

**KINGS HEATH
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT
2023-24**

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023-24

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PART 1. GOVERNING BOARD FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

All school governing boards have three core functions, which are defined by the Department for Education as follows :

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

In addition to performing these core functions, during the 2023-24 school year the governing board engaged with a series of special challenges and discharged their ongoing statutory responsibilities as explained in the following sections of this statement.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

There were seven meetings of the Full Governing Body during the school year, with one regular meeting being held during each half term over the course of the year, and an extraordinary meeting in April to approve the school budget. In addition, the governing body operated the following regular committees :

- **Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee**. There were seven meetings of this committee during the year. One meeting was held each half-term, and there was an extraordinary meeting in the first half of the summer term to scrutinize the budget.
- **Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee**. One meeting of this committee was held each term.
- **Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Committee**. One meeting of this committee was held each term.
- **Head Teacher Performance Management Committee**.
- **Pay Committee**. This committee held one meeting in the autumn term to scrutinize the school performance management process and outcomes.

The following special purpose committees were also required during 2023-24 :

- **Appeals committee**. There was one meeting of this committee during the year to consider an appeal by a member of school staff.

Governing body membership and meeting attendance records for 2023-24 can be found in part 5 of this statement. These records are also published on the governors' page on the school website.

PART 2. CORE GOVERNING BODY FUNCTIONS

2A. ENSURING CLARITY OF VISION, ETHOS AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The governing board established a clear strategic direction through :

- Agreement of the School Development and Improvement Plan for the year, which featured the following main sections for improvement action :
 - Quality of Education
Teaching strategies introduced over the last two years were to be continued and embedded. These strategies should continue to raise achievement for all pupils, but there would be a specific focus on disadvantaged pupils and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
 - Behaviour & Attitudes
While aiming to improve overall school attendance there would be a particular emphasis upon improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and children with special needs.
 - Personal Development
Further enrichment opportunities would be developed for all pupils with a focus on improving uptake by disadvantaged pupils and those with special needs. Pupil confidence, resilience and knowledge should be developed so children can keep themselves mentally healthy.
 - Leadership & Management
The role of leaders at all levels would be developed, while encouraging aspiring leaders. Work to reduce the school budget deficit with all stakeholders would continue.

Progress within each section of the School Development and Improvement Plan was monitored by a committee as a standing agenda item and reported at each meeting of the Full Governing Body.

2B. HOLDING THE HEAD TEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANISATION

SCRUTINY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee received a series of presentations upon work within the school to develop and improve teaching and learning practice, and how educational challenges are being faced. These presentations and associated governor scrutiny included the topics listed below.

English – The Talk for Writing approach

In February, the English lead presented to governors on the Talk for Writing approach which had been introduced at the school during the 2022-23 school year. This featured the following key points :

- Talk for Writing involves a very different method of lesson planning and delivery from what has been used before. Each Talk for Writing unit commences with a model story. Children learn that story before they see the text. The teacher prepares a story map, and the children learn actions which accompany the story. When the children have learned the story by heart, they then begin

to re-tell the story to the whole class. They imitate the story and are encouraged to develop their own slant to the story. Only at this point do the children start to write using the model text. Pupils use tools to re-create the story and begin to innovate through creating their own versions.

- Governors watched a video clip illustrating the Talk for Writing approach in action. The clip showed a Year 1 class singing and performing the actions for “The Gingerbread Man”. Children were guided through the story by means of a pictorial story map displayed at the front of the class. Governors noted children using sophisticated words and phrases for their age while singing.
- At the time of the presentation, staff had only received training on using Talk for Writing for fiction writing. Training was to be delivered later in the year on how to use this approach for non-fiction writing. Using the approach for fiction writing might involve learning the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Adapting the approach for non-fiction might involve writing a newspaper article entitled “Woodcutter saves the Day”.
- Staff feedback about Talk for Writing has on the whole been positive. However, some staff commented that planning for this approach takes a long time. While this concern should reduce over time as staff become more familiar with the scheme, a Talk for Writing overview for each year group had been prepared. The overviews include units for each cohort and grammar elements to be included within each unit. These overviews are intended to be working documents to be tweaked in the light of experience about what will work effectively.
- The Talk for Writing approach is particularly helpful for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who become much more confident about writing when they already have the story firmly embedded in their minds. However, the school has experienced a phenomenon described as “hugging the text”, where children cling to the original story rather than move away from the text and innovate by creating their own versions. For example, Year 3 had been studying the Talk for Writing unit concerning fables, which features Aesop’s story of the fox and the raven. By the end of the unit, the focus should be on the moral of the story and children writing their own fables which have a moral. Despite encouragement to write fables featuring human characters, there has been a tendency to cling to animals such as “the squirrel and the badger”. While “hugging the text” is not a great problem for Year 3 children, by Year 6 their writing must be more independent.
- Governors were presented with some encouraging data which suggests Talk for Writing is having a beneficial impact. A much greater proportion of disadvantaged children in the younger cohorts are working at the expected level in Writing than in the older cohorts, as shown in the table below, which is taken from the end of autumn term assessment data :

DISADVANTAGED PUPILS WORKING AT EXPECTED LEVEL OR BETTER IN WRITING – AUTUMN 2023	
Reception	69 %
Year 1	53 %
Year 2	32 %
Year 3	13 %
Year 4	21 %
Year 5	29 %
Year 6	11 %

Developments in Mathematics

In June, the Maths lead presented to governors on teaching developments in mathematics over the last year. This featured the following key points :

- **Continuation of Mastery pathway.** Kings Heath Primary has continued to participate in the four-year maths mastery pathway programme offered by the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM). After completing “Mastery Readiness” in 2021-22 and “Mastery Development” in 2022-23, Kings Heath Primary has been participating in “Mastery Embedding” during this year. Next year will be the final year of this programme.
- **Mastery number programme.** The Mastery number programme now forms a key part of the Reception and Key Stage 1 curriculum. A nominated teacher from Reception to Year 2 receives half-termly training from a NCETM professional development lead and disseminates this training to their year group colleagues. The mastery of number can be likened to the phonics scheme for reading – it imparts the core facts that will underpin all later learning.
- **White Rose maths scheme.** Daily maths lessons across the school continue to employ the White Rose maths scheme, which uses the mastery approach to deliver the national curriculum. This involves all children working together and not being grouped according to current attainment or predicted outcomes. The teaching emphasis is upon deepening understanding rather than accelerating breadth of knowledge. The mastery approach is based upon the notion that all ships rise together as all children make progress. However, the downside to this approach is that some children will grasp number concepts far more quickly than others and consequently attainment gaps in classes will emerge.
- **Use of concrete resources / physical objects.** There has been investment over the last year in concrete resources. The reasoning behind this is that maths should be experienced initially through concrete resources / physical objects, then through pictorial representations and lastly through abstract problems.
- **Use of technology.** Two programmes are used on a daily basis to supplement the teaching of mathematics. “Numbots” supports children to develop their understanding of number, including subitising (the ability to look at a small set of objects and instantly know how many there are without counting them), addition and subtraction. This programme is challenging and many Year 6 children cannot complete it within a year when given fifteen minutes at the start of each day. “Times Tables Rock Stars” is used to memorize multiplication/division facts by the end of Year 4.
- **Impact on disadvantaged children.** Governors were advised that all children eligible for the Pupil Premium are now accessing more of the curriculum and are exposed to the highest levels of learning within the school. Not all pupils will attain those levels, but this change has resulted in higher attainment. Three key reasons for this improvement in attainment levels were identified :
 - Higher expectations upon children across the school.
 - Partnerships with high achieving children. Pupils with the highest attainment are being challenged to explain the topic to other children.
 - IT resources, principally the use of “Numbots”, which helps children grasp patterns.

Early Careers Teachers

In the spring term, the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee received a presentation on the support the school is providing for Early Careers Teachers (ECTs), which enabled governors to speak directly to two ECTs employed at the school. This featured the following key points :

- When a school engages an ECT, the post has to be registered with the Department for Education (DfE) and with a content provider who will supply training materials. Kings Heath Primary uses the Best Practice Network as content provider for ECT training. A school must also appoint an “Appropriate Body”, who undertake a quality assurance role in the induction process, ensuring that ECTs receive their statutory entitlements and appropriate support, assessment and guidance. Ark Schools was the appropriate body used by Kings Heath Primary during 2023-24.
- Best Practice Network course modules are written for all year groups ranging from Early Years up to Year 6. There is an inevitable systematic problem from using one scheme which is designed to fit all settings and so the modules may not always match the Kings Heath Primary context.
- The ECTs informed governors that they had been well supported with plenty of mentors in school. They thought the Best Practice Network offered in depth training materials with helpful guidance on how to put theory into practice. The materials also featured some helpful case studies. ECTs confirmed that they were allowed training time to complete Best Practice Network tasks, given opportunities to go into other classrooms and observe more experienced teachers and allocated release time to attend in-person training events.

SCRUTINY OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Governor scrutiny of the school curriculum included the following activities :

- **School Improvement Advisor reports**

The Full Governing Body received reports on the work of the School Improvement Advisor to develop subject leaders within the school and improve monitoring of curriculum delivery. This work included the following matters :

- Meeting subject leaders in December to discuss how to build their confidence in leading their colleagues and how they might monitor and evaluate curriculum delivery.
- Exploring curriculum monitoring strategies in February. Staff shadowed the advisor while conducting pupil voice exercises and book reviews. Strategies for ensuring a wider range of pupil voices were discussed, such as using playground duties to glean information through impromptu two-minute catch up sessions with children suggested by class teachers.
- Developing a methodology and template for curriculum monitoring to be used by subject leaders in pilot trials.

- **Social media references by external bodies**

The Full Governing Body’s attention was drawn to writing samples by Kings Heath Primary pupils being used by Little Wandle, the provider of the phonics scheme used at the school, within their social media feed on 18 March and 16 April. Screenshots of the posts were reproduced within the Head Teacher’s report. Governors were advised there was a potential possibility that Kings Heath Primary might become a Little Wandle flagship school. The school wished to explore what this possibility would mean in practice, and how this would be beneficial for staff professional development.

SCRUTINY OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT : 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

During the autumn term, governors reviewed a comprehensive analysis of school 2023 assessment data, using a document prepared by the Birmingham City Council Data and Intelligence team. The document contained a detailed assessment of progress and attainment data for each phase,

incorporating analysis by pupil categories, and comparisons with national averages, local ward, parliamentary constituency and all Birmingham schools.

The key points shown by this data analysis were as follows :

- **Early Years Foundation Stage**
 - Overall, Kings Heath data compares very favourably with both local and national data. 69.7 % of Kings Heath pupils attained a Good Level of Development in 2023, which was an improvement from 66.2 % achieving that goal in 2022. School attainment at 69.7 % was above both the Birmingham average of 65.6 % and the national average of 67.3 %.
 - The one area of concern shown in the year's data was that only 73.7 % of pupils attained the expected standard in Communication and Language. The national average attainment figure was 79.7 %.
 - The data analysis by pupil groups showed that 40 % of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) attained an overall Good Level of Development. There was a small sample size for this data, with only ten children in Early Years receiving SEND support. However, the outcome compares favourably with the Birmingham average, where only 19.2 % of pupils with special needs attained this level.
 - However, the pupil groups analysis showed some significant attainment gaps. Only 50 % of pupils eligible for free school meals attained a Good Level of Development, compared with 74.2 % of their peers. The forty-four girls in this cohort significantly outperformed the thirty-two boys in all areas.

- **Phonics**
 - The Phonics outcomes illustrated how phonics teaching had improved since the introduction of the Little Wandle system, with the school obtaining very strong results. 87.5 % of children attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check. This is comfortably above the national average of 78.9 % and Birmingham average of 79.1 %.
 - By the end of Key Stage 1, 92 % of children had attained the required standard.
 - All pupil groups across the Year 1 cohort were outperforming the respective national averages for that group. This includes 52.2 % of children with special needs attaining the standard, compared with 42.2 % nationally.
 - Although there remain significant gaps between the attainment levels of disadvantaged pupils and others, the overall performance of disadvantaged pupils is improving. The Head Teacher hoped this improvement would show more impact as these children progress through the school.

- **Key Stage 1 data**
 - The school assessments for Reading, Writing and Maths were externally moderated by the local authority, so governors could be confident that these assessments were accurate.
 - At the end of Key Stage 1, 51.1 % of pupils attained age related expectations or better in Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) combined. This is a decline from the 55.6 % attainment in 2022 and is below the national average of 56 % and Birmingham average of 54.8 %.
 - Attainment was below the national average for each of these three subjects.

- **Key Stage 2 data**
 - Overall, 64.2 % of pupils reached age related expectations in RWM combined. This was a sharp increase from 53.1 % in 2022 and comfortably above the national average of 59.4 % and Birmingham average of 57.8 %.

- 12.6 % of pupils attained the higher standard in RWM combined. This is also well above the national average of 7.9 % and Birmingham average of 6.8 %.
- The overall school results were above the national average in every progress and attainment category featuring in the analysis.
- The analysis by pupil groups shows both boys and girls performing at or above the national average in all subjects. Children with special educational needs also performed at or above the national average for SEND pupils.
- There remain significant gaps between attainment by disadvantaged pupils and their peers, although those gaps had reduced from previous years. Only 47.8 % of disadvantaged pupils reached age related expectations in Reading, compared to the national average of 60 %.
- The reading score resulted in 47.8 % of disadvantaged pupils attaining age related expectations in RWM combined, which was still above the national average of 43.9 %.

SCRUTINY OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT : 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

In July, governors reviewed the provisional school assessment data for the 2023-24 school year. Many national averages had not been published at that time, and therefore many of the comparisons were with the 2023 averages.

The key points shown by this data analysis were as follows :

- **Early Years and Phonics outcomes**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Year 1 data is shown in the table below :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY EARLY YEARS & YEAR 1 OUTCOMES 2023-24				
	Kings Heath 2024	Kings Heath 2023	National average 2024	Change for school from 2023
EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE				
Good Level of Development	71 %	68 %	68 %	+3 %
GLD – Pupil Premium children	44 %	50 %	TBC	-6 %
PHONICS				
Attained standard in Year 1	92 %	88 %	81 %	+4 %
Attained in Year 1 – Pupil Premium	85 %	68 %	TBC	+17 %
Attained standard by end Year 2	95 %	85 %	93 %	+10 %

Governors noted the following points concerning this data :

- It was highly commendable that 92 % of children in Year 1 attained the phonics expected standard. This is well above the national average of 81 %. It was particularly encouraging that 85 % of Year 1 children eligible for the Pupil Premium have attained the required standard. Governors recognized how this reflects the dedicated effort of staff using the Little Wandle phonics scheme and how teaching assistants have driven the phonics interventions programme.
- It was also very positive that 71 % of Reception children attained an overall Good Level of Development. This represented a rise of 3 % from last year, despite the high level of special needs within this cohort.

- Only 44 % of Reception children eligible for the Pupil Premium attained a Good Level of Development. This statistic arose from a high correlation between children eligible for the premium and children with special needs.

- **Key Stage 1 outcomes**

The Year 2 Key Stage 1 outcomes are shown in the summary table below . Governors recognized that these teacher assessments are no longer a statutory requirement :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 1 OUTCOMES 2023-24					
		Kings Heath 2024	Kings Heath 2023	National average 2024	Change for school from 2023
Reading	Expected level or better	64 %	61 %	72 %	+3%
	Greater Depth than Standard	19 %	24 %		
Writing	Expected level or better	55 %	51 %	63 %	+4%
	Greater Depth than Standard	8 %	7 %		
Maths	Expected level or better	64 %	64 %	72 %	0%
	Greater Depth than Standard	11 %	18 %		
RWM	Expected level or better	53 %	51 %	59 %	+2%
	Greater Depth than Standard	4 %	6 %		

Governors noted the following points on these results :

- These school results generally show a small improvement on last year.
- Writing attainment was lower than the other subjects. The Head Teacher advised this will be a focus of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for school staff next year.
- **Multiplication check**

The Year 4 multiplication check data is shown in the table below :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY MULTIPLICATION CHECK 2023-24				
Attainment score	Kings Heath 2024	Kings Heath 2023	National average 2024	Change for school from 2023
Maximum (25 out of 25)	25 %	40 %	36 %	-15 %
24 or 25	49 %	57 %	41 %	-8 %
Mean average score	21	22	21	

Governors noted there is no official expected standard mark published for the multiplication check. The school percentages for the maximum score have fallen below the national average but the Head Teacher advised these scores were not unduly concerning. The multiplication check is an online test performed upon an Ipad in which the questions have to be answered within a limited timeframe. There is no option to redo a question or go backwards in the test, which means that children cannot make any correction if they press the wrong button on the iPad.

- **Key Stage 2 outcomes – overall**

The Year 6 Key Stage 2 SATs outcomes are shown in the summary table below :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 2 OUTCOMES 2023-24					
		Kings Heath 2024	Kings Heath 2023	National average 2024	Change for school from 2023
Reading	Expected level or better	79 %	77 %	74 %	+2 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	39 %	39 %		
Writing	Expected level or better	69 %	76 %	72 %	-7 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	16 %	18 %		
Maths	Expected level or better	82 %	75 %	73 %	+7 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	31 %	29 %		
SPaG	Expected level or better	84 %	75 %	72 %	+9 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	15 %	38 %		
RWM	Expected level or better	64 %	65 %	61 %	-1 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	TBC	13 %		

Governors noted the following points concerning these results :

- The number of children reaching age related expectations in Writing has fallen from 76 % in 2023 to 69 %. The scores are based upon teacher assessment and the Head Teacher reported that, after reviewing books, he accepted this is an honest reflection of pupil attainment. The local authority moderated Kings Heath Primary assessments two years ago and teachers are familiar with the expected standards.
- This Year 6 cohort only had a few months in school during Years 2 and 3 as a result of the lockdown periods and school closures. This created gaps in their education and some points missing from writing expectations would usually have been taught during those years.
- Although the Talk for Writing approach adopted by the school is showing impact within Key Stage 1, impact so far is less evident within Key Stage 2.
- The Maths lead was leaving the school at the end of the school year. He departed after some excellent maths results, with 82 % of pupils attaining age related expectations and 31 % working at greater depth.
- There had been a slight improvement in Reading outcomes, with 79 % of children attaining age related expectations, compared with 77 % in 2023. 39 % of children were working at greater depth, which matched the previous year's achievement.
- 64 % of pupils achieved age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) combined. This was marginally down from 65 % last year but remained above the expected national average of 61 %.

In addition to these reviews of the year end outcomes for 2023 and 2024, the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee reviewed in-year school assessment data for each year group at the end of the autumn and spring terms.

SCRUTINY OF PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Each term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee received a presentation and report from the Assistant Head Teacher for Inclusion on the educational performance of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These reports included the following information :

- The number of children on the SEND register along with the types of need identified.

- The support provided for children with special needs during the previous term.
- Recent developments locally and nationally concerning SEND provision.

The latest report to the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee, at the summer term meeting, presented the following data concerning children with SEND within the school :

- There were 189 children (28 % of the school population) on the SEND register or being monitored in some way. This monitoring may relate to attendance concerns or a pupil being a Looked After or Previously Looked After Child rather than any special educational needs.
- There were nine children within the school who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

- **New strategies being used to support children with special educational needs**

In the spring term, the Assistant Head Teacher for Inclusion delivered a presentation to the committee featuring photographs to show strategies which had recently been developed to help support children with special needs. These photographs included :

- One of the safe spaces which have been developed around the school.
- Posters setting out colour-coded “Zones of regulation”. These zones help children recognize and understand the feelings they are experiencing and this understanding can help the child to self-regulate.
- A safe space which had been created within a corridor using Parent Teacher and Friends Association funding.
- The physiotherapy room, which was being used as a place for children to become calm and to relax.
- The Year 1 phonics chart for the week, set out prominently on the classroom wall.
- Handwritten posters on the wall which are used for modelling - for example, by explaining rules for multiplication and division. The Head Teacher stressed that teachers were being told to write, not laminate. These posters had been created with the children as working tools to be used, not printed off with the risk that they become background wallpaper on the classroom wall.
- The story map used as modelling for the Talk For Writing approach.
- A pupil using a specialist keyboard and device for learning. The device was compared to an old Etch-a-Sketch toy – the pupil writes something on it and then it can be wiped clean.

- **Speech and language needs in Reception**

Early in the year, the school reported to governors there were very high level of needs, and particularly speech and language needs, within the Reception cohort which joined the school in September. The Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee therefore requested a special report on the school’s strategy for supporting this high level of needs. The Assistant Head Teacher for Early Years delivered a presentation which included the following key points :

- Special needs within Reception were not confined to speech and language but covered all the prime learning areas. Behaviours for learning were another important factor that had to be considered and addressed by the school.
- Through the Developing Local Provision project, the school is able to use the Wellcomm speech and language toolkit to assess pupil communication ability. This toolkit places a child within a band representing their language development relative to their age. The bandings for children at the end of autumn term and at the spring half term show all pupils using this toolkit

were making progress. The toolkit also illustrated the very low levels of development of some pupils when they joined the school. If the Wellcomm kit identifies a speech and language need, the child will be referred to a therapist.

- Staff prepare a chart for each child not on track which highlights the Early Learning Goals not being achieved. The chart also shows the child's attendance level, any other concerns and actions taken. This chart will be sent to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and Learning Mentor to assess whether the child might need to be placed on the SEND register and/or referred to the school nurse.
- A highly detailed timetable for interventions by each member of staff was in place. Each intervention runs for six weeks. The adult leading the intervention fills in a sheet following every session listing each participating child and commenting on the session. The teacher adds further comments to the sheet.
- These actions are supported by other wider curriculum activity. For example, at the start of each Cornerstones Maestro curriculum topic, existing pupil knowledge will be harvested ahead of introducing new vocabulary. Pupil knowledge will be harvested again at the end of the topic, showing where language has developed.

2C. HOLDING THE HEAD TEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE PUPILS

Governors received regular reports from the Head Teacher upon developments within the school and containing statutory data that must be presented to governors. These reports included the following matters :

- School census data
- Attendance reports
- Safeguarding data

SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The Head Teacher presented a detailed analysis of the latest school attendance statistics to each meeting of the Full Governing Body. These regular attendance reports included the following information :

- Overall pupil attendance at each data point during the year.
- Attendance analysis by gender, by pupils eligible / not eligible for the Pupil Premium, by pupils with / without special educational needs, and by pupils who do / do not speak English as an additional language.
- Comparisons of school data for each group with the most recently published national averages.
- Persistent absenteeism using the same analysis groups.
- Attendance improvement actions in progress. This included offering Early Help where appropriate and taking stricter measures which could include fines in other cases.
- Reasons for absence analysis.

Particular points noted by the governors were as follows :

- Overall school attendance was consistently in line with the most recently published national averages. It was reported in July that school year to date attendance (for statutory age groups) was 94.4 %, while the national average for primary schools was 94.6 %.

- The absence rates for disadvantaged pupils were higher than the overall absence rate throughout the year. In July, year to date attendance by disadvantaged pupils was 91.7 %, compared to 94.9 % for other children in the school.
- However, the gap between attendance by disadvantaged pupils and other children had narrowed during the year. In 2022-23, attendance by disadvantaged pupils was 90.6 %, compared to 95.2 % for other children within the school.
- The persistent absence rate (that is, the number of pupils with attendance below 90 %) was better than the national average. In July, the persistent absent rate was 13.0 %, while the national average was 16.9 %.
- Governors commended the fact that persistent absence fell from 19.3 % in 2022-23 to 13.0 % in 2023-24. This demonstrated that the new attendance framework which the school had implemented in 2023 was bearing fruit.
- Throughout the school year, the cohort with lowest attendance was Reception (91.8 %). All other cohorts had attendance levels between 93.3 % and 95.6 %.

Governors paid close attention to attendance matters and scrutinized attendance improvement action in detail. This scrutiny included the following :

- **New statutory school attendance expectations**

The Full Governing Body noted that new statutory guidance about school attendance came into effect from August 2024. In May, governors reviewed the responsibilities and expectations for parents, schools, governing bodies and local authorities under the new guidance. All school governing bodies are expected to take the following actions :

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting the school to prioritize attendance and working with school leaders to recognize the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, use that data to understand attendance patterns, discuss and challenge trends, compare with other local schools and identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

Governors observed that the attendance data which is presented in each Head Teacher's report already meets most of the expectations, with the exception of comparison with other local schools. It was hoped that a new B.C.C. service might provide the necessary additional data.

The new statutory guidance recommends that schools report to governors on pupils who are severely absent – that is, those pupils with an attendance rate below 50 % over the school year. In July, the Head Teacher's report was therefore adapted to incorporate an analysis of severe absence at the school. This analysis made the following observations :

- There were only four pupils at the school who had been severely absent over the school year.
- Governors were informed about the support being provided for these pupils, which included liaison with multiple external agencies.

- **Persistent absence by disadvantaged pupils**

One governor prepared a long-term analysis of persistent absence by disadvantaged pupils at Kings Heath Primary. This analysis stretched back to 2015-16 and drew upon Head Teacher reports

supplemented by government sources. The academic years 2019-20 and 2020-21 were excluded from the analysis, due to the school closures implemented during the COVID pandemic lockdowns. The governor drew the following conclusions from this data :

- Before the pandemic, persistent absence for all Kings Heath Primary pupils was slightly better than the national average, while persistent absence for children eligible for the Pupil Premium was roughly in line with the national average.
 - Persistence absence at Kings Heath Primary shot up dramatically following the pandemic for all pupils, whether eligible for the Pupil Premium or not. This reflects the national picture.
 - Persistent absence for all Kings Heath Primary pupils has fallen over the last year and is now lower than the national average.
 - Persistent absence for Pupil Premium children at the school has also fallen over the last year, though the governor had been unable to find a national benchmark for comparison.
 - The gap between persistent absence by Pupil Premium children and overall school persistent absence remains wide and has widened since the pandemic period, but that trajectory is falling.
 - Persistent absence by Pupil Premium children at the school remains very high, with the rate this year continuing to be above 25 %.
- **Disaggregated analysis of attendance by disadvantaged and SEND pupils**

Each term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee reviewed an analysis of the previous term’s attendance data which disaggregated statistics by disadvantaged pupils and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The number of disadvantaged and SEND pupils in each year group was shown.

The key statistics from the latest report, in summer 2024, are shown in the table below :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY ATTENDANCE SPRING TERM 2024		
	Pupils	YTD attendance
Whole school attendance	643	94.0 %
Disadvantaged pupils	143	91.0 %
SEND pupils (with EHCP)	8	89.0 %
SEND pupils (without EHCP)	133	92.0 %

In nearly every year group, the attendance levels by SEND pupils without an Education Health Care Plan (that is, SEN K pupils) were above the attendance levels for disadvantaged pupils. Governors concluded that this demonstrated that disadvantage rather than special needs is the key driver of poor attendance. Consequently, it showed that a focus on Pupil Premium initiatives is important for attendance improvement action.

During the autumn term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee examined some case studies showing the school’s attendance improvement strategy in action.

SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR

The Head Teacher presented a report on school behaviour to each regular meeting of the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee.

These reports included the following information :

- Behaviour incidents being logged on the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) being used within the school. Governors were advised that the school intends to move from this system to the Arbor Management Information System.
- There was a spike in behaviour incidents during the autumn term, mostly concerning the new Reception cohort. This reflected a local and national trend which is linked to the COVID lockdown experiences of these children. The committee noted how the number of incidents gradually reduced over the year as these children became more settled and more regulated in school.

Governors also received the following additional information relating to school behaviour :

- The data outcomes report for 2022-23 prepared by the B.C.C. Data and Intelligence team included data on pupil exclusions. This report showed that pupil exclusion rates at Kings Heath Primary are below both the Birmingham and national averages.
- An external review was conducted to identify how lunchtime provision might be revised to support improved behaviour. A trial of new arrangements was scheduled to commence in June with a view to a full launch in September. The new arrangements would include the following points :
 - Lunch timings were to be changed and lunchtimes were to become more structured. Pupils will spend thirty minutes outside in the playground, and thirty minutes inside the school eating their lunch.
 - Children will not be allowed to leave the dining area and go into the playground until that thirty-minute period has ended. Previously, some children would finish their lunch as soon as possible in order to return to the playground.
 - The new arrangements will result in fewer children in the playground at any one time, which ought to lead to fewer incidents. At the same time, zoning areas within the playground are to be introduced – for example, a ball games area and a free play area.
 - The Head Teacher assured governors that the vast majority of Kings Heath Primary pupils are well-behaved, but increasing structure during the lunchtime period would be helpful for some children.

SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Head Teacher presented a termly safeguarding report to each meeting of the Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee.

These reports included the following information :

- Safeguarding referrals and concerns which have been raised.
- The number of complaints and concerns raised with the school.
- Online monitoring alerts recorded and the actions taken in response.

The safeguarding link governor reviewed the Single Central Record (SCR) in January 2024 and no significant issues were raised.

Other governor scrutiny concerning safeguarding included the following matters :

- **Online filtering and monitoring procedures**

In February, the Full Governing Body received a presentation by the Deputy Head Teacher about the online filtering and monitoring procedures used at the school. This presentation ensured compliance with the expectation within Keeping Children Safe in Education (the statutory

guidance on safeguarding in schools) that governors should not only be aware of the monitoring systems used in school but should also regularly monitor the effectiveness of those systems.

This presentation included the following key points :

- Filtering is the process of stopping inappropriate internet content coming into school. All internet traffic coming into school has filtering applied. The filtering database is a third-party collection of acronyms, words and phrases which might generate concern. The school was using filtering software called Lightspeed, although it planned to switch to a package named NXFilter. Filtering software uses tags applied to websites – anything which has been tagged as inappropriate will be blocked.
- Monitoring is the process of reviewing what materials have been viewed by anyone using school devices and identifying any potential concerns around that material. The school uses software named Securus, which has the advantage of running on desktops, laptops and iPads.
- The risks of inappropriate internet usage within a primary school are lower than within a secondary school environment. Pupils do not engage in unsupervised internet browsing for research or other learning purposes. When pupils use the internet, access is most commonly via scanning a QR code which will take them directly to specific websites where they complete the assigned learning tasks.
- All school desktops and laptops have a monitoring application constantly running in the background, whether the device is being used in school or elsewhere. This application logs every keystroke and word which appears on the screen. When any potentially concerning word or term appears, the software takes a screenshot and stores it within the monitoring software's database. When the monitoring software is running on iPads, it uses a technically different method by tracking packages of data going to and from the device, but the outcome is the same in terms of a logged screenshot appearing in the monitoring database.
- This monitoring method inevitably creates a vast number of false alerts due to acronyms or terms which are deemed concerning being used within an innocuous context. For example, a story named "Skunk's New Year resolution" had created alerts about possible cannabis usage.
- Each week, online monitoring alerts are reviewed. An infographic screen highlights the flagged categories for which alerts have been received, and the Deputy Head Teacher works through each category checking how these alerts have been generated. For each alert, the captured screenshot shows the context in which the alert was created.
- An example from the latest review was the category "Self-harm", which had prompted hundreds of alerts. Investigation showed how these flags had been generated by innocuous computer usage, such as the following activities :
 - Completing a referral form which contained "self-harm" within a checklist.
 - A teacher completing a risk assessment using a proforma template which featured the term "self-harm".
 - Office staff, while reading an article about online safety for children and a BBC website news article about school attendance.
 - A teacher using the "Jigsaw" materials that form part of the school Personal, Social and Health Education scheme.
- The overwhelming majority of monitoring investigations show no grounds for concern. At times, children will be found to have typed swear words or other inappropriate language into

the computer. This is treated as a behaviour issue rather than a safeguarding issue and the pupils concerned will be spoken to.

- This weekly monitoring is a time-consuming procedure and the school would ideally wish to streamline the process. Some schools pay for third-party monitoring, but this is an expensive option and the information returned tends to be rather broadly based.
- Every year, the school reviews the filtering and monitoring software available and decides whether to make any changes. This year, four alternatives were considered before deciding to continue with Securus. The school is pleased this software runs on all devices and the iPad monitoring is much improved. Other products monitoring iPad internet usage will only work when a specific browser is being used. However, there is one practical issue concerning iPad monitoring. Alerts are not linked to a specific user but to the device which generated the alert, along with the date/time stamp. Switching to NxFILTER for filtering will enable fine-tuning of website access. For example, staff could be allowed access to YouTube but not pupils.

SCRUTINY OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

Governors received various reports relating to Health and Safety matters within the school. This included the following reports :

- A termly report on buildings health and safety issues and actions.
- Work undertaken during the course of the school year to enhance health and safety. This included the following items :
 - The installation of new fencing on the school's Poplar Road boundary to make this area more secure.
 - Meetings and discussions with Education and Schools Infrastructure (EDSI), about possibilities for improving site security at the front of the school. The EDSI officer was optimistic that the fencing heights could be raised and that motorized gates could be installed. There was no discussion concerning who might pay for such works, although the school would argue that B.C.C., as the landlord, should be responsible.

Other governor scrutiny concerning health and safety issues included the following matters :

- **Statutory compliance testing**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee reviewed the compliance declaration submitted to the local authority concerning the statutory testing of equipment and plant. Governors were informed that all required testing had been completed. The committee thought it would be helpful for a governor to make a scrutiny visit to see the paperwork and records associated with the checks reported on the compliance return and review the record-keeping procedures. The governor will report on this scrutiny visit in October 2023.
- **Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)**

In September 2023, the presence of RAAC in school buildings featured prominently in the national news as some schools were prevented from re-opening due to RAAC concerns. The Strategic School Business Manager advised governors that Kings Heath Primary does not believe there is any RAAC within school buildings. The buildings were constructed using concrete breeze blocks and timber roofs. There was only one place where there could potentially be any RAAC – within the flat roof above the Year 1 and Year 2 areas.

- **Fire drills annual report**

In July, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a report on fire drills conducted during the year. Three fire drills had been held, one during each term. Governors commended how the drills had been staged at various times of the school day, including one during a Key Stage 2 assembly and another during lunch time. These variations had enabled the school to identify learning points and training needs.

SCRUTINY OF OTHER PUPIL WELFARE MATTERS

Governors considered the following additional matters relating to pupil welfare :

- **Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee received a termly report on the well-being of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (P-LAC) within the school. In the summer term, the following information was reported to the committee :

- There were five Looked After Children in the school
- There were fourteen Previously Looked After Children in the school
- Two P-LAC children were currently in family care/special guardianship.
- A further five P-LAC children were expected to join the school in September.
- The school continued to hold termly meetings with the families of LAC and P-LAC pupils, but it was uncertain how sustainable this practice would be in future. The Head Teacher reported that a local school had recently contacted him, seeking advice on establishing a similar P-LAC family group at that school.

- **Corporate Parent Visit report**

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Committee reviewed the Corporate Parent Visit report from the Birmingham Virtual School, following a visit made in May 2023 to examine school provision for LAC and P-LAC pupils. Errors within the original report, which required correction, prevented this report being presented to governors until January 2024. The visit report covered the following areas and recommended the following actions :

- Attainment and priority areas for pupils. It was recommended that a representative from the Virtual School attend a working group meeting for P-LAC families.
- Quality of Personal Education Plans (PEP). It was recommended that PEP targets be identified as achieved / not achieved. The school had not previously been closing PEP targets in order to retain a history of these targets.
- Self-evaluation. The school was encouraged to complete a Self-Evaluation Form included within the report.

The committee observed that while the general principles behind this Corporate Parent Visit were praiseworthy, in practice the visit report was unhelpful. Governors thought the comments and recommendations were rather vague and unclear. An overall assessment or grading following the visit would have been useful. Governors noted the report was styled as an “annual report” on the front page but commented that annual visits might reflect an aspiration more than a practical possibility.

- **Pop-up swimming pool provision**

During the autumn term, governors received reports on a new initiative of installing a pop-up swimming pool for six weeks in the school playground. These reports included the following key points :

- The pool was installed as a means of meeting the national curriculum expectation that children should be able to swim at least twenty-five metres at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Year 6 children received intensive swimming provision for the first three weeks that the pool was in place. This cohort was chosen because they missed the swimming provision which they would usually have experienced in previous years due to the school operating under COVID restrictions. For the following three-week period, Year 3 children received similar intensive swimming provision.
- The onsite pool offered significant curriculum time savings by removing the need for children to be transported to a swimming pool. In previous years, Monday afternoons would be completely occupied by swimming trips which only enabled children to spend half an hour swimming. Under the new arrangement, children can have a swimming lesson at 9.00 a.m. and be back in class for other lessons by 9.45 a.m. Lost teaching and learning time had been significantly reduced.
- The onsite pool should also prove more cost-effective than previous swimming provision. The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a statement of pool operation costs for comparison with the previous arrangements. The statement envisaged a saving of £3,792 for the current financial year through using the temporary swimming pool. The savings were forecast to increase in the next two years if the initiative were repeated.
- In practice, the school experienced some logistical challenges. The swimming pool operated with ten children swimming at any one time, while ten others were getting changed. This created difficulties for the Year 6 timetable, leaving only ten children in the classroom at a time during swimming lessons. Arrangements would be made in future for project work or online learning to be staged while swimming lessons are in progress.

In October, the Full Governing Body reviewed the findings of a Pupil Voice survey to gauge reaction to the temporary pool from ten Year 6 pupils. The main survey points were as follows :

- 80 % of pupils thought having a pop-up swimming pool was a good idea.
- 30 % of the pupils rated the pool as a 10 out of 10 experience. An additional 50 % of the pupils awarded the pool 7 or 8 out of 10.
- Positive comments included the lower cost, environmental benefits of not hiring coaches and helping to give people brain breaks.
- Negative comments mentioned belongings getting wet and dirt on the bottom of the pool.
- 80 % of pupils stated that they now felt more confident swimmers.

- **Nurture groups**

Governors received regular reports on the establishment of nurture groups for pupils. This initiative commenced during the autumn term, with groups being established for children who found settling into the school day difficult. Experience had shown some children needed about twenty minutes to settle and be ready to learn. Therefore, nurture groups enabled these children to come into school twenty minutes before the other children arrive and help them become

settled and ready for the start of the school day. Later, lunchtime nurture groups were created, which provide quiet spaces for children who struggle in the playground during the lunchbreak.

Governors strongly commended this initiative and expressed warm appreciation and thanks to the members of staff who were running these nurture groups. In the spring term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee considered a case study showing how nurture groups were being used and how children were benefiting. In the summer term, this committee considered case studies showing how peer mentoring was being used to help both older and younger children.

- **School Council**

During the spring term, the Full Governing Body reviewed a copy of the School Council newsletter, which had been prepared by a Year 6 councillor as an annual report on the council's work. The newsletter reported the following council activities :

- A competition to determine a new school mascot to be used in association with the Rights Respecting Schools work. A pupil in Year 3 was successful with "Ruby the Rights Respecting Sloth" becoming the new mascot. One class member takes Ruby home each week.
- The council made a video showing how the competition winner was chosen. The video was shown to the whole school.
- The School Council accompanied the Head Teacher and School Council lead teacher on a visit to "Peters" bookshop in the city centre to obtain £750 worth of books for the new school library.
- Councillors assisted with a collection of donations for a local food bank.

Governors commended the work of the School Council and praised the informative newsletters. They asked the Head Teacher to inform the council that they were impressed by the breadth of topics in which the council were involved and welcomed how pupils are being allowed an opportunity to make choices through this work.

The Chair of Governors attended a meeting of the School Council and was highly impressed by how the councillors debated and took their responsibilities seriously. The Council meeting considered Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which concerns the right of every child to an education. The Chair commended how the councillors were using class views to assist their debate, and how the discussion moved into very practical matters, such as the advantages and disadvantages of being silent in school corridors.

- **Rights Respecting School Award**

During the spring term, the Full Governing Body was informed that Kings Heath Primary had received bronze level accreditation under the Rights Respecting School scheme and was now working toward silver level accreditation.

Governors were shown how this effort was being supported by a communication tool which enables pupil views to be gathered. The Parent, Teachers and Friends Association had funded this tool. The tool had been used to canvass pupil views on whether or not Kings Heath Primary achieves Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which expresses the right for all children to have rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to their age.

Twenty-one of twenty-two classes within the school participated in this survey, and each class split into several groups. The survey results showed that

- 50 pupil groups believed that right is already achieved at the school.
- 83 pupil groups thought the right could be improved at the school.
- 6 pupil groups (all the nursery children) were undecided.

- **Whole school enrichment and educational visit plans**

During the autumn term, the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee reviewed a summary of the whole school curriculum enrichment plans for the 2023-24 school year. This summary showed, for each year group, the trips that were planned, visitors coming into school, “Wow events” to launch or celebrate a project and any other activities such as workshops or events which include parents. The Head Teacher acknowledged that, during the COVID lockdown periods, many enrichment activities ceased and opportunities for parental engagement had been curtailed as schools were under instruction to discourage unnecessary visitors. Enrichment and educational visit programmes have therefore had to be rebuilt.

The committee noted the following points concerning school enrichment plans :

- The map across the school year demonstrates there is now an enrichment offer for each year group, although more needs to be done to enhance that offer. For example, it was hoped to introduce visits to places of worship next year.
- It could not be claimed that there is an enrichment journey as children progress up the school. Some visits might seem rather similar to activities from previous years, so developing a journey needed to be considered.
- Ideally, visiting the local Kings Heath library would become a termly activity. Library trips were planned for all year groups during the second half of the summer term.
- One-page diagrams showing the enrichment journey for each Year group throughout the academic year were being prepared for the new school website.

2D. HOLDING THE HEAD TEACHER TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OF STAFF

The Head Teacher presented a staffing report to every meeting of the Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee. This included the following information :

- Employee numbers, broken down into employment categories of teaching staff and support staff.
- Sickness absence reporting and monitoring.
- Sickness absence monitoring procedures.

Other scrutiny included the following actions :

- The Pay Committee scrutinized the performance management process conducted during the previous school year. Governors were satisfied that a robust, thorough and equitable assessment process had been completed and accepted the school’s performance management recommendations.
- The committee commended the improvements that had been made to the performance management process from the previous year. However, the committee considered there

remained scope for improvement in the performance management for support staff and suggested that the appraisal format introduced for teachers would form a good model for the appraisal of support staff.

- The committee reviewed the draft performance management targets for 2023-24. The governors recognized that the targets were aligned with the objectives set for the Head Teacher and approved these targets. The targets were as follows :
 - To embed a positive contribution to the wider life, culture and ethos of the school.
 - The work of pupils (including disadvantaged and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) to improve from their starting points as a result of the embedding of effective teaching strategies.
 - To understand and implement curriculum expectations across all subjects.

Governors recognized that these targets involved embedding and tightening work which is already happening at the school.

Other governor scrutiny concerning the performance management of staff included the following matters :

- **Continuing Professional Development**

In spring, the Full Governing Body received a report on a recent Continuing Professional Development (CPD) initiative at the school which offered guidelines for dialogue and safe conversations about difficult topics in school relating to religious diversity. In January, a group which aims to bring together young people from different faiths and cultures to build relationships and friendships came to Kings Heath Primary to deliver a training session to all staff, including lunchtime supervisors. Governors reviewed a sheet showing the guidelines for dialogue outlined in this training session. These guidelines are intended to construct safe spaces within schools where topics such as religion, war and culture may be discussed. The Head Teacher believed the training session had been well received and that the skills disseminated would be transferable to many other conversations and potentially difficult situations.

In the autumn term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee reviewed the training register recording all CPD delivered during the previous school year.

- **Artificial intelligence and workload**

In May, the Full Governing Body held a discussion on how artificial intelligence (AI) might offer opportunities for reducing staff workload. Governors encouraged the school to consider any opportunities that AI might offer for reducing school administrative burdens and thereby releasing energy and capacity to work on other matters.

Governors were advised that the school has a trial subscription to “Senior Leaders AI”, a tool specifically designed for support within schools. The package will produce documents for various educational needs and the Deputy Head Teacher commented that reasonable results had been produced when experimenting with this tool to create letters.

2E. OVERSEEING THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL AND ENSURING MONEY IS WELL SPENT

SCRUTINY AND OVERSIGHT OF THE SCHOOL FINANCIAL POSITION

At each meeting of the Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee, governors received reports explaining the current financial position of the school. Reports considered included :

- Income and expenditure by cost centre with variances from budget
- A three-year strategic financial forecast.
- Budget revisions approved by the Head Teacher under delegated powers and budget revisions requiring approval by governors.

School in-year financial outturn

The local authority had been unable to declare the official end of year balances for 2023-24 for Birmingham schools by 31 July 2024. Consequently, the latest financial figures presented to governors could only be drawn from the school's internal accounts. These figures showed that, during 2023-24, Kings Heath Primary had recorded annual funding of £3,481,448 and recorded annual expenditure of £3,367,192. This means that the school had an in-year surplus of £114,256.

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee carefully scrutinised the proposed school budget for 2024-25 and requested some adjustments to the supply expenditure budgets before commending the budget for approval by the Full Governing Body.

The approved school budget for 2024-25 envisages total income of £3,519,682 and expenditure of £3,498,426, thereby creating an in-year surplus of £21,252.

School cumulative financial position

At the end of the 2023-24 financial year, Kings Heath Primary had a cumulative financial deficit, but the extent of that deficit was unclear as it had not been possible to reconcile the school's internal accounts with the local authority's ledgers. There was a disagreement concerning the extent of the financial deficit for 2022-23, with the school believing the deficit for that year was considerably greater than the figure declared by the local authority.

The local authority failed to provide even preliminary figures from their ledgers for the 2022-23 financial year until November 2023, eight months after that financial year had ended. Official school end of year balances for 2023-24 were not published on the B.C.C. website until April 2024, no less than thirteen months after that year had ended.

The table below shows the discrepancy between school and local authority figures :

SCHOOL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY END OF 2022-23 BALANCES			
	School expected figure	Local authority figure issued November 2023	Local authority figure issued April 2024
Start of year cumulative deficit	-172,090	-172,090	-172,090
In year surplus/deficit	-119,838	-14,427	-41,789
End of year cumulative deficit	-291,928	-186,517	-213,879

Governors were confident that the expected in-year surplus for 2023-24, to the value of £114,256, would significantly reduce the school's cumulative deficit, but not eliminate it. The cumulative deficit should be further reduced by the envisaged surplus for 2024-25. Efforts to reconcile school and local authority balances, and thereby determine an accurate cumulative deficit figure, were continuing at the end of the school year.

Despite the improvement in the school's financial position during 2023-24, governors recognized that the school continued to be in a cumulative deficit position. Governors therefore took the following actions in the light of the financial position :

- Throughout the year, governors stressed the importance of filling any vacancies on the school roll in order to maximize funding. Scrutiny of school roll numbers is outlined later in this statement.
- The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee closely monitored cost centres where there was the greatest risk of expenditure exceeding budget. There was a particular focus upon supply expenditure.

SCRUTINY OF SCHOOL FINANCIAL CONTROLS

Governors received and scrutinized the following documents concerning the financial controls operating within the school :

- **The Schools Financial Value Standard**

Governors approved the Schools Financial Value Standard (S.F.V.S.) return to the local authority. The Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee considered draft answers and supporting evidence at one meeting before commending a revised version for approval at the following meeting.

- **Statement of Internal Controls**

Governors approved a Statement of Internal Controls declaring that the school's internal systems provide as much assurance as is reasonably possible (not absolute assurance) that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorised and recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or can be detected promptly. The statement recorded the following weaknesses in control systems :

- A notable weakness remains pertaining to the setting of future balanced budgets and eliminating the current cumulative deficit – this is the current highest priority for governors and school management who continue to work to address this issue, liaising at all times with relative local authority departments and officers.
- The introduction of the local authority Oracle 1B systems has caused a loss of control around payroll reconciliation and absence management. The school has been unable to undertake reconciliations on a regular schedule. The new system still fails to provide absence management reports, causing the school to rely upon internal systems to meet its absence monitoring responsibilities.
- The belated declaration of year end balances by B.C.C. and their subsequent failure to supply transaction details to enable a reconciliation between school and local authority ledgers means there is an unresolved discrepancy of £105,417 between the expected and published year end balances for 2022-23.
- The school currently uses the C-MIS system for internal accounting. This system will be decommissioned after 31 August 2024.

- The long-term sickness absence of a senior leader has exposed a dependency on his knowledge in some places and has weakened the capacity of the finance team to ensure that all controls are operating effectively.

The statement proposes that over the coming year the following steps will be taken to address the weaknesses noted above and to further strengthen controls :

- An external consultant has been engaged to support during the long-term absence of the senior leader. The consultant is leading the work to reconcile school and local authority balances and advising on how the school may learn from best practice elsewhere.
- Possibilities for expanding income generation will be explored to strengthen the school financial position.
- A new financial accounting system to replace C-MIS will be introduced for the 2024-25 financial year.
- The new system will be used to facilitate best value reviews of supplier expenditure.
- **School fund audit**
The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received the audit report on the school fund. The auditor certified that the accounts present a true and fair view of income and expenditure for the 2022-23 financial year and raised no concerns.

A previous school fund audit had recommended that formal documented procedures for the operation of the fund should be prepared. After those written procedures were created in summer 2023, the Chair of the Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee undertook a scrutiny visit to review whether the controls and procedures were operating as intended. He reported the following points from this scrutiny visit :

- Monthly reconciliation sheets from April 2023 onward were checked. Each one had been printed and signed off by the Strategic School Business Manager.
- Two months were examined in more depth. This scrutiny confirmed that the income shown within the monthly reconciliation statement matched the bank statement and bank paying-in book. Expenditure on the bank statement agreed with cheque stubs.
- Checks were made that each claim for School Fund money was accompanied by receipts and had been countersigned by either the Head Teacher or Strategic School Business Manager. This was found to be true in each case.
- There was no issue with any missing cheques within cheque books.
- The most regular source of School Fund income is via standing order, where there is no paying in procedure necessary.
- The only concern identified is that cash receipts are not banked immediately. The Committee Chair acknowledged the cash sums involved are relatively small, and the money held is locked securely in the school safe.
- **Local authority template finance and governance monitoring reports.**
The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee discussed a new version of the B.C.C. template finance and governance monitoring reports which are expected to be presented to the Full Governing Body. These reporting expectations had been somewhat reduced from previous years.

The committee considered that they were already completing the actions expected without any requirement for this checklist. The committee noted considerable overlap between this checklist and questions within the Schools Financial Value Standard and the pre-certification checklist for the Statement of Internal Controls, which are both completed during the spring term. Governors thought that reviewing this checklist would duplicate work which is already being completed by this committee. It would therefore increase workload for school staff without conferring any additional value. The committee therefore agreed to recommend to the Full Governing Body that preparing the checklist should not be a priority for school staff. The Full Governing Body accepted this recommendation.

SCRUTINY OF SPECIAL FUNDING RECEIVED

Governors particularly scrutinized how special purpose funding was being used. This included the following work :

- **Pupil premium funding**

The Pupil Premium is additional school funding provided for disadvantaged children, to help close attainment gaps between these children and their peers. The Full Governing Body looked closely at the school’s Pupil Premium strategy for 2023-24. The strategy was presented using a template which all schools are required to adopt. The primary objectives for using Pupil Premium funding were defined as follows :

- Raising attainment - improving the academic attainment of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding across all subjects and year groups.
- Closing the achievement gap - reducing the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Holistic support to pupils, addressing not only academic needs but also social, emotional, attendance and mental health aspects to ensure their overall well-being.

The planned use of Pupil Premium funding is summarized in the table below :

▪ Teaching	£130,215
▪ Targeted academic support	£42,047
▪ Wider attendance/behaviour strategies	£35,667
▪ <u>Total expenditure</u>	<u>£207,929</u>

Review of Pupil Premium strategy at end of 2022-23 school year

The Pupil Premium strategy is based upon a three-year cycle to develop teacher and pupil knowledge and skills, and the core objectives for 2023-24 were unchanged from the previous year. Therefore, in autumn 2023, the Full Governing Body reviewed the effectiveness of the strategy over the previous year. The Head Teacher presented the following to tables to demonstrate how Pupil Premium funding had a positive impact on attainment by disadvantaged pupils :

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 2 READING, WRITING & MATHS COMBINED ATTAINMENT					
Pupils meeting age related expectations	Kings Heath 2021-22	Kings Heath 2022-23	Change	Birmingham 2023	National average 2023
All pupils	53.1 %	54.2 %	+11.1	57.8 %	59.4 %
Pupil Premium	16.7 %	47.8 %	+31.1	49.5 %	43.9 %
Non-Pupil Premium	61.5 %	69.4 %	+7.9	65.6 %	66.2 %
Gap	44.8 %	21.6 %	-23.2	16.1 %	22.3 %

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE – GOOD LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT					
Pupils attaining overall GLD	Kings Heath 2021-22	Kings Heath 2022-23	Change	Birmingham 2023	National average 2023
All pupils	66.2 %	69.7 %	+3.5	65.5 %	67.3 %
Pupil Premium	46.2 %	50.0 %	+3.8	Not available	Not available
Non-Pupil Premium	70.3 %	74.2 %	+3.9	Not available	Not available
Gap	24.1 %	24.2 %	-0.1	Not available	Not available

KINGS HEATH PRIMARY YEAR 1 PHONICS ATTAINMENT					
Pupils attaining expected standard	Kings Heath 2021-22	Kings Heath 2022-23	Change	Birmingham 2023	National average 2023
All pupils	80.0 %	87.5 %	+7.5	79.1 %	78.9 %
Pupil Premium	53.8 %	68.2 %	+14.4	73.9 %	Not available
Non-Pupil Premium	84.4 %	93.9 %	+9.5	82.1 %	Not available
Gap	30.6 %	25.7 %	-4.9	8.3 %	Not available

Governors noted the following key points shown within this data :

- The percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) combined at the end of Key Stage 2 had risen from 16.7 % in 2022 to 47.8 % in 2023.
- The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has fallen from 44.8 % to 21.6 %. This gap was now below the national average of 22.3 %
- The percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining a Good Level of Development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage has risen from 46.2 % to 50 %.
- The percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining the required standard in phonics in Year 1 has risen from 53.8 % to 68.2 %.

Refining the Pupil Premium strategy for the 2023-24 school year

Two governors worked with the Head Teacher to refine the Pupil Premium strategy for 2023-24 to include measurable targets and success criteria. The governors drew on strategies published by some other local schools to learn from good practice elsewhere. In December, the Full Governing Body approved the following strategy targets for 2023-24 :

PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY TARGETS 2023-24			
Targets for disadvantaged pupils	2021-22 outcome	2022-23 outcome	2023-24 target
EYFS Good level of development	46 %	50 %	60 %
Phonics standard achieved	54 %	68 %	78 %
Age related expectations at end Key Stage 2	16.7 %	47.8 %	57.8 %
Age related expectations for SEND pupils	19 %	30 %	40 %
Attendance levels	88.9 %	90.8 %	96.0 %
Participation in school clubs		18 %	50 %

Targets now incorporate attendance and participation in clubs as well as academic attainment.

Monitoring the Pupil Premium strategy throughout the school year

The Full Governing Body received regular reports from the Pupil Premium link governor on meetings with the Head Teacher and other members of school staff to discuss how the strategy

was operating. These reports were supplemented by an interim review of strategy progress in the summer term. These reports included the following key points :

- Governors recognized that the targets for raising participation by disadvantaged pupils in school clubs needed to be a point carefully considered when clubs or activities were advertised. Governors thought that remissions available for children receiving Free School Meals should be more clearly advertised when activities are promoted, and that the school should consider how places are being allocated. Giving places to the earliest applicants inevitably offers an advantage to families with a parent working at home and able to respond immediately to emails advertising an activity.
 - Meetings between the Head Teacher and the attendance officer were held each fortnight to discuss attendance improvement action. Overall school attendance for disadvantaged pupils in July stood at 92.6 %, below the 96 % target.
 - Efforts to encourage Pupil Premium children to join school clubs were bearing fruit. During the summer term, there were 26 % of Pupil Premium children participating in clubs, using attendance at a club for more than three weeks as the yardstick for participation. It was hoped to reach 30 % participation by the end of the school year.
 - Both attendance and attainment by Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (LAC and P-LAC) had increased from 2022-23 and were just below the target levels defined within the strategy document.
 - Ideally, the school would like teaching assistants to receive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the Pupil Premium strategy. However, there is a barrier as teaching assistant working hours do not include attending the weekly staff training sessions.
 - The link governor met the Attendance lead and reviewed some attendance case studies where there had been dramatic rises in pupil attendance. These case studies illustrated the value of tailoring the school's approach to individual family circumstances, bringing in other services where appropriate and establishing trusting relationships. However, the Attendance lead had commented upon the administrative burden of acquiring the data required for attendance improvement action.
- **Special Educational Needs funding**
Owing to the absence of a senior leader, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee did not receive the usual annual reports on SEND funding and provision costs. It was intended that the committee should receive these reports in autumn 2024.
 - **P.E. / Sports Premium funding**
The Full Governing Body reviewed the P.E. and Sports Premium expenditure report for 2023-24.

SCRUTINY OF PUPIL ROLL NUMBERS

Governors recognized that vacancies on the school roll compounded the financial difficulties facing Kings Heath Primary, as every primary school place occupied secures at least £4,610 in funding. Therefore, governors closely scrutinized the numbers on the school roll and efforts being made to fill these vacancies. This scrutiny included the following points :

- The Head Teacher reported the number of pupils in the school and the number of vacancies at every meeting of the Full Governing Body. In September 2023, there were 662 pupils on the school roll (including thirty-four children in the nursery) and thirty-one vacancies. Eighty-six of the ninety available Reception places have been taken, which was more than were filled in September 2021

or 2022. In July, it was reported that there were 670 pupils on the school roll and twenty-three vacancies. Sixteen of those vacancies were in Year 1 and Year 2.

- Governors commended the revised office arrangements to ensure that someone would be present throughout the summer holiday period and able to respond to any enquiries about school places.
- The Head Teacher reported on the open day for prospective nursery admissions in September 2024, which was well-attended and positively received. The Head Teacher had instituted a new practice of holding meetings with new starter families. This is to guard against families receiving the erroneous impression that Kings Heath Primary is a special school or Resource Base school and thereby better equipped to support children with special needs than other mainstream schools. The new practice also enables the school to gain some familiarity with children before they join.

Pupil place preference data

During the spring term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee examined the school preference data for Kings Heath Primary and other local schools. This is public information available from the Department for Education (DfE) education statistics service. The committee looked at offers made in April 2023 for Reception admissions in September 2023. The eventual number of admissions in September may differ from the number of offers made, but the preference data allows an assessment of the relative popularity of schools.

The Pupil Place preference data showed the following information :

- Kings Heath Primary was the first preference school on sixty-four applications. All sixty-four applicants were offered a place.
- Kings Heath Primary was second preference on a further seventy-three applications. Nine applicants were offered a place.
- Kings Heath Primary was third preference on a further eighty-six applications. Two applicants were offered a place.
- Overall, in April 2023, Kings Heath Primary made seventy-six offers for Reception places. There were ninety Reception places available at the school.
- The ratio of first preference applications to the total offers made by a school indicates the popularity of that school, and whether it is over-subscribed. Kings Heath has a popularity ratio of 0.84, calculated by dividing sixty-four first place preference applications by seventy-six offers made. This ratio is broadly in line with many local schools.
- Only 16.8 % of Kings Heath Primary's potential Reception pupils were eligible for Free School Meals. Only one other local school had a lower percentage.

SCRUTINY OF ISSUES CAUSED BY LOCAL AUTHORITY ORACLE 1B SYSTEMS

Throughout the year, governors monitored the continuing problems created for the school following the implementation of new B.C.C. Finance / HR systems in April 2022, which are known as Oracle 1B. During the summer term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed the school's strategic risk register. The committee considered the Oracle 1B problems must be recorded as a significant financial risk involving a serious loss of financial oversight. The risk factors to be considered were recorded as follows :

- Absence of weekly reconciliation files
- Inability to identify variances in payments and income

- Absence of confirmation of additional income (E.g. Exceptional Special Needs payments)
- Inability to ensure staff are being paid accurately
- Loss of absence management reports
- Difficulty ensuring suppliers are paid accurately and promptly
- Workload increase through reliance upon the “Simplified Loader” mechanism for paying invoices
- Absence of training opportunities on Oracle 1B systems to mitigate difficulties

The risk register recorded the following additional control measures that had to be introduced in response to these risks :

- Increased reliance upon purchase card expenditure
- Establishment of manual procedures for staff absence management
- Liaison with local authority officers to track Oracle system developments and maintain pressure for improvement.

In May, governors reviewed a letter to Head Teachers from Sue Harrison, B.C.C. Strategic Director of Children and Families. Dated 3 May 2024, the letter included the following comments :

“We acknowledge the difficulties you have faced since the implementation of the Oracle Finance, Payroll and HR system and are concerned that these issues are continuing.

With this in mind, the council’s Oracle Improvement Board has been assessing the future of Oracle and is planning to reimplement Oracle to address wider system issues. The council remains strongly committed to ensuring schools receive the best possible services to support their activities, and recommendations have been made in a Cabinet report, to be considered in May 2024, that the reimplementation does not include the use of Oracle for schools. This is because:

- *The existing Oracle service for schools contains workarounds which are expensive, unsustainable and not meeting the needs of schools to run efficiently.*
- *Additional costs would have to be passed on to schools through increased trading charges, which would not represent value for money for schools.*

On Cabinet approval, the council will run a project to identify the best options for schools in moving away from Oracle use.”

During the summer term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received progress reports on the initial stages of the local authority project to replace the Oracle 1B systems and the implications this created for schools.

BENCHMARKING AGAINST OTHER SCHOOLS

During the spring term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee usually conducts an annual benchmarking exercise, using the Schools Benchmarking Service data to compare Kings Heath Primary School’s financial performance against other local and national schools. Birmingham City Council failed to supply any data concerning Birmingham schools for the 2022-23 financial year until summer 2024. Consequently, it was not possible for governors to undertake the usual benchmarking exercises this year.

During the summer term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed the Schools Financial Benchmarking Service self-assessment dashboard for 2022-23, after B.C.C. belatedly

supplied this benchmarking data to the national benchmarking service. However, governors thought the dashboard analysis was of limited and questionable value, in view of the unsettled dispute with B.C.C. concerning the financial outturn for 2022-23.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

Governors also received reports/considered the following matters in connection with finance and governance matters within the school :

- **Implementation of new internal accounting system**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received regular reports on the replacement of the system used by the school for internal accounting. At the start of the 2024-25 financial year, the school commenced using the SIMS system, instead of C-MIS. These reports contained the following key points :

- Sixty-six Birmingham schools were impacted by the termination of support for the C-MIS software package from August 2024, and a working party had been exploring alternatives. This working party, and Schools Financial Services, recommended schools transfer to the SIMS financial system, which is widely used for schools' financial management.
- After implementing the Arbor Management Information System in autumn 2023, Kings Heath Primary could have chosen to implement the related Arbor Finance system. However, Arbor Finance is a relatively new and unproven system, while SIMS is thoroughly tried and tested. Following all the problems experienced with the local authority Oracle 1B systems, the school believed it was imperative to introduce a proven and reliable financial system for internal accounting.
- The migration to SIMS enabled a review and cleansing of the school accounting system, including the removal of suppliers, cost centres and orders which were no longer used.

- **Scrutiny of supply expenditure**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee recognized that supply expenditure was the most serious risk factor that could undermine school budgets. Therefore, the committee closely monitored supply expenditure, receiving termly reports from the Head Teacher on supply usage. These reports were used to inform analysis of possibilities for reducing dependence upon supply resources.

- **Application for cheque book status**

During the summer term, governors considered whether Kings Heath Primary should apply to become a "cheque book" school. A cheque book school is one which operates its own bank account rather than rely upon the local authority to make payments and hold funds on their behalf.

Briefings published by the local authority about the transition from Oracle 1B systems highlighted that all schools should consider becoming a cheque book school. The briefing sheet published on 20 June included the following statement by the local authority.

"At this point, we are exploring all the options that are available to us. It is too early to know which solution will be the best one for schools and BCC..... It may be worth thinking about how much support you might require should we need all schools to become full chequebook and what the impact might be for you and your teams."

The subsequent briefing sheet published on 4 July 2024 defined the options available to non-cheque books schools as follows :

“As a non-chequebook school, what options do you have to move forward?

- 1. Choose to become a full chequebook school.*
- 2. Wait for the council to make their decision, which you will need to respond to, and that may involve becoming a chequebook school.”*

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a presentation from an external consultant on the implications of moving to cheque book status. The following advantages of moving to cheque book status were identified :

- It removes the dependence upon Oracle 1B (or any other local authority system) to process income and payments. Some cheque book schools continue to generate cheque payments, but it is possible to make BACS payments instead.
- It removes any need to use the time-consuming and difficult simplified loader mechanism to make payments.
- There is no requirement for any reconciliation with local authority ledgers. This means there is no suspense facility where items which cannot be reconciled must be held. It means that a dispute with the local authority over carried forward balances, in the form Kings Heath Primary is currently experiencing, cannot happen as a cheque-book school will always know the current balance in their bank account.

However, becoming a cheque book school also places additional responsibilities upon schools which have previously been borne by the local authority. These include the following tasks :

- Monthly reconciliation between the bank account and the school’s financial management system.
- Monthly reconciliation between the payroll and the financial management system. Payroll charges are normally taken from a cheque book school’s bank account by a monthly direct debit.
- Managing cash flow to ensure sufficient funds are available at the requisite time to pay salaries and HMRC.
- Submitting monthly claims for VAT reimbursement, while factoring VAT expenditure and reimbursement into cash flow. This creates the risk of penalties being incurred for errors.
- Preparation of year end accounts, including allowances for accruals and pre-payments.

There are some specific additional key issues and challenges facing local authority schools considering a move to cheque book status :

- At present, any school in financial deficit (such as Kings Heath Primary) is not permitted to become a cheque book school. The local authority is currently examining how this restriction can be removed. Nonetheless, it remains an open question as to whether banks will be willing to take on schools in a deficit position.
- There were question marks over whether B.C.C. will continue to operate services such as payroll provision. If schools are forced to use other payroll providers, this will create potential issues around payroll reconciliations, and how some statutory required services will be delivered.

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee carefully considered these points and agreed to recommend to the Full Governing Body that Kings Heath Primary apply for cheque book status. While there are risks and responsibilities associated with that status, the committee believed it also offered greater control and opportunities. The local authority briefings suggest that schools may be forced in this direction, and an early application would allow Kings Heath Primary more control over this move. The committee's recommendation was accepted and the Full Governing Body unanimously agreed that Kings Heath Primary should apply for cheque book school status from 1 April 2025.

- **Sundry reports and scrutiny**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee also took the following actions concerning school financial matters :

- Received regular reports from the Head Teacher on premises matters and related expenditure.
- Scrutinized the Gifts and Hospitality register on a termly basis. Governors were encouraged that the protocols within the school Gifts and Hospitality policy were being followed, and that the Head Teacher's efforts to ensure all staff are familiar with those protocols was bearing fruit.
- Completed a self-assessment survey of governor financial skills in connection with preparing the Schools Financial Value Standard. The survey indicated the school has governors with suitable financial skills and expertise, although the number of governors on the board with such skills has reduced.

PART 3. SPECIAL PROJECTS DURING 2023-24

3A. REVIEWING THE USE OF DATA TO INFORM DECISION MAKING

When OFSTED inspected Kings Heath Primary in April 2023, one area for improvement given to the school was to make more strategic and analytical use of data. The inspection report included the following comments :

“Leaders do not analyse some of the information they collect about different aspects of their work with sufficient focus. As a result, they do not always identify patterns or trends which they can then address. Leaders at all levels should ensure that there is a strategic, analytical use of information in order to evaluate proactively the impact of what they have done and identify what to do next, across all aspects of provision.”

In the light of this area for development, during 2023-24 governors were keen to see how the school was using new systems to facilitate a more strategic employment of data. Governors received presentations and demonstrations of how new systems were being deployed.

The Arbor Management Information system

In December, the Head Teacher demonstrated how the school was using the Arbor management information system, which was implemented after the autumn half-term. Implementing Arbor formed a key part of the school’s plan for meeting the development point arising from the OFSTED inspection.

This presentation included the following key information :

- Initially, the school was using Arbor only for attendance and registration purposes.
- A planned second stage would be to use Arbor for logging behaviour incidents. This remained an outstanding action at the end of the school year.
- The third stage would be employing Arbor to record pupil attainment data. This is currently being recorded within the Cornerstones Maestro system. Arbor capacities may simplify and reduce teacher workload preparing reports.
- A data dashboard screen within Arbor presents live data showing whole school attendance, statutory attendance, authorized absences and unauthorized absences. The Head Teacher can see the whole school picture, while access restrictions limit class teachers to seeing their class attendance at a glance.
- Arbor includes a national average based upon the over 5,000 schools who use this system. While this offers an informative and immediate benchmarking tool, the Head Teacher assured governors that his attendance reports would continue to use the latest DfE published data for national averages.
- When staff take the register, the system pulls up photographs of children in the class. This is helpful for safeguarding purposes when a supply teacher is taking the class and provides mitigation against possible errors.
- Attendance can be filtered by pupil groups, to provide immediate and easily accessible figures for attendance by disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- Customized pupil groups can be created for monitoring purposes and to inform attendance and behaviour strategies. For example, a group for LAC / P-LAC pupils can be established.
- Staff attendance and absences can also be recorded on this system.

The online continuum toolkit

In January, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee received a presentation on the online continuum toolkit now being used at the school. The continuum is a tool which enables the school to track small progress steps made by children with special educational needs. This new software includes the following features :

- Teachers provide the data recording the attainment level for each child. There are strands for speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- A report showing the next steps required for the child to progress along the continuum can be generated automatically from this data.
- The system collates the information into data dashboards showing classes, year groups or the whole school. The data dashboard offers a breakdown of the SEND register by gender, year groups and principal areas of need.
- The data dashboards include colour-coded bar charts illustrating the level of support being provided to children on the register.

Governors welcomed how the online continuum was being used and encouraged the school to incorporate the data dashboard information into future reports to the governing body.

PART 4. OTHER GOVERNING BODY ACTIONS

4A. GOVERNOR VISITING

In accordance with recommended best practice, link governors were appointed for Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and for Vulnerable Pupils (including, but not limited to, children eligible for the Pupil Premium). Other link governor roles were created to meet identified scrutiny needs.

Link governor reports were presented to the Full Governing Body which included the following matters discussed or actions taken within governor visits :

- The implementation and impact of the Pupil Premium strategy, as mentioned earlier in this statement.
- The school Equalities Statement, and how the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act. A question raised in the OFSTED inspection meeting with governors was discussed. How can the school ensure that statutory communications concerning consultation on relationships and health education are received by families who speak English as an Additional Language ?
- The safeguarding link governor conducted an audit of the Single Central Record (SCR).
- The SEND and safeguarding link governors joined an Assistant Head Teacher for a walk around the school to see inclusive measures in action. They noted how the school is more clearly zoned and less visually cluttered. Shadowing arrangements, which have been introduced over the last year to establish a wider range of SEND leaders within the school, was discussed.
- The safeguarding link governor met the Attendance lead and discussed difficulties obtaining the attendance data required to inform her role and track how attendance changes as strategies are developed.
- The English link governor discussed the high level of needs within the current Reception cohort and how the school has had to be creative in finding solutions and interventions to address those needs. Staff expertise was being deployed in various ways, including using Lego therapy for interventions.
- The Chair of Governors attended a meeting of the School Council
- Some governors were given a tour of quiet spaces which have been developed around the school to support dysregulated children. The governors were also shown the redecorated staff room and the external kitchen / herb garden where younger children can have lessons.

4B. OTHER GOVERNOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Apart from activities previously mentioned within this statement, governors also made the following contributions to school life :

- A governor liaised with the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) and provided regular reports on PTFA activities, serving as a trustee on the PTFA board.
- Some governors attended the opening of the new school library during the autumn term.
- One governor and the Head Teacher attended the National Governance Association Outstanding Governance Awards, held at the Houses of Parliament in London in September. Kings Heath Primary's Clerk to Governors, Tim Bennett, won the award for Outstanding Clerk to a Governing Body for his support to the school.

- Two governors represented the governing body at the PTFA International Evening event, talking to children and adults about the role and work of school governors.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors represented the governing body at the school summer fayre. They gave out information leaflets and talked to many people about the role and work of school governors. The governing body thought the presence and accessibility of governors at these social events was a positive development.

4C. OTHER STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

The governing body approved the statutory and non-statutory policies listed below :

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Admissions criteria – nursery | • Flexible Working |
| • Alcohol misuse | • Freedom of Information |
| • Anti-bullying | • Gifts and Hospitality |
| • Appraisal | • Governor virtual attendance |
| • Attendance - pupils | • Health & Safety |
| • Behaviour & Statement of Behaviour Principles | • Kings Heath Code of Conduct |
| • Best Value statement | • Managing attendance – staff |
| • Birmingham Curriculum Statement | • Marking, feedback and assessment |
| • Business Continuity Plan | • Maths |
| • Capability procedures – support staff | • No platform |
| • Capability procedures – teachers | • Pay |
| • Carer’s leave | • Privacy notice - pupils |
| • Code of Conduct – Support Staff | • Privacy notice – staff |
| • Code of Conduct – Teachers | • Purchase Card |
| • Collective worship | • Relationships and Health Education |
| • Complaints | • Safeguarding and Child Protection |
| • Critical Incidents | • Safer recruitment |
| • Drugs education | • School Fund procedures |
| • Early Careers Teachers | • Security |
| • Educational visits | • SEND |
| • English | • Substance misuse |
| • Equalities Scheme | • Teaching and Learning |
| • E-safety | • Volunteers |
| • First Aid | • Whistleblowing and Serious Misconduct |
| • Fixed-term employees | |

The Safeguarding and Inclusion committee reviewed the following risk assessments prepared by the school :

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Asbestos | • Out of hours clubs |
| • Child abduction | • Playtimes and lunchtimes |
| • Fayres, fetes and events | • Site security |

PART 5. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS 2023-24

5A. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

Name	Governor category	Start of term	End of term
Bailey, Mr Kyle	Parent governor	28/11/2023	27/11/2027
Beusch, Mr Danny	Co-opted	18/10/2022	17/10/2026
Bishop, Dr Beth	Co-opted	17/07/2023	16/07/2027
Brownsword, Mrs Fiona	Co-opted	22/05/2023	21/05/2027
Clabon, Mr Paul	Co-opted (staff)	01/09/2023	31/08/2027
Court, Mr Mark	Head Teacher	Ex officio	
Coxsey, Ms Gemma	Co-opted	01/09/2023	31/08/2027
Cragg, Mrs Gemma	Parent governor	28/11/2023	27/11/2027
Hetherington, Ms Janet	Co-opted	22/05/2023	21/05/2027
Holmes, Mrs Liz	Co-opted	19/03/2022	18/03/2026
Migliarini, Dr Valentina	Parent governor	13/12/2022	12/12/2026
Naven, Mrs Michelle	Co-opted (staff)	01/09/2023	31/08/2027
Spencer, Miss Claire	Local authority governor	17/12/2022	16/12/2026
Way, Mrs Rebecca	Elected staff governor	01/03/2021	28/02/2025
Webb, Mr Robin	Co-opted	22/05/2023	21/05/2027
<u>Resignations / departures during year</u>			
Hand, Professor Michael	Co-opted	19/06/2023	31/01/2024

Notes on governing body membership

- Mr Clabon and Mrs Naven had both previously served more than one term when co-opted again at the start of the school year.
- Ms Coxsey had previously served a four-year term as a parent governor before being co-opted from September 2023.

5B. GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE RECORDS

All meetings were quorate and were usually held at the school. However, virtual meetings were held when the Chair of Governors / Chair of Committee judged that would be wiser or more appropriate.

Full Governing Body

Name	Attended	Called	Apologized	Attendance %
Bailey, Mr Kyle	6	6	0	100%
Beusch, Mr Danny	7	7	0	100%
Bishop, Dr Beth	7	7	0	100%
Brownsword, Mrs Fiona	5	7	2	71%
Clabon, Mr Paul	6	7	1	86%
Court, Mr Mark	6	7	1	86%
Coxsey, Ms Gemma	6	7	1	86%
Cragg, Mrs Gemma	4	6	1	67%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	5	7	2	71%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	6	7	1	86%
Migliarini, Dr Valentina	4	7	3	57%
Naven, Mrs Michelle	6	7	1	86%
Spencer, Miss Claire	7	7	0	100%
Way, Mrs Rebecca	5	7	2	71%
Webb, Mr Robin	4	7	2	57%
<u>Resignations / departures during year</u>				
Hand, Professor Michael	1	2	0	50%

All meetings were quorate. One extraordinary meeting was held remotely. Mr Webb was granted leave of absence for the spring term for medical reasons.

Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee

Name	Attended	Called	Apologized	Attendance %
Beusch, Mr Danny	7	7	0	100%
Bishop, Dr Beth	7	7	0	100%
Court, Mr Mark	7	7	0	100%
Coxsey, Ms Gemma	6	7	1	86%
Spencer, Miss Claire	5	7	2	71%
Webb, Mr Robin	5	7	1	71%
<u>Resignations/departures during year</u>				
None				

All meetings were quorate. Mr Webb was granted leave of absence for the spring term for medical reasons.

Safeguarding & Inclusion Committee

Name	Attended	Called	Apologized	Attendance %
Brownsword, Mrs Fiona	3	3	0	100%
Court, Mr Mark	3	3	0	100%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	3	3	0	100%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	3	3	0	100%
Spencer, Miss Claire	2	3	1	67%
Way, Mrs Rebecca	2	3	1	67%
Resignations / departures during year				
None				

All meetings were quorate.

Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Committee

Name	Attended	Called	Apologized	Attendance %
Clabon, Mr Paul	2	3	1	67%
Court, Mr Mark	1	3	2	33%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	3	3	0	100%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	3	3	0	100%
Migliarini, Dr Valentina	3	3	0	100%
Naven, Mrs Michelle	3	3	0	100%
Resignations / departures during year				
None				

All meetings were quorate. Mr Bailey attended two meetings as a visiting governor. Mrs Cragg attended one meeting as a visiting governor.

5C. GOVERNING BODY OFFICERS 2023-24

Chair of Governors : Claire Spencer

Vice-Chair of Governors : Beth Bishop

Chairs of Committees

Finance, Staffing & Premises : Danny Beusch

Safeguarding & Inclusion : Liz Holmes

Teaching, Learning & Curriculum : Janet Hetherington / Valentina Migliarini (Co-chairs)

Statutory/other link governor roles

Safeguarding (incl. attendance) : Liz Holmes

SEND : Claire Spencer

Pupil Premium / vulnerable pupils : Beth Bishop

English (reading, writing and phonics) : Gemma Coxsey

Equalities : Danny Beusch

Governor induction : Fiona Brownsword

Staff well-being : Liz Holmes

The Governing Body of Kings Heath Primary School

September 2024