



THE SOLENT SCHOOLS LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

The De Curci Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 10646541
Registered office address: Springfield School, Central Road, Drayton, Portsmouth, Hampshire, United Kingdom, PO6 1QY

Governors' Annual Statement 2022-2023

The major focus of the governors is to ensure that pupils at The Solent Schools progress appropriately in their education. The Governing Body appreciate that for this to happen the pupils must be supported by a well-led, enthusiastic, professionally competent and motivated staff all working together within a safe, supportive, stimulating environment.

Governors appreciate too the requirements of our children's parents and carers and their need to be satisfied about the overall leadership and management of the school and how it affects safety, learning and enjoyment of their children.

To achieve their objectives governors must continually evaluate the role they have played within the life of the school and publish relevant information to all interested parties.

This statement is part of that evaluation and publication process.

Education Recovery & Improvement Plan (ERIP)

Governors work co-operatively with both the Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) in contributing to and monitoring the ERIP. This plan evolves and develops annually as the schools and educational demands change.

Governor Visits

Governors are invited to visit both schools as part of their monitoring of the ERIP and gain evidence which can be fed back to the full Governing Body.

Throughout the year we also attend fun activities in which the pupils participate; sports events and class/school performances are always enjoyed. Guidance in terms of the roles and responsibilities of statutory link governors are provided to relevant governors and regular training is available to up-skill our team.

Data Analysis

Governor plans this year will be based on the ERIP and analysing pupils' performance across the whole school. This is done using a range of data both provided from in-school progress reports and our annual test results.

Policies

Governors review all relevant policies on a programmed basis to ensure that all guidance is current and up to date. Specific attention is paid to ensure that the schools comply with the Department of Education mandatory policy list and those required by The De Curci Trust.

Financial Management

Members of the governing body have been trained in School Finance management. In addition, we have a CIMA qualified accountant on the governing body. School accounts are audited and scrutinised by the De Curci Trust and its Chief Finance Operating Officer. Budget reports are drawn up and seen by Governors on a termly basis.

The impact of the governors' role in the schools ensures that the budget is managed effectively; that correct purchasing procedures are followed; those improvements are effective and continuous.

Governor Expertise

The Governors bring a wide range of expertise to the schools and this helps to ensure the schools continue to progress. Our members have a range of abilities including a background and knowledge in education, project management, finance, IT, and Human Resources. Examples of the impact of Governor expertise on school improvement include:

- Funding for continued and improved staff CPD
- Evaluating and deciding priorities for Capital Project funding bids
- Programme of building work, eg, upgraded site security to ensure Safeguarding compliance.
- Appraisal of Solent Schools Senior Leaders
- Evaluation and contribution to the School Improvement Plan

Staff Recruitment and Appraisals

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of Schools are trained in safer recruitment and are part of each recruitment process. They also carry out staff appraisals. SLT appraisals are led by the Executive Headteacher, teaching staff appraisals are led by either Head of School or our more experienced teachers. Governors sit on both pay and appraisal panels and work with the CEO of the De Curci Trust and an external advisor for the Executive Headteacher's appraisal. The impact of this is to ensure all staff have targets which are evaluated, as well as having access to continued professional development.

Governor Meeting Attendance

Governor attendance is at an excellent level, with any absences from meetings subject to being accepted and approved by the governing body. There are no causes for concern at the level of commitment shown by any member of the governing body. The impact of this is an engaged and knowledgeable team who work cohesively with senior leaders.

Annual Review

The Governing Body, Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and all members of staff are constantly striving to improve and develop The Solent Schools. At both schools, this work has contributed to the 2020 Ofsted judgements that both schools remain Good with a number of areas highlighted as being extremely effective. Areas needing development are known and being focussed on. During the last year, 2021-2022, the Governing Body focussed on:

- Working alongside the school and Trust leadership teams on Capital Funding projects to improve Solent Schools which culminated in the successful outcome of the project to upgrade the entrance to Solent Junior School along with new fencing and entrance gates at both sites to improve

security and safeguarding. The replacement of the balconies at the Infant School; valuable learning spaces which had been out of use for far too long because of safety concerns.

- Continuous monitoring of the Solent Schools budgets to ensure money is spent as effectively as possible while protecting the future viability of the schools. This has helped to create specific roles at both schools to improve and implement an enhanced curriculum.
- Evaluation of different ways to improve Solent Schools' financial position.
- Continued evaluation of the SIP and ensuring Governors have specific responsibility to monitor the impact in key areas. This has contributed to the 2020 Ofsted inspections at both schools classifying them as remaining "Good". Key areas were also picked up by the inspectors as being highly effective.
- Attendance at Development and Inset Days and liaison with external moderators to validate the improvement processes within the schools. This has helped contribute towards cohesion, a shared vision and better understanding of the protocols and processes within the schools and how they work in practice.
- Provide capacity and opportunity for staff within Solent Schools to develop to ensure leadership is strong, driven and sustainable. This has helped give staff a progression route and opportunity to continue developing professionally within both Solent Schools and the De Curci Trust.

Future and Continuous Improvement

On-going and future areas for targeting will include:

- Effective monitoring of the School Improvement Plan, including Covid 19 catch-up funding, using areas of responsibility to feedback and assess impact of interventions and proposed action.
- Evaluate the curriculum delivered at both schools to ensure it remains broad and balanced as well as delivered equally to all pupils.
- Develop greater understanding of pupil progress among all groups of children at Solent Schools, including data scrutiny, to help Governors to question and challenge about narrowing the gaps.
- Budget analysis which not only continues to ensure the viability of Solent School but also looks at the needs of both schools in an individual and combined way which also adapts to the current demands within education.
- Specific and targeted use of the Hampshire Governors training programme to develop governor knowledge while improving ways of reporting back to maximise the impact across the schools.
- Participation in development days to provide visibility and a sense of shared vision while developing knowledge and understanding of greater depth in all areas.
- Continue working with the De Curci Trust Chief Financial Operating Officer to scrutinise the budgets on a monthly basis and to monitor and track progress on current Capital Funding Projects including the Infant School balcony project.
- Review of online learning delivery and participation by staff and pupils.

Particular focus of the governing body in the coming year will be on the following:

- Continued expansion of our engagement with all stakeholders and the wider community.
- Develop a wellbeing strategy to ensure that all staff are able to understand and best support the mental health of our pupils, that we continue to monitor the wellbeing of staff and pupils and provide resources for pastoral care provision linked to complex behavioural, social and emotional needs and that we create an effective way of monitoring staff wellbeing.
- Improve communication efficiency.

- Gaining a fuller understanding of CPD opportunities and their planned impact on school improvement

Celebrations

- In February we welcomed two new parent governors who have both settled into their roles and immediately proved to be most valuable members of our team.
- We are now able to enjoy a return to school trips and visits to school enabling us to engage fully with staff and pupils.
- The completion at the Junior School of quiet spaces and break out rooms as well as the new meeting room and administration offices giving a new lease of life to a rather tired building.
- The return of governors meeting with the school councils at both schools. A delight to engage with our bright and enthusiastic pupils, we are very proud of them.
- Yet another of our LSAs completing her PGCE and starting as a primary teacher in Portsmouth

Current Governing Body at The Solent Schools

Co-opted Governors

- Gary Burnett (Network Manager, Inclusion/Equality & Diversity Link)
- Karen Howe (Wellbeing Link)
- Neil McQueen (Chair of Resources)
- Kath Murriman (Safeguarding Link, Pupil Premium Link, Chair of Curriculum & Standards)
- Jon Pugsley (Maths Link, Vice Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Curriculum & Standards)
- John Wademan (Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Resources, Health & Safety Link)
- Dee Whitelock (English Link)

Parent Governors

- Iain Sutherland (Inclusion/SEND Link, DTG)
- Sarah Turner (EYFS Link)

Headteacher Governor

- Lucy Wilby (Executive Headteacher)

Associate Members

- Emma Curthoys (Head of Solent Infant School)
- Tracy Dinsmore (Bursar Solent Junior School)
- Laura Peterkin-Aldred (Head of Solent Junior School)
- Clare Winnicott (Bursar Solent Infant School)

Clerk to Governors

- Jean Loy

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 Chair of Governors

14 September 2022