



Whitecross Nursery School

'Your Child, Our Inspiration'

Governing Body Newsletter – Summer Term 2024

Hello, as we fast approach the end of this busy school year, the Whitecross Nursery School governing body would like to share with you some of the work we have been doing over the course of 2023/24.

What Does the Governing Body Do?

The governing body works with the nursery leadership and staff team to provide the best possible education for the children who attend Whitecross by:

- Ensuring a clear strategic direction for the nursery school, including vision and values, and agreeing on school development plans and policies;
- Monitoring and evaluating the educational performance of the school ;
- Ensuring the financial health of the school, and value for money;
- Ensuring the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves; to the local community; to those who fund and maintain it and to the staff it employs; and that the voices of these key stakeholders are heard.



The full governing body has met five times in person this year for full board meetings. We had two committees in place this year and each committee has met three times. The Resources committee focuses on finance, premises and personnel matters, while our Standards committee reviews curriculum, attainment and progress.

From September 2024, the board have agreed to move to six in person full board meetings per year and remove committees.

In addition to these meetings all governors have enjoyed spending time in nursery monitoring different aspects of the school including safeguarding, inclusion, health and safety, staff and children's wellbeing, and the school curriculum.

Four governors came into school to meet with the lead HMI from Ofsted during our recent inspection and the majority of the board were present at the inspection feedback meeting.

We have also supported various events including; parent information evenings, Christmas performances, new staff recruitment, and open days, and we very much enjoy meeting families and children on these visits.

Governing Body Focus for 2023/24

Alongside our statutory duties, the Governing body had the following priorities for 2023/24;

- **Deepen Governor understanding of the recently updated school curriculum.** Staff curriculum leads have been invited to attend governing board meetings to share information about their area of the curriculum and how this is implemented and monitored. Governors have also grown their knowledge of the curriculum and the impact this is having on children's attainment and progress through regular monitoring visits and discussions with staff.
- **Governor induction, training, and succession planning.** We welcomed co-opted governor Sarah Harrison, and staff governor Kate Parker to the board this year and would like to thank them for the contribution they have already made to the school in such a short space of time. We said goodbye to our Resources committee chair, Sara Woodward, at the end of this term and thank her for her wonderful support over the past few years. Our succession planning has ensured key governor roles continue to be covered, governor training plans are in place, and we have just launched our next round of recruitment to fill current vacancies.
- **Staff engagement and wellbeing.** The governing body has always sought to build positive working relationships with the wonderful staff team at Whitecross, and ensure they feel supported and appreciated. Our wellbeing link governor has continued to visit school each term to listen to all members of staff and work alongside the leadership team to further support staff wellbeing. We were delighted that our recent Ofsted inspection highlighted the care being given to staff workload and wellbeing by governors and leaders, and how positive our amazing staff team are about the school and their roles.
- **Parent/Carer engagement.** We continue to seek opportunities to meet with parents and families. This year, governors have attended school events, stay and play sessions, and open days to have the opportunity to meet with families. We ensure new parents receive an introduction to the governing body, including how to contact us, and we have reviewed and evaluated responses to parent surveys in governor meetings. Further information about the governing body can be found on our website - [Whitecross Nursery School - Our Governing Body](#).

Governor Monitoring Visits

One of the key functions of the governing board is to undertake monitoring activity, the purpose of which is to ensure governors have a good understanding of the school, build relationships with the staff team, and validate information shared with governors in board meetings.

- **Link Governor Visits.** We have link governors for the important areas of Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), and Wellbeing/Mental Health. These governors carried out termly visits to school to discuss and review work across these areas with the Headteacher and staff team.

- **School Development Plan Monitoring Visits.** Each year the governing body approves the school development plan and carries out monitoring visits to help us review progress against the plan. The focus for this year has been on the following priorities;
 - *To update and develop the maths curriculum to ensure clear taught progression, quality of teaching and learning and monitoring and evaluating are improved.*
 - *To develop staff interactions in continuous provision when working both inside and outside.*
 - *To consult upon and develop our provision to take two-year-olds from Sep 2024.*

Thank you!

The Governing body would like to say a huge thank you to all the wonderful parent and grandparent volunteers who have supported school in so many ways this year, from helping on a school trip to running the school library each week, your support and time is very much appreciated, we couldn't do it without you.

Governors would also like to extend their thanks to all the staff for their incredible professionalism and continued hard work during the past year, and all our families and children for helping to make Whitecross such a thriving, inclusive and happy nursery. Our recent Ofsted 'Outstanding' judgement was testament to the incredible dedication and support of our whole Whitecross community – what a fantastic team!

We wish all our families who will be leaving us at the end of this term the very best of luck as your children begin their adventures in new schools, and we look forward to seeing our returning families next September.

Have a wonderful summer break!

Governor Vacancies

Are you passionate about achieving the best possible outcomes for children?

Are you inquisitive, curious and enthusiastic?

Do you have good inter-personal skills and enjoy learning and working together as a team?

Have you ever thought about volunteering as a school governor?

Whitecross Nursery School are looking for new governors to join our friendly and welcoming governing body. No experience of governance or education is needed, just a willingness to commit your time and energy!

If you are interested in finding out more about this rewarding and enjoyable role, please visit the governing body page on our website: www.whitecross.derby.sch.uk or email Claire Devey, our Chair of Governors – chair@whitecross.derby.sch.uk or Julie Fowler, our Clerk clerk@whitecross.derby.sch.uk