



## ROWDEFORD SCHOOL



### Governors Annual Report 2018/2019

The role of the Full Governing Board (FGB) at Rowdeford School is to support the school in achieving high educational standards which will ensure that our pupils are educated to their full potential.

The role of the FGB is also to challenge the Head Teacher and staff to ensure:

- a. the best possible education for our pupils;
- b. making sure the pupils are safe and feel safe and valued;
- c. public funds are used efficiently.

The FGB also supports a safe and nurturing environment for our pupils who are amongst the most vulnerable members of society.

During the year 2018/2019 the Governors fulfilled their remit by:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that public money is well spent.

During 2018/2019 the following actions were taken by Governors:

- a. We supported and called to account the Head Teacher, Mike Loveridge, in his second year in post as Head Teacher.
- b. We supported the Head Teacher and senior leadership team in the extension of the school's designation to include students with SLD and the challenges that this brings.
- c. We oversaw the Head Teacher's support and management of the Deputy Head Teachers.
- d. We oversaw the Deputy Head Teacher's new safeguarding recording system.
- e. We oversaw and supported the Head Teacher in the planning of the increase in the cohort of pupils in September 2019 from 136 to 160 including the recruitment of 4 additional teachers, 10 teaching assistants and 4 support staff associated with the significant increase in the number of our pupils.
- f. We lobbied against the closure of Rowdeford, Larkrise and St Nicholas schools. We made a number of representations both verbally and in writing to the Local Authority against the proposals to close all three schools. At the time of this report we are in the consultation process to close all three schools, create a new school on the Rowdeford site and two "satellite" schools on the sites of St Nicholas and Larkrise. We are saddened that it is likely that Rowdeford School will close but are pleased that the amazing school site will be retained to create a new school. Throughout this unsettling period we have supported the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership team, teaching and support staff.
- g. We supported the work of the Rowdeford Charitable Trust. We continue to be very appreciative of the Trust's support of the school.
- h. We strengthened our board by recruiting three new governors – Rosemary Freestone, Neil Ainsworth and Marc Gibson. New Governor Induction was carried out by one of our governors Liz Yarn.
- i. Throughout the year the FGB agendas we have continued to focus on the key issues



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- of the governors including strategy, performance and the effective use of resources. Our two sub-committees were Standards and Welfare chaired by Dave Wood and Resources chaired by Charles Burgess.
- j. We reviewed the educational performance of the school and its pupils at every meeting including a detailed annual review of progress and achievements for the previous academic year. In the opinion of the senior leadership team and the governors the level of attainment continues to be outstanding. Exam results in particular have been very good. Pupil attendances are excellent and well above average for special schools.
  - k. We received a comprehensive report from the Head Teacher on the performance of the school at every FGB meeting on which questions are asked and answered. The governing board continue to focus on pupil behaviour and safeguarding. The governors continue to monitor the success of planned interventions to minimise the impact of disruptive behaviour on the learning of all pupils.
  - l. We encouraged all governors to undertake training whether it be external or in house. In particular at the start of three FGB meetings training and presentations were delivered to the governors by members of the teaching staff and governors, including progress and exam results, training on evaluation and monitoring and tree awards (in respect of learning outside the classroom).
  - m. We have undertaken a comprehensive Health & Safety review with the facilities manager Sean Scott.
  - n. We undertake as a Board at least one classroom visit per governor per year.

We completed our annual assessment on the school under the school financial value standards in March 2019 and approved our annual budget in May 2019. Matching the school's expenditure to the available funding continues to be very challenging in the current environment of public funding cuts. Despite the challenging environment the school was able to achieve a financial surplus. In reviewing financial issues, governors are always mindful of the need to make decisions in the best interests of the pupils' education and safeguarding.

We have in the last year faced a very challenging time in respect of the Local Authority's plans for Special Educational Needs provision in North Wiltshire.

However, despite the challenges there is shared vision for the school and the FGB that the best possible education is to be delivered for the pupils.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to chair the FGB of Rowdeford School during 2018/2019 and I would like to thank my fellow governors for their time and effort in supporting the Head Teacher, Mike Loveridge and the school's senior leadership team to deliver an outstanding educational experience to our pupils. We also thank our very proficient and supportive clerk Jennie Noble-Nesbitt.

Annette Foster  
Chair of Governors  
17 September 2019