



# Chase Side Primary School

*Annual Governance Statement*

December 2020



## Chase Side Primary School

# Annual Governance Statement for the Governing Board of Chase Side Primary - December 2020

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the Governing Board has three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent.

## Governance Arrangements

The Governing Body comprises of:

- 1 Head Teacher Governor
- 4 Parent Governors selected by election (or by appointment if insufficient people stand)
- 1 Staff Governor selected by election from school staff
- 6 Co-opted Governors appointed by the governors to represent local community interests
- 1 Local Authority Governor appointed by the Local Authority (LA). The Governor is a representative of the LA.

The full Governing Body meets once each term. There are two subcommittees:

- The Rapid Improvement Group. This subcommittee was created in January 2019 to replace the Development Committee, following the Ofsted inspection report in 2018 which rated the school as Requires Improvement. It is targeted at addressing the matters raised in that report and ensuring that the school returns to an Ofsted rating of Good as soon as possible. This subcommittee meets twice each term
- The Resources committee. This subcommittee is concerned with finances and personnel and meets once each term.

The Chair of the Governing Board is elected by its members along with the Chairs of the two subcommittees. Both subcommittee chairs are Vice Chairs of the Board.

## Attendance Record of the Governors

Following the closure of school to most pupils in March, the Governing Body continued to meet virtually on a regular basis. Given the challenges faced, the Resources and RIG committees were suspended and every meeting was attended by all available Governors. No meetings were cancelled due to the Governing Body not being quorate (i.e. the number of governors needed to ensure legal decisions are made). We continued this over the autumn term.

In 2020 four new governors joined Chase Side. Sarah Bocas was appointed as a co-opted governor at the start of January having previously supported the Rapid Improvement Group as a local lead governor. Hilary Ballantine was appointed as a co-opted governor at our first virtual meeting on 1 April having previously been a member of the Rapid Improvement Group as external Headteacher support. Emily Bowler and Antonio Upali were elected as parent governors just prior to the spring lockdown and attended their first meeting virtually on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

## Informal visits to the School

Governors visit the school both in formal and informal capacities. Prior to March Governors attended a number of events on an informal basis.

Parent governors, in particular, are often present in the school playground either before or after school. Governors have a rota for helping to manage the school streets barrier the majority of the week at both the start and end of school.

## Our impact

### Finances

Chase Side has faced a challenging financial situation this year. Government funding has not kept up with increased costs. In addition we are facing lost revenue from cancelled lettings (as a result of the Covid pandemic) and additional costs as a result of making the school as 'Covid secure' as possible. Some of these costs have been reimbursed by the Department for Education. Despite these challenges Chase Side continues to maintain a balanced budget.

### Staffing

The most significant change to staffing was the appointment of Mr Hitchens as Deputy Head Teacher. This provided a complete Senior Leadership team that we hope will help to drive the improvement the school needs to make.

### Teaching and Learning

At the start of 2019, we set up the Rapid Improvement Group to focus on achieving at least a Good Ofsted rating as quickly as possible. Prior to the March shutdown the Rapid Improvement Group continued to meet every half term to discuss and assess plans for school improvement. We also received reports from visits by the Local Authority to assess provision. We met with subject leaders to understand the ways in which teaching of those subjects was being embedded across the school.

After the March shutdown the Governing Body continued to meet virtually. The Department for Education allowed schools to decide for themselves what remote working provision should be made for their pupils – if any. Chase Side issued work for the pupils to complete at home on a weekly basis. The Governing Body monitored the

levels of engagement in each year group across the whole lockdown period. When the school server broke down we approved the funding needed for the replacement.

Since September we have looked at the plans for Catch-up to try to fill the gaps in learning that the children have inevitably developed after so long out of formal education. We are also monitoring the plans for Remote Working for all pupils who have to Self Isolate. This will include the content and engagement levels.

## Other Impacts

Prior to lockdown we began considering plans to move the After School Club in house so we had full control of the provision. We were aware that many parents were unhappy with the existing provision and needed the club to be Ofsted registered in order to use Childcare vouchers. During shutdown we continued to discuss this and plans were finalised to begin providing in house care from September.

During shutdown we continued to monitor pupil engagement and safeguarding where needed. We received weekly updates from Ms Scull.

On the announcement that Primary schools should reopen to certain year groups we met to discuss the ways in which Chase Side could safely reopen. It soon became apparent that it would be impossible to follow the Government guidance to make the school as 'covid secure' as possible whilst allowing all pupils in those year groups to return full time. We therefore took the decision that we would only be able to offer part time provision. We made covid safe health and safety visits to the school both before and after reopening to ensure that all provisions in the Risk Assessment were adhered to. We also read and discussed the Risk Assessment.

When remaining year groups were allowed back we considered the updated Risk Assessment and discussed the logistics with Ms Scull.

Prior to full return in September we considered further updates to the Risk Assessment and had an additional meeting as early as possible in September to monitor the situation.

## The Year Ahead

2021 will continue to offer challenges to the whole country and to our school community. It will take some time for the children to catch up on the learning they missed in 2020. The pressures on school staff to assess the gaps and address them whilst also continuing to teach the national curriculum and address the ways in which Chase Side needs to improve is creating a perfect storm of pressure. The Governing Body will continue to support and challenge when appropriate. We will also continue to assist in the drive for improvement in anticipation of the reinstatement of routine inspections by Ofsted.

## Governing Body Meeting Minutes

These are available to read upon request from the School Office.