



Kingham Primary School

Annual Report

2019-2020

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Introduction

This annual report from the governors of Kingham Primary School covers the academic year from September 2019. It has undoubtedly been a challenging time for everyone, but we look forward to the coming year with optimism.

Governors

The school governors have a key role and responsibility in ensuring the success of the school and that children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential at Kingham Primary School.

The three core functions of the board are to ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, to hold the Headteacher to account for educational performance, and to oversee the financial performance of the school.

The school governors continually assess not only the performance of the school but also the positive impact that the governing body makes to its direction. This year the board commissioned an external governance review, which was conducted by the local authority. The recommendations from this will support the governors in concentrating on strategic priorities, carrying out statutory governance and promoting school improvement.

As volunteers, the governors give considerable time and experience to the school without remuneration. It is a demanding but rewarding role that offers a significant opportunity to contribute to the community and develop additional skills. All governors receive training in the role and have the opportunity to attend training in specific aspects of their function.

The school staff elect a staff governor to represent their interests. There are two elected parent governors to represent the interests of parents and carers.

The last year has seen a number of changes on the governing board, as a number of members reached the end of their term of office. We actively recruited successors, advertising locally, and sought to extend the range of professional experience on the board.

Jeremy Joiner became our local authority governor. He is a retired solicitor and was a partner at an international law firm in London. He has previously been a governor at two co-educational independent schools in Surrey, where he was instrumental in formulating development projects.

The board is able to appoint co-opted governors with particular expertise and to appoint associate members with additional experience to offer.

The Reverend Nick Seward was appointed to the board in January. As the headmaster of the nearby Kingham Hill School, he has extensive experience in educational leadership. All his children attend or have attended Kingham Primary School.

Chris Wheeler joined the board in March and chairs our Finance Committee. Having qualified as a chartered accountant, he has held senior executive positions in investment banking. He recently returned to education and gained a degree in History from Oxford and is continuing his postgraduate studies.

Yvonne Birnie became a governor in May. She has lived in Kingham for many years and is now retired, having been a qualified teacher with experience in early years, at Windrush and the former Dormer House School.

The board is also responsible for appointing the headteacher, who is by office a member of the governing body.

The full governing board meets during each half term of the academic year. Minutes of meetings are recorded by our professional clerk and are published on the school web site.

Dr W Cooper (Chair)	Parent Governor
Mr J Joiner (Vice Chair)	Local Authority Governor <i>(from November 2019)</i>
Ms B Townsend-Jowitt	Headteacher
Mr R Alden	Parent Governor
Mrs Y Birnie	Co-opted Governor <i>(from May 2020)</i>
Miss E Jenkinson	Co-opted Governor <i>(to May 2020)</i>
Mr J Loomes	Co-opted Governor <i>(to December 2019)</i>
Mrs L Phillips	Co-opted Governor <i>(to January 2020)</i>
Rev D Salter	Co-opted Governor
Rev N Seward	Co-opted Governor <i>(from January 2020)</i>
Mr C Wheeler	Co-opted Governor <i>(from March 2020)</i>
Miss L-A Woskett	Staff Governor
Mrs C Hunt	Associate Member

Overview

This year has clearly been a difficult one for everyone in the country as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, which remains a continuing challenge. We should not forget that the first half of the academic year was very much business as usual, in which we celebrated our everyday achievements.

Schools across the country closed for most children for a period from 20 March. Our school was able to maintain provision for a number of vulnerable children and those of key workers. This continued over the Easter and half-term holidays, thanks to the exceptional efforts of staff.

Support was provided for other children to continue learning at home. It is fair to say that this was a learning experience for everyone. Staff, parents and children responded well to a transition to online learning as it evolved. Special provision was made to ensure that learning materials were available to all children. Increasing familiarity with online platforms, together with feedback from families, will enable everyone to be prepared for such a situation in the future.

Following a robust risk assessment based on guidance from the government and the local authority, the school was able to re-open to children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1 June, for one day a week to those in Year 3 and Year 5 for the last four weeks of term, and for a single day in the last week for those in Year 2 and 4.

Throughout this period and beyond, the governors, headteacher and staff received and responded to a continuous stream of updates to government guidance, policies, protocols and procedures. The headteacher and staff worked exceptionally hard to maintain educational provision, with the priority on ensuring health and safety for all.

Bretta Townend-Jowitt informed the board of governors in June that, after careful consideration and approaching 30 years of teaching, she had decided to leave Kingham Primary School at the end of 2020.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Bretta Townend-Jowitt for her characteristic commitment to the school throughout this process and for staying until the end of the calendar year to facilitate the re-opening of school, provide a smooth transition and ensure continuity for staff, parents and children. We appreciate the contribution that Bretta has made to the school and wish her the very best for her future.

Strategy

The process of recruiting a replacement headteacher has focused the attention of governors on the vision, values and long-term strategy for our school. The governors have articulated a clear ambition to maintain the high standards that have been set and build on them to ensure the school remains successful and sustainable, at the heart of the local community, as one of the best in the area and an example of excellence, locally and nationally.

The board will work closely with the headteacher to develop a strategic plan for the school to enable it to continue to develop and improve. Creating and refining such a plan will no doubt take time, so we do not expect any immediate changes, but we will share our thinking on this as it evolves and consult with the school community to represent the views of staff, parents, carers and children.

Although it may seem like a tranquil rural idyll, there is much to be done to achieve our objectives and to move the school on. This will require vision, focus, insight, and high standards and expectations of excellence for all our children, including those that may need more support and those that are more academically able.

While not all our children enjoy the same advantages, they are all equally valued and respected as individuals and are privileged to come to school in a peaceful and caring environment where everyone is respected. We acknowledge that our school and community do not necessarily reflect the diversity of the wider world and we work hard to ensure that we appreciate all aspects of contemporary culture and society.

The local area has a rich history and is imbued with many traditional values, but it is essential for the school to embrace new educational thinking and contemporary technologies to equip our children for the world in which they will live and work.

We will measure the success of our school not simply in standardised tests but in our achievements across the board, in sport, music, languages, science and the arts. We want all our children to achieve to maximise their potential in all fields.

We appreciate that parents choose to send their children to Kingham Primary School, and we expect to respect that choice by valuing every child as an individual and by providing them with an outstanding school experience. We aim to meet the aspirations of our parents because they and their children are our best ambassadors in recommending Kingham Primary School to others.

Vision

Kingham Primary School provides a safe, supportive and stimulating environment, which inspires our children to be composed, confident, and considerate, responding positively to every opportunity to develop their full potential. We encourage children to explore, expand and express their skills and talents through a carefully crafted creative curriculum tailored to the needs of every individual.

Values

Our values can be summarised in a series of simple statements that reflect the learning experience of our children through the school:

We all love to play, explore and discover, to look, listen, learn and understand.

We have fun together as one friendly family, always ready to help one another, making sure that everyone is safe and secure, and has the choices and chances they deserve.

We enjoy creating, competing and performing as well as we can, respecting our differences as individuals and strengths as a team.

We want our school to be the best it can be, for us and those that follow.

We look beyond our playground, field and forest, to the wider world and realise we all have an important part to play in the future.

There are no limits to what we can achieve, and we will work hard to show and share our success.

We can sum this up in three characteristics that we want to demonstrate in everything we do:

Friendly—*Our school is a friendly place where learning is fun and exciting.*

Inspirational—*We take pride in our achievements and the quality of our work.*

Personal—*Everyone is personally valued and respected as an individual.*

Constantly striving to improve, at Kingham Primary School we are

Always learning to be our best

Staff

We are fortunate to have an incredibly dedicated team of staff who are committed to achieving the best for the school and for our children.

The last year has been unprecedented in the challenges that it has presented as a result of the pandemic and we appreciate the flexibility that everyone has shown in difficult circumstances.

The governors would like to express their gratitude to the senior leadership team and the entire staff for their work over this year.

Parents

We recognise the contribution that parents and carers make to the school in many ways.

This year in particular has demonstrated the essential role that parents and carers play in education. We recognise the practical issues that this has presented and are grateful for the understanding that our parent community has shown.

Whether it is helping out in the classroom, maintaining the premises, or working in the school grounds, we are very appreciative of the assistance parents provide, which considerably improves the school experience for our children.

We always welcome the involvement of volunteers in any ways in which they can contribute. With current funding constraints, the school is increasingly dependent on the goodwill of parents.

All parents and carers of children enrolled at Kingham Primary School are entitled to be members of the Kingham Primary School Association, which is the parent teacher association and registered charity that manages fundraising activities for the school, as well as bringing together parents, carers, children and the wider community.

School fundraising has been difficult over the last year, as many social events could not take place. We also understand that many people will be facing their own financial challenges in the current economic environment.

Nevertheless, we are grateful for the contribution that the KPSA has been able to make, through the generous support of its committee, volunteers and donors.

Children

The children are the heart of the school and their welfare is always our prime priority. This has been a particular emphasis in the current pandemic. Health and safety remain of paramount importance as the school adapts to the challenges presented by coronavirus.

The school is committed to providing a high-quality education, with a curriculum that is ambitious for all our children. We aim to ensure that our children have a positive attitude to their learning, in a supportive environment in which everyone is respected.

We support the broader personal development of children beyond the core curriculum, enabling them to discover and develop their interests and talents, confidence and independence.

The achievements of the school should not be measured simply in terms of the attainment of children in tests. It can be seen in how enthusiastic our children are to come to school and learn.

This year, with children unable to come to school for many weeks, saw the temporary suspension of national standardised tests. As a result, we are unable to report performance for the year in terms of test results in reading, writing and maths.

In previous years, our results have demonstrated results that significantly exceed the regional and national averages for achieving the expected standards and for the number of children at a high level of attainment.

The governors have set a clear ambition for the school to measure its success not simply against the local authority or national average, but to be among the very best of the schools in the area.

While statistics have some value in measuring the performance of the school, we are committed to ensuring that every child is personally valued and respected as an individual. That is ultimately how we measure our success.

The governors routinely monitor the implementation of the national curriculum and teaching and learning overall, not only by looking at statistics but also by spending time in the school and talking to children.

It is also important to acknowledge the extra-curricular accomplishments that children have made, from art and music to sport. Needless to say, this has been more difficult to recognise this with the cancellation of events due to coronavirus restrictions.

Finance

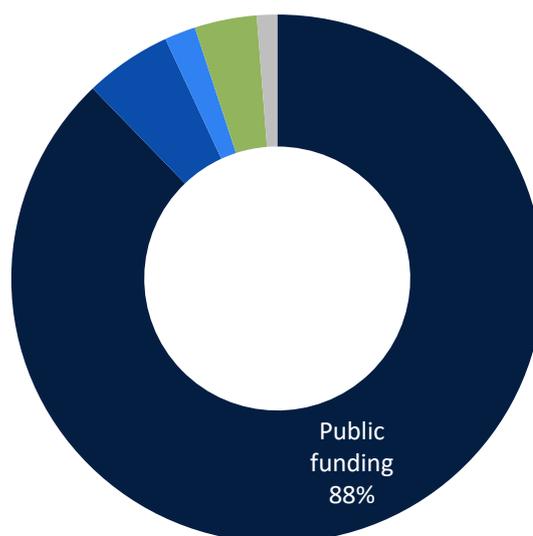
The financial challenges facing the school are increasing. Although the school was partially closed for a portion of the year, its income and expenditure remained relatively unaffected, with any savings offset by increased costs.

Income

In the academic year 2019-2020, Kingham Primary School had a total income of £1,057,000. Of this, £867,000 came from local authority funds, with an additional £45,000 in government grants. The school also received £4,000 in funding for special educational needs, £13,000 pupil premium funding for disadvantaged children and £12,000 from nursery income. The school received £20,000 from catering, £22,000 from Kidz Club and activities, and £18,000 from contributions to visits, although these all generally only cover their costs.

In addition, the school received £40,000 from contributions and donations. Extensive fundraising by the Kingham Primary School Association makes a meaningful contribution to school funds and allows the purchase of resources and experiences that would not otherwise be possible.

Income
£1,057,000



■ Public funding ■ School generated ■ School meals
■ Donations ■ Other

The income of the school is largely based on the number of children on roll. Every vacant school place represents a loss of funding of around £2,920 per year, which is £20,440 over seven years. The biggest financial factor that we can influence is therefore to ensure that the school continues to be able to fill every available place. To do so, we need to promote our profile actively to prospective applicants and we welcome the support of parents and carers in recommending the school to others.

Expenditure

In the same academic year, the total expenditure of the school was £1,037,000. Staff costs accounted for £750,000, or 72% of spending.

While employment costs continue to rise, this is not necessarily matched by increased funding for the school. The governors therefore need to ensure that the school maximises the value for money for expenditure on contractual employment costs.

The school budget not only has to pay for teaching, support and administrative staff but also for catering and cleaning, building and grounds maintenance, rates, refuse collection, energy, water and sewerage.

That leaves just under £72,000 a year for learning resources, materials and supplies, which is around 7 pence in every pound spent by the school. It works out at around £354 per child each year, or £9.32 a week.

Any savings that we can make, or additional funds that can be raised, can therefore make a significant contribution to the quality and quantity of learning resources and teaching materials available for our children.

Forecast

The approved budget for the financial year 2020-2021 currently forecasts a total income of £988,000 and a total expenditure of £1,022,000. This indicates an in-year shortfall of over £33,000, which we will endeavour to reduce.

The school is only able to balance the budget because it has a small surplus to carry forward from previous years. This is simply not sustainable in the longer term.

If expenditure continues to exceed income, as is forecast, the school simply will not have enough money to cover its costs in the near future.

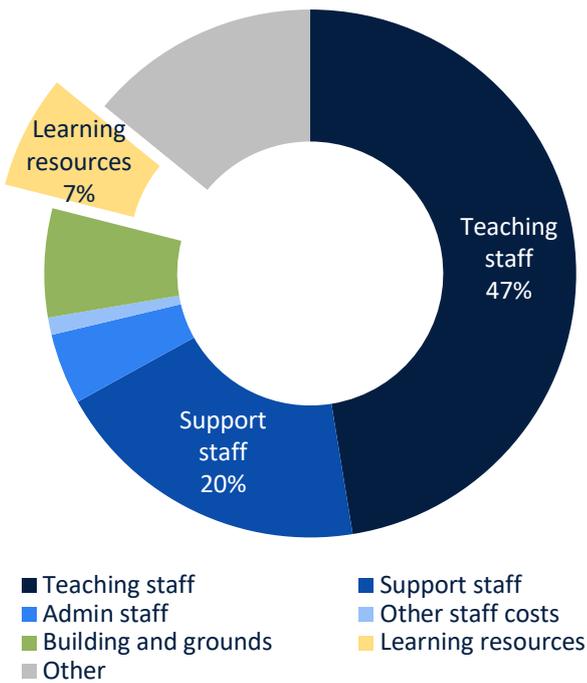
It is clear that the reductions in expenditure required will not be achieved through minor efficiencies. Significant cost savings will be required to balance the books. Alternatively, significant additional income will be required to secure the financial position of the school.

Kingham Primary School is not alone in this position. Most local authority schools are struggling to operate within their funding, which has not risen in real terms to meet increasing costs.

The governors are exploring ways in which the school can achieve longer-term financial stability to ensure a more sustainable position. This will require a creative strategic approach to provide the best opportunities not only for our current children but for generations to come.

None of this should distract from the primary purpose of the school, which is to provide an exceptional educational experience for our children.

Expenditure
£,1037,000



Feedback

We will continue to engage with the whole school community as we shape and share the strategy. Your input into this process is important.

If you have a specific suggestion, please feel free to discuss this with the relevant member of staff.

The Headteacher welcomes opinions from parents and is available for meetings or calls by appointment through the school office.

You can also contact the governors through the school office. In the unfortunate event that you wish to make a formal complaint there is a form available on the school web site or from the school office.

As it says on our web site, we are *always learning to be our best*.

Outlook

The governors began the process of recruiting a replacement headteacher in June. This is one of the most significant responsibilities of the board of governors, and one which they take very seriously.

An appointment panel, led by the chair of governors and supported by an advisor from the local authority, prepared a job description and specification for the role, based on the particular requirements and strategic priorities of the school.

The position was advertised and promoted widely, locally across three counties, nationally, and internationally, including prominent advertisements in *TES*, the leading weekly publication and online service for teachers. As a result, we received a large number of qualified applications from near and far.

The selection process was conducted remotely, using a combination of assessments, including a presentation to a group of governors and a panel interview. Based on a careful evaluation of all the shortlisted applicants, the panel was unreserved in recommending the appointment of one candidate.

Nicholas Prockter has been appointed to lead the school as headteacher from January 2021. He brings with him a wealth of experience, having most recently been head of the lower school at the prestigious Harrow International School in Bangkok, Thailand. Closely following the British educational system, processes and standards, offering an exceptional education to children from 18 months to 18 years, it is the largest of the international schools associated with the renowned Harrow School in London, which was founded in 1572.

Before moving to Thailand with his family in 2014 he was the executive headteacher at a large state primary school in South East London for nine years. He transformed Heronsgate Primary School from an underperforming school with falling numbers to be recognised as outstanding in all areas, expanding it over two sites with over 800 children.

Throughout the selection process, Mr Prockter showed a clear vision and ambition for our school and demonstrated his leadership experience and a practical understanding of our school values and reputation. We are confident that he will be a great fit for Kingham Primary School and will help to lead us to exceptional levels of excellence, while maintaining the unique qualities that we all value in the school and in the various achievements of all our children as part of a rounded education.

The governors are committed to ensuring a smooth transition to our new headteacher, who will bring world-class experience to our exceptional school and its dedicated staff.

We are confident that with strengthened governance and strong leadership, we will all rise to the challenges and opportunities presented and ensure the continuing position of Kingham Primary School as the choice of parents and their children in the area.

We look forward to the future with excitement and expectation.

Dr William Cooper
Chair of Governors
November 2020



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