



Upton-upon-Severn C of E Primary School

Annual Statement of the Governing Body

September 2025

1. Introduction

The Governing Body works to promote and maintain high standards of educational achievement. This annual statement details the work of the Governing Body in fulfilling its responsibilities.

The purpose of governors is to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

The Governing Body has three core strategic functions:

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

2. The work of the Governing Body during 2024-25

Once again this year, underlying all of the work of the Full Governing Body is the school's vision - to offer inspiration to young lives and the associated motto 'Anything is possible, we can all succeed.'

The Full Governing Body (FGB) met on five occasions for its regular business during the academic year 2024-25 – on 24 September 2024, 10 December 2024, 18 March 2025, 30 April 2025 and on 15 July 2025. The FGB's three committees, Business, School Improvement and Pay met during the year as follows:

- Business: 18 September 2024, 11 November 2024, 5 February 2025, 30 April 2025 and 2 July 2025.
- School Improvement: 4 October 2024, 30 January 2025, 27 March 2025, and 26 June 2025.
- Pay: 6 December 2024.

One additional meeting of the FGB took place on 8 April 2025 to approve the appointment of the new headteacher.

Key issues engaged with by the Full Governing Body (FGB) and its constituent committees through the school year included the following:

- Consideration of a detailed termly Headteacher's report, which included details on the following:
 - school's contextual data
 - safeguarding update
 - leadership and management
 - staffing update
 - pupil behaviour and attitudes (including attendance)
 - personal development
 - quality of education.

The termly reports were pre-circulated, allowing governors the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification from the Headteacher on the content of the report.

- Oversight and monitoring of the school's safeguarding procedures, with regular anonymised reports on the subject being considered at FGB meetings. The Safeguarding Link Governor met with the school's Assistant Headteacher who has responsibility for safeguarding to ensure all protocols and procedures are robust to ensure safety for all of the school's pupils, staff and visitors.
- Approval of the school budget for 2025-26. Through the work of the Business Committee, the governors have worked closely with the Headteacher, the School's business manager and senior leadership team to monitor the school budget throughout the year and to identify spending priorities. The local authority regularly monitors the school's financial situation, and is working closely with the school on financial management matters.

During the year, governors had face-to-face school visits. The following themed visits were undertaken, all linked to various aspects of the School Development Plan. The governors undertaking these visits have produced reports which were considered at FGB meetings where there was an opportunity to consider issues arising from these reports. During 2024-25, governor visits explored the following areas:

- Early Years and Foundation Stage
- English – reading literacy, achievement at Key Stages 1 and 2
- Numeracy
- Pupil Premium
- Religious provision
- Safeguarding
- SEND

With regard to the governing body itself, during 2024-25:

- All governors undertook online safeguarding training during the year.
- Governors monitored the implementation of the governors' strategic plan which had been adopted in July 2024. This is accessible as a separate document.

- Two new governors were appointed during the year: Kiran Mejer (parent governor, from December 2024) and Julieann Watson (foundation governor, from December 2024).
- During the year, three governors resigned. We are very grateful to them for the work they undertook as governors during their tenure in office: Jessica Wood (parent governor, resigned November 2024); Tonwen Empson (local authority governor, resigned April 2025); Glyn Olden (co-opted governor, resigned September 2025).
- Currently, there are two vacant governor posts – one local authority governor and one co-opted governor. Active attempts are being made to fill these vacancies.

3. Highlights and challenges during 2024-25

Two major issues have engaged the governors during the year.

- i.) The appointment of a new headteacher.

After 14 successful years, Julie Wills decided to step down from her role as headteacher. We are grateful to Mrs Wills for her commitment and dedication to the school over this period. The governing body played an active part in the recruitment and selection process for the new headteacher. We were very pleased with the high quality of the candidates who applied for the post. Following a gruelling recruitment process, Rachel Arthur was offered the post and accepted. Rachel's appointment began on 1 September 2025.

- ii.) A positive Ofsted inspection took place in April 2025.

During the inspection, led from the school's perspective by Julie Wills as headteacher, a number of governors were interviewed. The inspector found that:

'Upton-Upon-Severn CofE Primary and Pre School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection [when the School was judged good for overall effectiveness].'

The following areas for improvement were identified in the inspection:

- In some subjects, learning is not coherently sequenced. This means pupils do not build their knowledge securely and find it difficult to make connections between their learning over time. The school should ensure that the curriculum sets out precisely what pupils should know and when in all subjects so pupils learn well across all subjects.
- The school's work to improve the attendance of some groups of pupils has not had the required impact. This means that some pupils miss important learning. The school should redouble their efforts to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence.

The school's SATS results showed very significant improvement year-on-year which governors were pleased to note.

The governing body continued to pay attention to the implementation and embedding of a revised school-wide curriculum, monitoring its impact upon the children's learning through the year. The impact of this substantial development upon learning has been promising to date. The Head and Deputy Head have reported regularly to the governing body upon this matter through the year.

As reported last year, like many schools, finances remain a challenge and the school is working with the local authority on this matter. Particularly through the work of the Business Committee, the governors work with the school management to explore ways of seeking to increase pupil numbers, and ensuring that expenditure is rigorously controlled, ensuring good value for money is achieved in all areas.

The governing body, in line with the recommendations of the Education White Paper of 2022, has been considering whether, in the long term, to join an academy and, if so, which one would best suit the needs of the school community. We have deferred this for the time being whilst we await further developments at a national level. Full consultation with parents will take place before any decisions on this matter are taken.

4. Priorities for Full Governing Body identified for 2025-26

These include the following:

- Providing support and appropriate constructive challenge to the new headteacher in her first year in post.
- Ensuring that the School addresses the two areas for improvement outlined in the recent Ofsted report.
- Continuing to scrutinise implementation by school management and staff of the plans put in place to enhance pupils' academic achievement.
- Overseeing the development and implementation of a plan in co-operation with the local authority, so as to address the School's financial position
- Implementation of the governors' strategic plan.
- Considering the local and national context before determining whether to continue exploring options relating to the school becoming part of an academy.

Dr Andrew Walker, Chair of Governors

September 2025