



Kingham Primary School

Annual Report

2020-2021

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Introduction

This annual report from the governors of Kingham Primary School covers the academic year from September 2020 and looks forward to the year starting in September 2021.

Governors

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

The board of governors continually assesses not only the performance of the school but also the positive impact that the governing body makes to its direction.

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.

The role of the governors is set out in the *Governance Handbook* published by the Department for Education.

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.

Effective governance is based on six key features:

- **Strategic leadership** that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.
- **Accountability** that drives up educational standards and financial performance.
- **People** with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.
- **Structures** that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- **Compliance** with statutory and contractual requirements.
- **Evaluation** to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

The first two features are the core pillars of the board's role and purpose. The second two are about the way in which governance is organised, and the last two are about ensuring and improving the quality of governance.

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 and can benefit from professional development in specific aspects of their role.

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

In November, the board appointed Melanie Jones from our parent community as an Associate Member. Mel has a background in talent management, leadership development and human resources consulting. She will bring this experience to support the board in employment matters.

The board is also responsible for recruiting, selecting and appointing the Headteacher, who is by office a member of the governing board.

In January, Nicholas Prockter took up his appointment as Headteacher to succeed Bretta Townend-Jowitt. He brings with him a wealth of experience and a real ambition for Kingham Primary School. We are pleased to welcome him to our board.

Dr W Cooper (Chair)	Parent Governor
Mr J Joiner (Vice Chair)	Local Authority Governor
Ms B Townend-Jowitt	Headteacher (to December 2020)
Mr N Prockter	Headteacher (from January 2021)
Mr R Alden	Parent Governor
Mrs Y Birnie	Co-opted Governor
Rev D Salter	Co-opted Governor
Rev N Seward	Co-opted Governor
Mr C Wheeler	Co-opted Governor
Miss L-A Smith	Staff Governor
Mrs C Hunt	Associate Member
Mrs M Jones	Associate Member (from November 2020)

Overview

This was another challenging year for everyone in the country due to the continuing coronavirus pandemic.

Schools across the country closed for most children over a period from January. Our school was again able to maintain provision for vulnerable children and those of key workers. Support was also provided for other children to continue learning at home. Building on previous experience, we were better prepared and the feedback from families was very positive.

Despite these operational difficulties, we have concentrated on ensuring that Kingham Primary School continues to maintain its justified expectations for excellence.

It was far from an ideal scenario for our new Headteacher, relocating from overseas to join us at the start of the calendar year, but he certainly rose to the challenge.

Nicholas Prockter joined us from Harrow International School in Bangkok, Thailand, 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.

The opportunity at Kingham is to take a traditional village school that already has an unrivalled local reputation and to make it even better.

Ambition

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 centre of the local community, as one of the best in the area and an example of excellence, locally and nationally.

Our new Headteacher has outlined his aims for the school:

- A school at the heart of the community, where all stakeholders feel good when they walk through the door and where everything is done in the best interests of every individual child.
- A school that provides magical experiences, friendships, and lifelong memories.
- A school where teaching and learning is exceptional: teachers know their students well, believe every child is full of potential and challenge all students, whatever their starting point.
- A school where the curriculum rigorously focuses on the essential skills of English, maths, and digital literacy, but where teachers are also passionate about developing a love of learning and nurturing all talents including music, sport, and the arts.
- A school that teaches how and why, as well as what, where students develop a range of thinking and life skills as well as a strong moral compass, and an appreciation of diversity.
- A school that cultivates great communicators and critical thinkers who can independently question and analyse the information they receive and articulate their thoughts confidently.
- A school where students are responsible and confident, with a desire to make a difference locally and globally. One which develops collaborative, enterprising learners who are creative and well-placed to enjoy future success in education, the workplace and life.
- A school that provides an inspiring and safe environment that encourages students to take risks, where the ethos is rooted in exceptional pastoral care, where children are cared for, care for each other and care about the world and where parents are fully involved.
- A school that is always seeking to improve.

Vision

Working with the new Headteacher, the board has reviewed and revised our Vision, Mission, and Values. This involved a workshop with staff and governors led by the Headteacher. The inputs were developed by a working group of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, and a Parent Governor, chaired by the Chair of Governors. The outputs were refined in discussion with the full governing Board, which has adopted these important organising principles.

Our Vision is ambitious but simple:

A truly exceptional education for our next generation.

Mission

Our stated Mission is:

- **To provide magical experiences, friendships, and memories**
- **To develop the talents, skills and knowledge needed to excel in all that we do and thrive in a rapidly changing world**
- **To be a supportive and inclusive community, where we care for ourselves, each other, and our environment.**

Values

Underpinning our Vision and Mission are three core values. We aim to be:

- **Inspirational**
- **Ambitious**
- **Kind**

Constantly striving to improve, at Kingham Primary School we are:

Always learning to be our best

Staff

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

In 2021, we conducted a consultation on proposals for a staff restructure, driven by a combination of financial constraints and the need to improve operational efficiency. The objectives were to establish a full-time Deputy Headteacher position in place of two part-time Assistant Headteachers, to ensure that our Teaching Assistants are deployed where they are needed most, can add most value to teaching and learning, and support the operation of the school, and to improve efficiencies in administration.

Following the formal consultation, governors met to consider responses received and agreed to proceed with the recruitment of a full-time Deputy Head. As a number of Teaching Assistants leaving the school would not be replaced, it was not considered necessary to proceed with a full restructure.

The post of Deputy Headteacher was advertised externally and attracted many suitably qualified applicants. Following a rigorous interview process with shortlisted candidates, Emma Jenkinson was appointed Deputy Headteacher.

The year saw the departure of two highly regarded and long-serving teachers: Kami Smith and Elizabeth Mahoney. We thank them for all they have done for the school and wish them well for their futures.

Two teachers will be joining the school. Lucy Hargreaves is an experienced teacher, who recently relocated from Southwest London to Oxfordshire and provided cover for us earlier in the year. Lauren Prince-Wright joins us from an 'Outstanding' Teaching School in Oxfordshire.

We appreciate that the prospect of change can be unsettling for everyone concerned but we are confident that the outcome will be a school that continues to develop our strengths, with strong leadership and management.

The last year has continued to be challenging due to the coronavirus pandemic and we appreciate the flexibility that everyone has shown in difficult circumstances.

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

Parents

We consider parents and carers to be our customers. They rightly have high expectations for their children and of the service that we provide. We recognise that they have a choice of schools. We appreciate that many parents select Kingham Primary School as their first preference and choose to send their children to our school.

Our reception class is generally oversubscribed, which means that we do not necessarily have places available for everyone. Children are accepted according to our admissions policy, which is published on the school web site. Attending our nursery does not guarantee a place in the school, although it can be beneficial for a smooth transition. We maintain a list for those interested in joining us if places become available further up the school.

Our parents and carers and their children are our best ambassadors in recommending Kingham Primary School to others. Those that may be considering Kingham for their children will find that there is a very strong and supportive parent community.

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

Through the pandemic we have seen the essential role that parents and carers play in education. We understand the practical issues that this has presented and are grateful for the understanding that our parent community has shown.

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.

Despite the difficulties in fundraising, as many social events could not take place, we are grateful for the contribution that the KPSA has been able to make, through the generous support of its committee, volunteers, and donors.

This year, the KPSA was able to fund the purchase of a set of iPad tablets for use in teaching. We greatly appreciate this contribution to our facilities.

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.

This year again 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.

Meanwhile, the school continues to track the development in children in core subjects and to ensure that they make expected progress despite any interruptions to their schooling.

The governors monitor the implementation of the national curriculum and their observations have contributed to process improvements. The way in which the curriculum is delivered is in the process of being refined to ensure that it works well throughout the school.

Although statistics have some value in measuring the performance of a school, we ultimately measure our success in the way that we value and respect every child as an individual.

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.

Despite the difficulties involved in arranging extra-curricular events, we also acknowledge the accomplishments that children have made, from contributing sculpture exhibited as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks and recording a performance of Hamlet, to participating in Sports Day.

Finance

The school, in common with many others, faces increasing financial challenges. Most local authority schools are struggling to operate within their funding, which has not risen in real terms to meet increasing costs.

Income

In the academic year 2020-2021, Kingham Primary School had a total income of £1,021,000. Of this, £789,000 came from local authority funds, with an additional £105,000 in government grants. The school also received £8,000 in funding for special educational needs, £14,000 pupil premium funding for disadvantaged children and £80,000 from nursery income. The school received £11,000 from Kids Club and activities, although these generally only cover their costs.

In addition, the school received £12,000 from donations. Extensive fundraising by the Kingham Primary School Association or KPSA makes a meaningful contribution to school funds and allows the purchase of resources and experiences that would not otherwise be possible. We are grateful for the efforts of everyone in contributing to this.

Expenditure

The total expenditure of the school was £1,001,000. Staff costs accounted for £827,000, or 83% of spending.

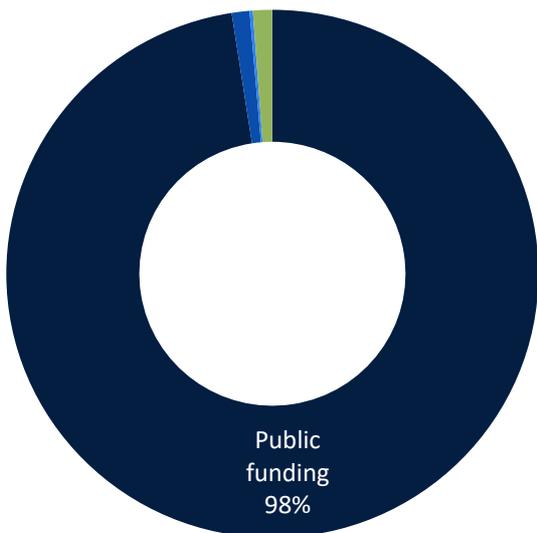
While employment costs continue to rise, this is not necessarily matched by increased funding for the school. The governors therefore need to ensure that the school maximises the value for money for expenditure on contractual employment costs.

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

That leaves just under £42,000 a year for learning resources, materials, and supplies, which is less than 5 pence in every pound spent by the school. It works out at around £210 per child each year, or £5.53 a week.

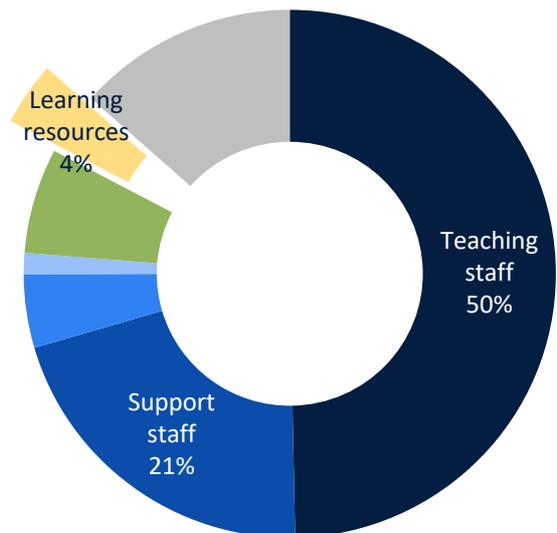
Any savings that we can make, or additional funds that can be raised, can therefore make a significant contribution to the quality and quantity of learning resources and teaching materials available for our children.

Income
£1,021,000



- Public funding
- School generated
- School meals
- Donations

Expenditure
£1001,000



- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Admin staff
- Other staff costs
- Learning resources
- Building and grounds
- Other

Forecast

The approved budget for the financial year 2021-2022 provisionally forecasts a total income of £1,032,000 and an increased total expenditure of £1,111,000. This indicates an in-year shortfall of over £79,000.

Governors on the Finance Committee will be reviewing the budget with the School Business Manager in the light of the latest estimates of income and expenditure. Having improved efficiencies wherever possible, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find areas in which further economies can be made.

The school is only able to balance the budget because it has a modest 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 future years.

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.

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 £3,192 per year, which is more than £22,000 over seven years.

The biggest financial factor that we can influence is to ensure that the school continues to fill every available place, throughout the school.

To do this, we need to provide a best-in-class education and promote the school actively to prospective applicants. We welcome the support of parents and carers in recommending the school to others.

Premises

The school benefits from an exceptional location, which is a key asset. We are fortunate to have such a site, but the nature of the grounds and the age of some of the buildings present problems that not all schools face.

Governors on the Premises Committee are responsible for overseeing the school premises and estate to ensure they are fit for purpose and preparing any spending plans for approval by the board.

The school receives a capital allowance of just £6,400 a year for premises. This does not even cover the cost of essential maintenance.

Despite financial challenges, the board has been able to commit significant investment in the estate from ring-fenced funds.

The outside area for the Early Years Foundation Stage has been refurbished over the summer with a new playground surface and play equipment. The funding for this came from retained working capital from the transfer of the former Kingfishers Playgroup to the management of the school.

There are plans to create an all-weather jogging track around the school playing field. This will be financed through accumulated physical education and sport premium funding, which is reserved for additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the physical education, physical activity, and sport.

The internet access for the school has been upgraded to a full-fibre connection to provide significantly improved performance and reliability.

The governors have also approved spending of £40,000 to cover immediate priorities for refurbishment and renovation.

This amounts to a total commitment of over £100,000 in renovations and improvements to the site over the financial year from April 2021.

However, the governors estimate the need to spend a further £200,000 or more over the coming years, just to maintain the existing building.

The board is also exploring ways in which it may be possible to improve the existing site further, to increase teaching space. Any development will be dependent upon securing significant additional funding.

Evaluation

It is over a decade since Kingham Primary School received a full inspection, in September 2010, when Ofsted rated it as Outstanding.

School inspections were suspended last year but resume this term, and we are always prepared for an Ofsted visit. We aware that being previously judged as Outstanding is no guarantee of future performance and we continue to be self-critical.

The school maintains its own self-evaluation form and school development plan to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to address areas for development.

At the end of June, an external consultant conducted a light touch review of our early years provision, based on the latest Ofsted framework.

After spending the day analysing data, watching lessons, reading our self-review, looking through our books and journals and speaking with staff and children, the consultant concluded that our early years provision met the Outstanding criteria.

Strengths highlighted in the review included:

- Strong and passionate leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage, with a shared vision.
- Teaching is excellent and interactions are highly effective as staff encourage children to think creatively and deeply.
- Environments, indoors and out, provide an abundance of exciting and highly creative opportunities.
- Behaviour is excellent, because of the high levels of engagement in stimulating learning environments.
- The curriculum is ambitious and extremely well-planned.
- Children achieve consistently well by the end of Reception class.

Although not a formal inspection, we are really encouraged by the findings, reflecting the hard work of Miss Jenkinson and the early years team.

We are committed to achieving a similar assessment throughout the school.

Feedback

The school conducts a parent survey every year to understand what is working well and where there may be areas for improvement. We compare the results to previous years and publish them on our web site.

We also encourage parents to contribute to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire at any time.

We will continue to engage with the whole school community as we shape and share our development 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.

We hope that it never comes to that, and you can resolve any issues in consultation with the Headteacher, but we want to know if there is a problem.

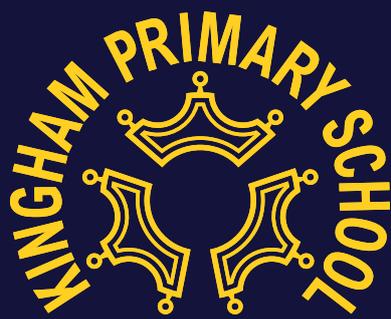
We also want to know if there are any ways in which you think the experience at Kingham Primary School can be improved.

Outlook

We are confident that with good 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 are always looking for people who could contribute to the governance of the school, either as parents or members of the local community. This is your school, and you can help shape its future. If you are interested, or know someone who might be suitable, feel free to get in touch with me through the school office. I would be pleased to discuss how you might get involved.

Dr William Cooper
Chair of Governors
September 2021



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