



## Governors' Report 2021/22

Dear St Wilfrid's

At the end of every school year our Governing Body reports to our school community on the progress we have made as a school over the last twelve months – and our priorities for the year ahead.

Firstly, though, a few words to set this report in context. School governors are volunteers who bring their professional skills to the governing body and commit to ongoing training to ensure that they discharge the core functions of governance:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.
4. Additionally, as a church school we oversee the school's Christian distinctiveness reflected in the Church of England vision for education: 'Educating for life in all of its fullness' (John 10:10)

**Hurst Education Trust (HET):** After a long and thorough due diligence exercise our school converted voluntarily to academy status to enable us to join the HET on 1 July. Governors firmly believe this marks an exciting new era in the school's continued journey to improve our offer for the children in our care and to keep pace with changes in education. The advantages of being able to draw on the resources and skills of the trust mean that pupils have already had a wider range of experiences than we have previously been able to provide. In particular, we are grateful for the specialist support of French for Year 6, free travel and swimming for Year 4 and the activity days at Hurstpierpoint College for Year 5. We expect our curriculum offer to broaden and develop even further with the support of the trust. Behind the scenes the school has benefitted from expert school improvement advice to set us on our way to an outstanding offering. Governors are particularly pleased that the benefits of being part of a larger organisation still allow for a considerable amount of local autonomy – a factor that was significant in our decision to join HET.

**Our concept-based curriculum:** Our concept-based curriculum (based around 'Big Questions') is unique to St Wilfrid's and we are proud of it. It was introduced just before Covid struck and has taken rather longer to embed than was originally planned. However, our staff have continued to extend and develop the scope of the curriculum to ensure that our children can learn more and know more. This provides wider opportunities for our more vulnerable children and those with SEN as well as catering for learning at greater depth for all pupils. As well as investing significantly in maths resources with the introduction of the Power Maths scheme and a wider variety of texts, our outdoor learning has continued to develop with whole school



involvement in the allotment (and engagement with the Royal Horticultural Society gardening awards for schools) and forest school for Years 1-4. Sport continues to play a significant role in our curriculum supporting both physical and mental health. Pupils and staff are strongly engaged in physical activity, Children are exposed to a range of sports, including fencing, badminton, volleyball, gymnastics, netball, hockey and a range of striking and fielding games. Almost all pupils have participated in either intra-house or inter-school competitions, and in Key Stage 2 around one-half of pupils have taken some form of leadership role in sport. The full range of national curriculum tests took place again, including the new times table test for our Y4s. Nationally results are not being publicly communicated this year, although we are pleased to report that our results reflected the enormous effort of our staff and pupils and were above the national picture, demonstrating the school's commitment to Covid catch-up.

**Covid Catch Up:** Extra government funding has enabled extra tutoring for children in Reception and Years 1, 2, 5 and 6.

**Investment in our building and resources:** Behind the scenes our School Business Manager and our Premises Manager continue to do a fantastic job to ensure that our school is as well maintained and resourced as it can be within the constraints of a school budget. Over the year we have invested significantly in 'future-proofing' our internet / online capacity and have invested in 60 new laptops - 15 each for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. In terms of premises development, the site is now more secure with new fencing and there has been a significant amount of painting and decoration work which also includes new carpet at the entrance and foyer of the school and in the KS2 corridor. We are pleased that we continue to operate a balanced budget which is no mean feat in the primary education sector.

**Community:** At St Wilfrid's we take pride in our strong sense of community. The fantastic Friends of St Wilfrid's (FOSW) has continued to support the school and raise funds – a big Thank You to all involved. It was great to have the Christmas Fair back with thought and planning to make the event as Covid-secure as possible. The Summer Fair was another huge success and governors are truly grateful for the dedication of the FOSW team.

Our parish churches have been in school less this year because of Covid restrictions but have continued to support the school, both in prayer and in person. We have welcomed Father Edward, the new rector at St Wilfrid's and our thanks and good wishes go to Father Chris and his wife Carolyn (one of our governors) at St Richard's as they move to Sidlesham. Our reverse advent calendar in support of the Haywards Heath Food Bank produced a remarkable response and the continued support in collecting milk bottle tops means that our parishes have been able to support Riding for the Disabled in Mid Sussex.

Our updated brand and uniform (PE kit and cardigans / jumpers) have increased functionality and provided a more contemporary look for our pupils. They have been well received in school and complemented within our wider community. We have continued to play our part supporting colleagues (both our headteacher and SENCo chair locality groups) and we also look forward to closer collaboration with our partner schools in the HET – currently Albourne CofE primary and Ditchling St Margaret's.

In our local community, our focus on the environment continues. It was great that some of our pupils were again able to take part in a clean-up in the Scrase Valley which they were last able to do pre-Covid. The new clothes bin in the main drive is working well and supporting our community's recycling efforts.

**Looking forward:** Our annual collaborative working through of school priorities with staff has resulted in three clear areas of focus for our School Development Plan. These are:

- Quality of teaching: to establish outstanding practice across the school;
- Curriculum Development: to continue to update and develop the school curriculum with a particular focus on diversity and RE
- The development of performing arts – to create opportunities in music, drama, dance and performance.

Our school values, our SEND children and the use of technology will continue to be factored into our decisions as we move forward.

**Finally:** Without the fantastic support of both our staff and our hugely supportive parents, the role of the Governing Body would be so much more difficult. A heartfelt Thank You to you all and to HET for the phenomenal support which has allowed us to continue to make remarkable progress as a school.

With all good wishes

Jill Garraway  
Chair of Governors