsibilities. They are not delegates and each must act according to their judgement, in the best interests of the children in the school.

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 Parochial Church Council and appointed by the Diocese. This year Jenny Beresford-Jones, John Lomax, Jenny Marks, Viv Stirrup, Rachel Wray and Dennis Wright, together with Sarah Easton who has filled the place previously occupied by the Vicar, have filled these roles.

Two Parent Governors - these are elected by all registered parents/carers of the school's pupils: currently Chris Christou and Hannah Gardner 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 those above, Rachel Wray and Dennis Wright have stepped up to replace retirees Julian Handy and Antony Wood. And whilst the Church awaits its next Vicar, we are grateful to Sarah Easton for her willingness to serve. Claire Kinnear's term of office as a Parent Governor came to an end during the year and Hannah Gardner was elected unopposed. All have already made their mark: Beetham School is fortunate to have such folk willing to play their part in the school community.

I must take this opportunity to record my personal thanks to Claire Kinnear for all she has done for Beetham School - in the School office, around the Governors' table, and as a hard-working parent at fund-raising and social events. She is due this September to move on to a new phase in her career and goes



with our very best wishes. No doubt she will continue to be a regular face among parents and carers and friends of the school!

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](mailto:beetham.clerk@hotmail.com)

After last year's Ofsted inspection, this year we awaited the arrival of the SIAMS Inspector whose role is to assess the quality of the School's provision for Religious Education and Collective Worship. We were delighted that the School was again graded as Outstanding - a word used only very sparingly by inspectors.

This time last year I wrote that we had learnt that the Beetham Sports Field had been secured very quickly for use as the School Field 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 land is now vested with the Carlisle Diocese together with the School buildings, under the control of the Governing Body. The whole school is delighted with this outcome and the Governing Body is now developing its plan for the management of Beetham School Field.

The results from national curriculum tests, often known as SATs, sat by 11-years-olds in May, were published in July. On the basis of the tests, pupils' progress is judged as "Working At the expected standard" (WA) or "Working Towards the expected standard" (WT) in each of the five areas of curriculum: Reading, Writing, SPaG\*, Mathematics and Science. Looking at the overall figures for "Working At" for the year group, the Cumbrian and National averages were exceeded in all subjects except Mathematics. Well done to the pupils, their teachers and of course parents and carers who do so much to encourage the children's learning! (\*SPaG = Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar).

Amongst all this good news there is, however, one less positive remark I feel should be made. School attendance 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 happier news, the governors last year were delighted to be able to endorse the School's plans to open a Nursery facility from September 2018. This has proved a most positive step and one which will consolidate the pattern of school admissions at a healthy level in future years. As a result of the



admission of Nursery age children, additional teaching space was required in order to meet the needs of all the children in the school. After investigating a range of options a timber framed classroom has been installed in the back garden. Admittedly the construction work went right down to the wire and we are enormously grateful to the many volunteers who help to

make the school garden a happy, pleasant and safe place with new paths to "Beetham Lodge". The opening ceremony conducted by Tim Farron MP was an uplifting occasion and gave everyone present the opportunity to see the splendid new classroom in action.

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

**John Lomax**

**Chair of Governors**

**October 2018**



## **CURRICULUM AND STAFFING COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Mrs Vivien Stirrup**

### **Introduction**

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. The present membership is Mrs Vivien Stirrup, Chair and Foundation Governor, Mrs Kirsty Klijn, Staff Governor and Mrs Tess Rowlands, Foundation Governor.

### **Staffing Issues**

During the past year the Curriculum and Staffing Recruitment Team have assisted with the appointments of Becky Rodgers as new School Administrator, Suzanne McCormick as Teaching Assistant and Lesley Sansom as Key Stage 2 teacher. All new members of staff are working through an induction programme and have been allocated a personal mentor to help them integrate quickly and successfully into the life of the school. At the end of the last academic year, as mentioned by the Chair of Governors, Claire Kinnear left as School Administrator, and Fenella Macmillan, Early Years Teaching Assistant, also left. We record our thanks to them both for their work.

Mrs Klijn continues with the responsibilities associated with being the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) officer. We are grateful to her for



taking on the responsibility of recording the personal professional development of all staff members. The role includes recording information relating to peer lesson observations, assessment of the worth of training undertaken, both externally and in house and monitoring performance and progression towards objectives as set at annual appraisal. Training initiatives and performance are closely linked to the School Development Plan and logged onto the centralised ScholarPack system. Appraisals for all staff, including the Head Teacher, have taken place in the last academic 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, handwriting and phonics.

### **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 standard of lesson preparation, teaching methods and variety of style 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 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. Policies continue to be updated 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 in all age groups have been involved in responding to a Pupil Questionnaire. The question sessions were led by the Chair of the Curriculum and Staffing Committee. As always, the children were very enthusiastic about taking part in this event and the information gathered was collected verbatim, compiled into a report and shared with the Head Teacher and appropriate members of staff. Each year the children's contributions are considered very seriously and any action taken wherever it is deemed appropriate.

### **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)**

In 2018 our school was inspected under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools framework. As you will be aware, the Governors were delighted that the school was awarded 'Outstanding' by the SIAMS Inspector. This outcome was a testimony to the hard work that children, members of staff and the leadership team continually undertake to maintain and raise standards.

### **Church/School Activities**

The school/church 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. The church has held services for the school on important events throughout its calendar such as Ascension Day, Harvest, Christmas and Easter. It is always a delight to welcome family and friends into church on these occasions to support the children. Ms Nicholas and Foundation Governors organised another Lent 'After School Club' during the period of Lent 2018 which was well received and well attended.



Volunteers from the church share their talents, skills and patience with the children on a daily and weekly basis throughout the year by assisting teaching staff in a variety of lessons from Religious Education to Numeracy to Music and much more. Volunteers run after school clubs, listen to readers as well as helping with numerous other activities. We are sincerely grateful for their help and support and thank everyone involved. It is notable that the SIAMS Inspector highly praised the links between school and church.

### **In Conclusion**

As stated last year and the year before, our school year has 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 and indeed the full Governing Body.

All other workers including support staff, trainee teachers and volunteers continue to give of their time and expertise and it is clear that they all hold the wellbeing of the children and the school at the heart of everything they do and our sincere thanks go to every one of them.

**Vivien Stirrup**

### **New Foundation Governor – Tess Rowlands**

*My name is Tess Rowlands and I have lived in Beetham for over four years, although we have had the house a little longer. Prior to becoming a foundation governor at this lovely school, I have had over 25 years experience as both a parent governor and a co-opted governor, in primary and secondary education. I was thrilled to be invited to join such a vibrant team and be part of the life of this very special school. Whilst I have new things to learn, I hope to become a valuable member of the governing body and support the school in years to come .*

### **COMMUNITY AND WELFARE COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Mr Brian Smalley**



The Community and Welfare Committee has been pleased to welcome as new members this year Mrs Rachel Wray, Mrs Hannah Gardner and Mrs Sarah Easton. They bring with them a wealth of experience in a wide range of areas and have provided new ideas and support for our role which is to monitor those aspects of school life which concern the personal wellbeing of all 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 all relevant policies and procedures are in line with current legislation and that they work in practice. The C & W Committee is also responsible for dealing 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, together with Health and Safety. We have agreed the production of a new Safeguarding information leaflet which sets out for parents and guardians the procedures to follow if there is a concern over the safety or well-being of a child. We have also looked at the implications for the school of the new Data Protection legislation which came into force in May.

Governors regularly 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, Early Help Assessment, and in holding senior staff to account. 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 Gateway ensures that school activities and pupil achievements reach a wide audience.

This year we have spent a lot of time considering the provision of extra room, both for teaching



purposes and for giving the pupils a quiet space for reflection where they can find a few moments away from the hurly-burly of everyday school life. 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. To do this we have tried to ensure that links between the school and St Michael & All Angels Church continue to grow during this period when the church is without its own priest. This year we were able to run a very successful Easter 'Eggsplorers' Club with church members and school staff working together to bring the all the events of the Easter story to life, culminating in a spontaneous (i.e. unrehearsed) depiction of the Last Supper in church during the end of term service. Harvest Festival, Christingle, the Nativity, Epiphany, Mothering Sunday and Ascension Day have all been celebrated in church and in school. Pupils' work is on display in church in regularly updated exhibitions which are much appreciated by the congregation. Church members are regularly to be found in school helping with the gardening club, the handbell club, the School Band, listening to pupils read and attending Celebration Assembly.

The strength of the links between Beetham School and St Michael & All Angels was recognised in the SIAMS Inspection Report which rated the school as 'Outstanding' and made special mention of the involvement of church members in the everyday life of the school. It would be impossible to name all the individuals who have helped our work during the year, but special thanks must go to all the members of this committee, to our colleagues on other governors' committees, especially Viv Stirrup, Jenny Marks and Dennis Wright, and to Ian Stirrup for his support of the Eggsplorers' Club. And, of course, all our efforts would be rendered ineffectual without the seemingly boundless energy and enthusiasm of Wendy Nicholas and her staff. Our thanks go to them for making our task so enjoyable and rewarding.

**Brian Smalley**

#### **New Parent Governor - Hannah Gardner**

*I am one of the two Parent Governors at Beetham School and have been a governor at school since January 2018. I am a member of the Community and*



*Welfare Committee and part of the Sports Field Committee. Both my children at Beetham are in the Juniors now - Daniel is in year 5 and William is in year 4. When I am not being a mum I work for our family run ecology firm and am a qualified Rural Practice Chartered Surveyor. My background is therefore a mix of ecology, wildlife and countryside management, planning, farming, property, and business management.*

## **FINANCE & RESOURCE COMMITTEE**

**Chair: Mr Chris Christou**

I am one of the two Parent Governors on the Governing Body 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, with members Mr Dennis Wright and Mrs Jenny Marks. My daughter Lily is currently in Year 5 and my son Samuel is in Year 2.

I have a Finance and Legal (Property) background. I am the Executive Chairman for a local hotel & property group after many years working and consulting in businesses worldwide. I am also Non-executive Chairman of another hotel in the Lake District and sit as a Director on the Board of Trustees for the YMCA in the North West.

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](mailto: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



3 years. The school has submitted its current forecast which sees it in 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 been involved in securing further developments including, although not exclusively, 'The Beetham School Field (prev. Beetham Sports Field)'. 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 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 fund raising 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 an already well-equipped board of governors and I sincerely hope to continue in my role for 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 fourteen 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.

## **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 the children in Yr 4 took part in level 1 cycle training and Yr 5 & 6 completed their Bikeability training.



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 Brian Smalley.

The school employs 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.

### **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

At Beetham CE Primary School we aim to offer a wide range of activities and learning opportunities for all our children. This may be in PE/Outdoor Education, Music, Forest School, Swimming, School visits and Residential trips. Here are some highlights from this year: Children in Reception and Nursery visited Williamson Park Butterfly House, Yr 1 & 2 children enjoyed Tree Top Nets at Brockhole, Yr 3 & 4 children spent a night at Tower Wood Outdoor Education Centre, Yr 5 & 6 spent 4 days in Edinburgh with the children from Old Hutton School, Children in KS2 along with a group of teachers and governors visited the Royal Opera House, London for a production of Swan Lake and the whole school spent the last day of term at the Lakeland Maize Maze.



### **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 19 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. This year the children were lucky enough to experience visits from a member of the UK Youth Parliament, John Bercow, Speaker of the House and also Tim Farron, our local MP.

