



## Annual Governance Statement

### Our Vision

Our vision is to provide the children who attend Rainow Primary School with an outstanding holistic education. We aim to promote every child's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development as well as excellence in academic achievement; whilst providing positive experiences in a wide range of sports, arts and culturally enriching extra-curricular activities.

We aim to:

- Develop the Governing Body to provide more challenge, rigour and strategic support to the school
- Develop a more visible and transparent style of governorship within the school community
- Build sustainable and supportive links between governors, school staff and other stakeholders
- Progressively improve our Ofsted inspection reports
- Improve our year-on-year achievement levels

This is all done in conjunction with the school's core values of *'Caring, Learning & Achieving'* and the school's vision of *'Growing a community of life-long learners who will care for each other, who will work hard to learn new things every day, and who will achieve more than they thought possible'*.

### Our Accountability

The Governing Body is committed to being transparent and accountable to parents and other stakeholders. This statement summarises the work done by the Governing Body during the academic year 2020-21 and its resultant outcomes.

The core strategic functions of the Governing Body are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school;
- Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring value for money;
- Promote the highest possible standards for Health & Safety and Safeguarding.



The following report is structured around these strategic functions.

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body is made up of a cross-section of local people who freely volunteer their time. They meet regularly to discuss a wide range of school issues. Details about the governors can be found on the school's website on the 'Governor' page. The Governing Body has benefitted from stable membership for a number of years with governors who have agreed to extend their service and this has provided valuable continuity to the school.

### **How the Governing Body functions**

As a Governing Body, we are committed to our strategic function whilst being acutely aware that we are not responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the school. The Governing Body delegates specific areas of governance to three standing committees (Teaching & Learning, Finance and Buildings) which meet regularly and report to the Governing Body at every termly meeting. Ad hoc committees are set up as-and-when required. In addition to attending Governing Body and committee meetings, every governor takes responsibility for a specific subject area in the curriculum. Governors visit the school frequently to attend meetings with: Local Authority advisers, the School Improvement Partner, teachers and support staff. They also visit to inspect the fabric of the school and its resources, and to assist with recruitment.

### **Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction**

At the commencement of the academic year the Headteacher, with input from the teaching staff, drafts a School Strategic Development Plan (SSDP). This plan is then submitted to the Governing Body for scrutiny, amendment and approval. The SSDP is a statement of intent for the coming year; and our vision and aspirations for the following two years. Once approved, the SSDP is a public document and may be viewed on the school's website. The Governors ensure that the SSDP sets out ambitious, whilst achievable, objectives that will benefit the education of the children attending the school.

The Strategic Plan is developed based on the following key inputs:

- input from the Headteacher and the staff
- feedback from parents and pupils (e.g. from survey data)
- guidance from our School Improvement Partner
- performance data



We also liaise with local schools to share new ideas and best practice; and, we continuously research similar schools for inspirational ideas.

Progress against the agreed objectives is reviewed and challenged throughout the year. The SSDP for 2020-21 had the following key priorities:

### **Quality of Education**

- Design and implement an effective school Recovery Curriculum to address children's social, emotional and academic needs. (COVID-19 related)
- Embed high quality curriculum planning, with a key focus on assessment of learning in all year groups, to ensure full coverage and pupil progress across all wider subject areas (rolled over from SSDP 2019-20).
- To achieve good levels of attainment and progress in English, at least in line with National standards (rolled over from SSDP 2019-20).
- To achieve good levels of attainment and progress in Maths, at least in line with National standards (rolled over from SSDP 2019-20).

### **Behaviour and Attitudes**

- Maintain high standards of behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning, with an increased emphasis on reconnecting the community safely, rebuilding learning confidence and stamina, and reigniting children's curiosity (COVID-19 related).

### **Personal Development**

- Ensure our PSHE curriculum reflects and promotes fundamental British Values, diversity and equality of opportunity, is high profile, meets new statutory requirements around RSE, and is effectively interwoven into our curriculum.
- Ensure there is support for children's and teachers' mental health. (COVID-19 related)

### **Leadership and Management:**

- To ensure that the school is COVID-safe. (COVID-19 related)
- To ensure that the new staffing structure (from Jan 21) is effective, including appropriate levels of CPD for new and existing Subject Leaders (rolled over from 2019-20).
- Ensure that the Special Educational Needs Coordinator role is effective and manageable, particularly in light of the increased pressure of a higher number of children eligible for an EHCP.

### **Quality of Early Years Education**

- Develop a rigorous and systematic approach to the teaching of EY maths, in line with the wider school's Rainow Approach to Mathematics scheme. (rolled over from SSDP 19-20)



- To understand and prepare for the introduction of the revised Early Years Framework.

### **Keeping the Headteacher Accountability**

The Governing Body sets high standards and we expect the Headteacher to provide demonstrable evidence that every child is achieving to their full potential. At the end of the school year we receive reports from the Headteacher setting out the children's attainment. We compare the school's data to national averages and similar schools to assist our evaluation. The comparable information comes from a range of independent sources including the Department for Education, Cheshire East Council and Ofsted.

The Headteacher identifies, tracks and addresses any differences between actual and expected progress and achievement for the school. Where attainment or progress targets are set within the SSDP, or if there is an identifiable anomaly, the data is reported to the Governing Body.

The Governing Body also employs a School Improvement Partner to provide independent analysis of the school's performance; and to advise the Headteacher's Performance Management Committee with annual appraisal.

### **Overseeing the Financial Performance of the School**

The Governing Body oversees the financial performance of the school to ensure school funds are managed efficiently and effectively for the benefit of the children, and in accordance with Department of Education and Local Authority advice and guidance; with the aim of ensuring all children reach their full potential in preparation for the next step in their education. Financial management responsibilities are overseen by the Finance Committee, which includes Governors with substantial financial management expertise. The Finance Committee reports to the Governing Body every term.

As in previous years, the Governing Body has approved a three-year financial plan for the school. The plan was prepared on a prudent basis and is aligned with the objectives in the SSDP; it is consistent with the financial resources available to the school and is realistic with regards to estimates of income and expenditure. Funding for the school is determined by the National Funding Formula set by the Department for Education on an annual basis. This year, as in previous years, the school has successfully delivered its objectives within the set budget. Our forecast for future years does show a deficit in the school budget; however, this is because it is impossible to predict the annual uplift in funding that will be made by the Department for Education.

Every year an annual review is conducted by the Finance Committee to provide assurance that the school is securing value for money and acting with financial integrity. Results of the review are reported to the Governing Body and submitted in an annual Statement of Financial Value Standards (SFVS) to Cheshire East



Council. The SFVS contains the detailed results of our assessment to satisfy ourselves and Cheshire East Council that we have sound and secure financial management in place.

It is important to note our gratitude for contributions from the Friends of Rainow School, and the other grants and donations received towards the school's expenditure.

### **Promoting the Highest Possible Standards for Health & Safety and Safeguarding**

The Governing Body is committed to providing the safest possible environment for everyone at the school.

All staff and governors adhere to the school's Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies which are written in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance and best practice. These statutory policies are reviewed, updated and approved by the Governing Body annually. There are several other policies that are linked to the Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies. These additional policies are reviewed and cross-referenced to ensure there is coherence throughout the school's policies.

Safeguarding children is defined by the Department for Education as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

All staff and governors are vetted in accordance with current legislation. They are also required to attend appropriate training when necessary. The school has a Safeguarding Governor (appointed by the Governing Body) who liaises directly with the school's designated safeguarding leads (DSL's) to ensure that, when appropriate, issues are reported to and addressed by the Governing Body. This process ensures that the school's procedures are functioning correctly.

### **Other Activities and Achievements**

#### **Buildings**

The school has a plan for ongoing maintenance and improvement of the school's facilities. A summary of our progress in this area is as follows:

- Our main priority was to ensuring the school was COVID-secure and adhered, as far as possible, to the latest government guidance. Most notably, we created additional, secure access to the rear of school, so that the upper juniors could safely use their external doors.



- We were successful in our bid to the Local Authority to install double glazing throughout the school. This work is due to commence 21-22.
- We installed a large shipping container behind the kitchen to replace a smaller, dilapidated unit to act as extra storage and help free up space inside school.

## **Other**

In a year disrupted due to COVID, other items worthy of note were:

### School Attendance

- This was high at more than 97% during the weeks that school was open to all the children. Well above the national average.
- Only 1 class was sent home during term-time due to COVID during 20-21.
- Our overall level of COVID-related absence was relatively low (children and staff).
- We cared for and taught over 50 children of Key Worker families between January and March 2021.

### Home Learning

- High levels of engagement with Home Learning - consistently over 95% attendance and task completion across the school. Families were overwhelmingly positive and supportive of our approach
- Teachers developed their knowledge and skills to prepare and deliver high quality Home Learning experiences for the children.
- Home Learning was closely matched to our usual school curriculum plan.

### Recovery Curriculum

- The teachers were sensitive and reactive to the needs of our children at every stage of the pandemic. They designed and adapted the curriculum to take into account the children's social, emotional and academic needs.
- All areas of missed learning, or where learning was not face-to-face, were identified and factored into future planning.
- We offered more nurture and emotional support through activities such as yoga, woodland activities, or more incidentally, through extra play or time to socialise.
- We provided extra academic support for children who have needed it most. This was a mix of additional teaching assistant time, 1:1 tutoring and other, tailored learning opportunities.
- Our extensive school grounds were utilised more than ever before to ensure children had a safe, stimulating and fun place to learn and play.



- The Winter Muddy Wonderland at Christmas provided a magical and memorable moment for the children.
- Our Planet Protectors (school Eco Team) did a tremendous job promoting eco-friendly messages and behaviour. They won the school over £800 worth of litter-picking equipment and earned the Bronze and Silver Eco-Schools awards!
- An enjoyable Sports Day took place, with all the children able to participate in a whole-school competition (albeit in their class bubble).
- The Upper Juniors took part in a brilliant end-of-year event, RainowFest: a fantastic week of challenging activities, partying and fun.
- We managed to arrange effective transition for all of our children moving to their next class.

### **Other**

- Our governor committees continued to meet frequently to support and drive school improvement.
- We raised more money than ever for Comic Relief and Children and Need.
- We continued to work with the FRS on lots of fun events: Christmas raffles, Reading challenges and sunflower competitions, to name a few. The FRS were wonderful.
- The staff worked tirelessly, adapted quickly to new roles, as well as managing their own personal situations. In addition to their day-to-day roles, they cleaned toilets, served lunches, supervised extra playtimes, followed one-way systems and strict rules around social distancing, wore face masks, took extra tests, and were generally amazing.

### **Final Comments**

We are committed to delivering an outstanding holistic education, in a happy and safe environment, for all children who attend the school. The governors are pleased that the school has enabled the children to fulfil their potential. The academic results are consistently at or above the national average; and, the children have managed to participate in a wide range of culturally enriching extra-curricular activities. Our thanks go to all of the staff, our ever-supportive parents and carers, and the children for their efforts that have secured these outcomes for the school community. We look forward to building upon this year's achievements.