

**KINGS HEATH  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT  
2024-25**

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## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024-25

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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 school, the well-being of pupils and the performance management of staff
- Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

In addition to performing these core functions, during the 2024-25 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 six 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. In addition, the governing body operated the following regular committees :

- **Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee**. There were six meetings of this committee during the year, with one meeting held each half-term.
- **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.

Governing body membership and meeting attendance records for 2024-25 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 the agreement of the School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP) which was intended to cover the two-year period up to summer 2026. The school improvement priorities were shaped around five key performance indicators (KPIs), with each KPI linked to one of the OFSTED inspection categories. Each KPI sought to build upon and embed positive achievements from the previous school year. The KPIs, with the associated school improvement priorities, were as follows :

- **KPI1. Quality of Education.** Continue to raise achievement for all pupils, with a specific focus on pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils.
- **KPI2. Behaviour and Attitudes.** Improve attendance for all with a focus on SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- **KPI3. Personal development.** Broaden pupils' personal, social and emotional development. This would include embedding the Trauma Informed Attachment Aware School (TIAAS) approach and embedding the new behaviour policy.
- **KPI4. Leadership.** There were three aspects to the leadership KPI :
  - Continue to develop leaders at all levels, including those new to the role. Many members of staff would be taking on new responsibilities during the year.
  - Achieve a balanced budget
  - Promote and support staff well-being
- **KPI5. Early Years Foundation Stage** Raise the number of SEND and disadvantaged pupils securing an overall Good Level of Development.

The plan included measurable termly milestones which were to be used to track progress. This practice links to the area for development given to the school following the OFSTED inspection in 2023, which was to make strategic and analytical use of data. The plan also featured a "data flight path", showing annual attainment by each year group dating back to 2022, and intended to track attainment progress as each cohort moves through the school. This aspect of the plan emphasized how securing good Key Stage 2 outcomes is not solely a responsibility for Year 6 teachers. Those outcomes will be based upon a seven-year journey through the school, and the data flight path will chart that journey.

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. In July, governors reached the following conclusions concerning attainment against the KPIs during the school year :

- **KPI2. Improved attendance for all, particularly disadvantaged pupils.** Attendance by children eligible for the Pupil Premium had increased by 2 % from 2023-24.
- **KPI3. Broaden pupils' personal, social and emotional development.** This was being measured on the basis of the number of recorded behaviour incidents. It was thought that the Senior Leadership Team need to review how incidents are being reported and how that impacts upon SDIP tracking, while considering wider criteria for measuring attainment against this KPI.
- **KPI4. Promote and support staff well-being.** It was thought that the focus on well-being, supported by staff questionnaires, had been well-received.

- KPI4. Achieve a balanced budget. The major objective to move the school out of a cumulative deficit had been achieved. The financial challenge therefore has now evolved into maintaining that position in future years.
- KPI4. Develop leaders at all levels. Much had been achieved during the year, with senior leaders acquiring new responsibilities. Plans had been established to implement a middle leadership team within the school from September 2025.
- KPI5. Raise Good Level of Development levels for disadvantaged children. There had been a small increase in the percentage of children eligible for the Pupil Premium attaining a Good Level of Development.

## 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.

- **Developments in Writing**

In March, the Writing lead presented to the governors on recent developments in teaching Writing at the school. This presentation featured the following key points :

- **The Talk for Writing scheme**

Kings Heath Primary was now using the “Talk For Writing” scheme for the third academic year. There was an initial training programme for the first two years, and although that has now finished, the school can still contact the trainer for support and advice where necessary. Talk for Writing has been rolled out throughout the school and it is believed staff are confident applying and using the scheme – work required now is to tweak and fine-tune how the scheme is being used.

When discussing Talk for Writing with pupils, there has been notably more enthusiasm for the scheme within Years 3 and 4 than within Years 5 and 6. This may arise from the scheme not flowing well in these older year groups, as teachers are having to plug gaps in spelling and grammar. This leads to a tendency for Talk for Writing to be used on a more sporadic basis which is less engaging and less effective. Ideas to address these challenges, such as guided writing sessions for groups of up to six children to plug gaps, were to be trialled during the summer term.

- **Spelling**

The school began using a software package named “Spelling Shed” in September 2024. This application provides a digital platform which features interactive games and activities to develop spelling skills. The initial feedback from staff about this package is positive, but governors were advised it is too early to be sure whether this package is having a discernible impact on pupil spelling abilities. Spelling Shed has won many awards and it bridges well with the Little Wandle phonics scheme used at Kings Heath Primary. Teaching slides and resources for Spelling Shed are good, and the scheme can be run on Ipad devices. Settings can be varied to determine the level of difficulty for each pupil using the scheme. However, it is quite easy for Spelling Shed sessions

to drop off the timetable and the software does need to be used consistently if there is to be a measurable impact. Governors were informed that, where Spelling Shed has been used consistently, children's scores on the platform certainly improve. However, that improvement is not necessarily showing within general writing by children.

- **Developing Local Provision meeting ideas**

Developing Local Provision (DLP) meetings with other schools in the local Hall Green consortium are a helpful forum for sharing ideas and learning from practice at other schools. Ideas from these training sessions for developing spelling and handwriting at Kings Heath Primary have included :

- Improving editing and revising practice. Schools often expect children to edit and revise their writing after completing a piece of written work. In practice, at that point children will be mentally tired and will consider that work to have finished. Training from the DLP sessions indicate it is more effective if editing and revising takes place every few paragraphs as the work is being created. Suggestions include giving children "Check specs" (spectacles) to put on for editing and asking children to pick out their "best sentence" and then to choose a sentence which could be improved.
- Handwriting practice. It is generally accepted that handwriting skills markedly declined following the COVID pandemic and lockdown periods. Consequently, there is very varied presentation of handwriting across the school. Ideas suggested in the DLP group include short five-minute sessions at the start of writing lessons. One session involves having a short warm up to ensure that children's bodies are ready for writing. Do they have a good posture which is anchored firmly to the floor suitable for writing ? Do they have the correct grip on their pen or pencil ? Is the paper in the correct position on the table ? The next five-minute session involves teacher models – this might be five examples of a sentence for a piece of work.

Overall, governors were informed that much is happening to develop and improve Writing at the school and considerable progress has been made over the last year. The challenge now is to show that progress in the Year 6 SATs results.

- **Developments in P.E. and Sports**

In June, the committee welcomed the Physical Education (P.E.) lead, who had been invited to present to the governors on recent developments in teaching P.E. and sport within the school. This presentation included the following key points :

- **The School Games scheme**

The Youth Sport Trust School Games scheme is a legacy of the 2012 London Olympics. The scheme promotes physical activity and competition among young people, while emphasizing the development of important life skills through values like determination, honesty, passion, respect, self-belief, and teamwork. Schools are invited to apply for an award under the School Games scheme. Kings Heath Primary has regularly secured the bronze and silver level awards over the last decade – the assessment criteria for each level have changed over time, with the outcome that the level attained by the school has varied. However, this year Kings Heath Primary won the gold award for the first time.

The key to this award was a new practice whereby sport is used as a vehicle to support transition to secondary school. To meet this requirement, the school had taken a group of twenty children

with special educational needs – particularly social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs – to Queensbridge School before their official transition days. The children had a tour and participated in a P.E. lesson before having a snack from the canteen and working in the school library. The children hugely enjoyed the day and hopefully their later formal transition days became a less daunting experience for them.

- **Competition with other schools**

As the School Games Organizer, the P.E. lead had sought to enable Kings Heath Primary to participate in competitions against other schools. Recent attempts to join the most local consortium for inter-school competitions have been unsuccessful, as that consortium is full. Kings Heath Primary is currently part of a scheme for “Central” schools which includes schools across a wide area of Birmingham. However, this scheme’s competitions are all held during the school day and it is difficult to arrange the necessary cover which would enable school staff to lead such trips. The P.E. lead expressed his appreciation to the Head Teacher for being willing to cover his class on occasions when such trips are possible. For example, late in the summer term, ten girls were to participate in a netball competition at Billesley Tennis Centre.

- **The Sports Coaching model used for P.E. provision**

Kings Heath Primary has now been using external sports coaches to deliver P.E. lessons for three years. The P.E. lead recognized there are pros and cons to this model of using sports coaches instead of teachers to deliver P.E. lessons, but overall, he thought the positives outweighed the negatives. He identified the following downsides to this model :

- The Sports Coaches are not school employees and work for an external company. Consequently, there will always be some differences in ethos and practice between the coaches and school staff.
- There are potential issues arising from corporate takeover of the provider. The school entered into a contract with a company which has now been acquired by a much larger company.

Nonetheless, there are the following advantages to the sports coaching model :

- The coaches have good subject knowledge and have a willingness to teach the subject which is not found in all primary school teachers. They also have enthusiasm for the subject, which usually means it is easier to work with the coaches to develop initiatives.
- Most primary school teachers have acquired their P.E. subject knowledge through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions. The P.E. lead recalled asking one teacher how much P.E. training she had received before joining the school. The answer was a one-hour workshop as part of her PGCE course.

- **The Nautilus software package**

In March, the Deputy Head Teacher presented to governors on a software package named “Nautilus” which the school had acquired for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning. This presentation included the following key points :

- **Meeting OFSTED inspection requirements**

It is intended that the “Nautilus” software package should be used to address development points given to the school at the OFSTED inspection in April 2023. The inspection report included the following comments :

*“There have been many recent changes to the curriculum. Some subjects are more developed than others. Leaders should continue to embed changes and check that all staff fully understand curriculum expectations so that they can deliver and implement what leaders intend effectively across the curriculum”*

*“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.”*

The Nautilus software package is described as a school leadership platform which enables evaluation of teaching and learning through performing learning walks, book studies and surveys using an iPad or tablet device. “Focus walks” can be established for capturing information. The package contains some pre-loaded focus walks, but schools can create their own walks with bespoke criteria.

○ **Using the software package to monitor curriculum delivery**

Governors were shown the “Spring 2 Classroom environment learning walk” which the school had created. A set of questions for the learning walk had been defined as follows :

- Does the classroom enable all learners to comfortably see the board ?
- Does the teacher have sufficient space and resources to teach and model effectively ?
- Do the wall displays reflect the key themes and objectives ?
- Are the whole school initiatives constantly referenced ?
- Overall, is the classroom well-presented ?

Each question is labelled for drawing together question categories from across different walks or similar walks over time. For each question, a set of possible answers is defined. For example, for the question concerning whether the teacher has sufficient space and resources, the options for answering are as follows :

- The space for teaching requires consideration.
- Some dedicated space is evident for teaching.
- The teacher has a combination of electronic and drywipe board space for teaching and modelling
- The teacher has created a dedicated and purposeful space for teaching and modelling.

The school had decided to limit the number of questions and options for each learning walk to four or five. This should enable focus to be retained and allow consistent questions to be asked across the school.

The Nautilus package will pull together the answers entered during the learning walk into a data dashboard which will highlight strengths and areas for development. The planned use of this package is for subject leaders to undertake learning walks and surveys, which could then be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. During the learning walk, the “Nautilus” package enables photographs to be taken and tagged for grouping purposes. As long as tags are carefully chosen and used, it enables information to be drawn together and analysed from a repository of

visual data. Over time, the school aims to build a photograph library which might have the following themes :

- High quality work within each year group.
- Common misconceptions / errors
- Expected starting points and end points for each year group. This would be a helpful reference source for teachers.

It was recognized that accurate and consistent tagging for search purposes is essential for this visual library to be useful. It will take some time before the school reaps the potential benefits of this library – governors were advised that two years might be a realistic timetable.

### **SCRUTINY OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

Governor scrutiny of the school curriculum included the following activities :

- **Pupil book study**

In July, the Full Governing Body reviewed the report from a Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) advisor following a visit on 18 June which focussed upon introducing pupil book study. “Pupil Book Study” is a technique which enables teachers and school leaders to monitor and evaluate the curriculum. The technique is not restricted to scrutiny of children’s books to assess their learning. Instead, it involves conversations with children to determine how much of their learning they have retained and are able to articulate.

The session involved looking at the books used by two different year groups at the same time. During this session, history books and science books used by two year groups were reviewed. Comparing possible books that could be used enabled the teachers to ensure that the curriculum was showing a clear progression of themes across year groups. The science books looked at progression relating to animals and humans, while the history books were linked by the theme of democracy. An Assistant Head Teacher who participated in this session commented that the session was both focussed and impressive, leaving the Kings Heath staff wondering by the end why they had not adopted this approach before, as it was such a good idea.

Governors were informed that after this session was enthusiastically received, the school had signed up for three further BEP school improvement visits next year. The school will also draw upon the BEP Continuing Professional Development packages. It is thought that using a single School Improvement Advisor through BEP would ensure consistent delivery.

### **SCRUTINY OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT : 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR**

Governors reviewed two official external assessments of the school’s progress and attainment results for the 2023-24 school year.

- **B.C.C. Data and Intelligence team report**

During the autumn term, governors reviewed a comprehensive analysis of school 2024 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 data**

- Overall, Kings Heath data compares very favourably with both local and national data. 70.5 % of Kings Heath pupils attained a Good Level of Development in 2024, which was a tiny improvement from 70.3 % achieving that goal in 2023. School attainment was above both the Birmingham average of 65.2 % and the national average of 67.7 %.
- All the overall results for the school were either above or in line with the relevant national average, with most categories rated green for significantly above the national average. This represented a significant achievement in view of the high level of special needs within the Reception cohort during the 2023-24 school year.
- Analysis by pupil groups showed boys performing above the national average in all reported categories and outperforming girls in many categories.

○ **Phonics check**

Governors noted the following points concerning the phonics attainment data :

- 91.2 % of children attained the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check. This is significantly above the national average of 80.2 % and Birmingham average of 80.8 %.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, 96.4 % of children had attained the required standard.
- School phonics attainment has improved year on year throughout the three-year period considered. Kings Heath Primary attainment had been above the national average in each of the last three years, and this attainment difference has increased in successive years.
- There was an attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, but this had narrowed. 85 % of disadvantaged pupils reached the required standard, which is above the national average for disadvantaged pupils. 93.3 % of non-disadvantaged pupils attained the required standard.

Governors recognized that this phonics data represented a significant school achievement which showed a good return on the equally significant investment of staffing resources required to deliver the Little Wandle phonics system effectively. The achievement had been based upon all available staff, including the Head Teacher, working in Key Stage 1 at the start of each day on phonics sessions.

○ **Key Stage 2 data**

Governors noted the following points about the Key Stage 2 data :

- Overall, 60.4 % of pupils reached age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Mathematics (RWM) combined. This was a fall from 64.9 % in 2023 and almost matched the Birmingham average (60.2 %) and national average (60.5 %).
- 14.6 % of pupils attained the higher standard in RWM combined. This was well above the national average of 7.6 % and Birmingham average of 6.8 %.
- The overall school results are shown as above the relevant national average in every subject progress and attainment category except Writing. Only 64.6 % of pupils attained the expected standard in Writing, compared to the national average of 71.7 %. The report rates Writing attainment at the school as showing some cause for concern. 75.5 % of pupils had attained the expected standard in Writing in 2023.

- There remained significant gaps between attainment by disadvantaged pupils and their peers, although those gaps had reduced from previous years. One data point rated as a cause for concern is that only 40 % of disadvantaged pupils reached age related expectations in RWM combined, compared to 65.8 % of non-disadvantaged children.
- Governors were informed that the basic cause for lower attainment in Writing than other subjects was that some pupils had not mastered some of the basic elements of writing in their earlier years at the school, and these gaps could not be made up in Year 6. Without evidence of those basics being secure, a child cannot be assessed as meeting the expected standard.
- **Inspection Data Summary Report**  
In December, the Full Governing Body reviewed the recently published Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR) on the school. This is a document which would be used by an OFSTED inspector when preparing to visit the school. It shows key data and suggests lines of enquiry which an inspector would be likely to explore in more depth. Data items deemed to be statistically significant are highlighted within the IDSR.

Governors noted the following points within the IDSR :

- 19 % of the pupils at the school have special educational needs. This is considered to be well above the national average.
- Both the school absence rate and the persistent absence rate show a three-year declining trend. No pupil group absences were highlighted as causes for concern.
- There were no suspensions during the 2022-23 school year and there have been no permanent exclusions during the last three years.

The IDSR considered the following points concerning pupil attainment in 2024 to be statistically significant :

- 90 % of Year 1 pupils attained the expected standard in phonics. This is significantly above the national average of 80 % and places Kings Heath Primary in the 81st percentile of schools nationally.
- 82 % of Key Stage 2 pupils attained age related expectations in maths. This is significantly above the national average of 73 % and places Kings Heath Primary in the 71st percentile of schools nationally.
- 40 % of Key Stage 2 pupils achieved the Greater Depth standard in Reading. This is significantly above the national average of 28 % and places Kings Heath Primary in the 80th percentile of schools nationally.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals who attained age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths combined was significantly below the national average. The IDSR does not provide percentages and percentiles in relation to this observation.

### **SCRUTINY OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT : 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR**

In July, governors reviewed the provisional school assessment data for the 2024-25 school year. Many national averages had not been published at that time, and therefore many of the comparisons were with the 2024 averages.

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

- **Key Stage 2 outcomes**

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

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 2 OUTCOMES 2024-25</b>					
		<b>Kings Heath 2025</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2024</b>	<b>National average 2025</b>	<b>Change for school from 2024</b>
<b>Reading</b>	Expected level or better	87 %	79 %	75 %	+8 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	50 %	39 %		
<b>Writing</b>	Expected level or better	69 %	65 %	72 %	+4 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	10 %	16 %		
<b>Maths</b>	Expected level or better	81 %	82 %	74 %	-1 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	41 %	31 %		
<b>SPaG</b>	Expected level or better	80 %	84 %	73 %	-4 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	41 %	15 %		
<b>RWM</b>	Expected level or better	65 %	64 %	62 %	+1 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	8 %	TBC		

The table below shows the Key Stage 2 SATs outcomes for children eligible for the Pupil Premium:

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY PUPIL PREMIUM CHILDREN KEY STAGE 2 OUTCOMES 2024-25</b>					
		<b>Kings Heath 2025</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2024</b>	<b>National average 2025</b>	<b>Change for school from 2024</b>
<b>Reading</b>	Expected level or better	74 %	53 %	TBC	+21 %
<b>Writing</b>	Expected level or better	63 %	61 %	TBC	+2 %
<b>Maths</b>	Expected level or better	70 %	53 %	TBC	+17 %
<b>SPaG</b>	Expected level or better	86 %	83 %	TBC	+3 %
<b>RWM</b>	Expected level or better	39 %	42 %	TBC	-3 %

Governors noted the following points concerning these results :

- These are excellent results with 80 % or more of Year 6 pupils attaining age related expectations in Reading, Maths and SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar). Reading and Writing attainment have both improved while maths attainment remains almost static at a high level. In both Reading and Maths, Kings Heath Primary attainment is significantly above the expected national averages.
- The school has recognized for some years that Writing attainment is lower than the other subjects. Nonetheless, Writing attainment had also improved from 65 % to 69 %. The Head Teacher expressed the belief that writing attainment would continue to improve in the future, as the Talk For Writing scheme becomes embedded throughout the school.
- There have been huge improvements to the attainment levels of children who are eligible for the Pupil Premium. Reading attainment at expected or better level has risen from 53 % to 74 %, while maths attainment has risen from 53 % to 70 %.
- 65 % of pupils achieved age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) combined. This is a marginal improvement from 64 % last year and remains above the expected national average of 62 %.

- **Key Stage 1 outcomes**

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

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 1 OUTCOMES 2024-25</b>					
		<b>Kings Heath 2025</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2024</b>	<b>National average 2025</b>	<b>Change for school from 2024</b>
<b>Reading</b>	Expected level or better	61 %	64 %	TBC	-3 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	15 %	19 %		
<b>Writing</b>	Expected level or better	59 %	55 %	TBC	+4 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	6 %	8 %		
<b>Maths</b>	Expected level or better	64 %	64 %	TBC	0%
	Greater Depth than Standard	15 %	11 %		
<b>RWM</b>	Expected level or better	52 %	53 %	TBC	-1 %
	Greater Depth than Standard	5 %	4 %		

Governors noted there were no significant differences with the results from last year.

- **Multiplication check**

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

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY MULTIPLICATION CHECK 2024-25</b>				
<b>Attainment score</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2025</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2024</b>	<b>National average 2025</b>	<b>Change for school from 2024</b>
<b>Maximum (25 out of 25)</b>	36 %	25 %	TBC	+11 %
<b>24 or 25</b>	49 %	49 %	TBC	0 %
<b>Mean average score</b>	21	21	TBC	

There is no official expected standard mark published for the multiplication check. 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 key.

- **Early Years and Phonics outcomes**

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

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY EARLY YEARS &amp; YEAR 1 OUTCOMES 2024-25</b>				
	<b>Kings Hth 2025</b>	<b>Kings Hth 2024</b>	<b>Nat.av. 2025</b>	<b>School change from 2024</b>
<b>EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE</b>				
<b>Good Level of Development</b>	75 %	71 %	69 %	+4 %
<b>GLD – Pupil Premium children</b>	55 %	47 %	TBC	+8 %
<b>PHONICS</b>				
<b>Attained standard in Year 1</b>	85 %	92 %	TBC	-7 %
<b>Attained in Year 1 – Pupil Premium</b>	64 %	84 %	TBC	-20 %
<b>Attained standard by end Year 2</b>	71 %	68 %	TBC	+3 %

The Head Teacher made the following observations to governors concerning this data :

- At first glance there appears to be a significant drop in Phonics attainment. This has to be placed in the context of the exceptionally good performance in 2024 when 92 % of pupils attained the required standard. There was a significant correlation in 2024-25 between Year 1 children with special educational needs and those eligible for the Pupil Premium. This largely explains why the percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining the expected standard has dropped from 84 % to 64 %.
- The improvement in the number of Reception pupils attaining an overall Good Level of Development is encouraging. The Reception cohort had a good year and had benefited from strong teaching which will equip them well when they progress to studying the national curriculum in Year 1.

### **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 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) 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 160 children 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 and six with a SEND Support Provision Plan (SSPP).

### **The Hub facility**

In January, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee received a presentation on The Hub, the facility which had been operating within the school since September 2024 for children with extremely complex needs. At that time there were five children accessing The Hub – two Year 1 pupils during the morning and three Reception pupils during the afternoon. At that time, all learning support staff were timetabled to work half a day each week in The Hub, with a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant planning the teaching delivered within this facility.

This presentation included the following key points :

- Children within The Hub are not able to access the regular school curriculum because of their complex needs. Potentially, they may never be able to access mainstream educational provision and a placement in a special school might prove to be the optimum longer-term outcome for these children. However, they need to be in school and The Hub ensures that these children are learning while in school and not merely being cared for.
- Most pupils in The Hub are unable to communicate verbally, so an intensive interaction approach is adopted with them to promote back and forth communication. The school uses attention

autism, an intervention approach which aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication skills in children through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities.

- The school draws on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) programmes, using communication boards and a core word programme. The core word programme uses simple key words that enable a child to communicate their needs or wants. By using the Widgits picture facilities and Makaton sign language, the school is able to ensure the children have different ways to communicate to staff whether by signing or pointing to one of the AAC boards. As the rest of the school uses the same Widgits facilities, this ensures consistency throughout the children's educational journey.
- Other activities within The Hub included the following :
  - "Dough Disco" is an exercise designed to develop fine motor skills.
  - ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) activities are employed to calm the children.
  - Some children of the same age who are struggling in their class will come into The Hub for a short time. This enables social play and interaction with peers, which can itself be a learning experience for these children.
  - The outside sensory garden is used for exploration.
  - "Structured sabotage" is a technique which involves children having to request something before they are given it.
  - Lego therapy.
- Impact from The Hub can be observed through how children are beginning to communicate their needs through different methods. This might involve pointing at a board. One child who had not been talking at all had recently been able to point at a symbol and say the word to communicate what he wanted. Governors were shown the evidence books which are prepared, showing how pupils are learning.
- Good educational outcomes from The Hub provision entirely depend upon each child's individual needs. It might involve starting to communicate. It might mean helping a child for a relatively short period until a move to a special school becomes possible. It might mean providing the necessary evidence required to enable a child to move into specialist provision in future. It can involve giving parents similar tools to use in the home, which can particularly help their child's development.

In June, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee received the following updates concerning The Hub provision :

- There were at that time four children receiving provision in The Hub - three Reception pupils and one Year 1 child. A Higher-Level Teaching Assistant continued to oversee the Hub provision, supported by Reception staff and an agency teaching assistant. This had superseded the previous arrangements which involved all teaching assistants working for half a day in The Hub. The four children spend most of their mornings in the Hub, although they also have short periods with their classes.
- It was not expected that any of the children joining the school in September will require specialist provision in the Hub.

#### **SEND developments during the year**

Governors received the following main information concerning SEND provision developments at the school over the course of the last year :

- External agency support had become extremely limited. These services had been impacted by retirements and sickness absence.
- Nurture groups before school and during lunchtimes have continued, despite the departure of the teacher who had established and previously led these groups.
- There has been considerable staff training delivered during the year. This included two dyslexia sessions, a session delivered by the Speech and Language Therapist on Developmental Language Disorder, and a session on dyscalculia.
- A SEND coffee morning for parents was held on 27 March, with various outside agencies attending. There was a good attendance and the governors commended the content of the presentation delivered at this event.
- The staff training day in September 2025 was to provide an opportunity for staff to showcase how they have used training received over the last year to adapt their planning and teaching to support all children. Staff will also be invited to help develop a Kings Heath provision map showing what the school offers in terms of universal, targeted and specialist provision. Templates for this guide to graduated support have been obtained from the Birmingham Education Partnership.
- A spreadsheet had been developed which tracks when referrals to outside agencies have been made, when parental consent has been obtained, and when a child has been seen. This provides teachers with an easily accessible overview of what is happening around special needs provision for each child in their class. Governors were shown an anonymized version of this spreadsheet.
- School practice had changed around obtaining consent for outside agencies to assess a child. The school will now only seek family consent when it knows an agency will be coming to see a child. Previously, consent was sought prior to making a referral and months might pass before the relevant agency responded. Issuing a consent form sometimes gave families a misleading impression that outside agency involvement was imminent.
- The school envisaged some adjustments next year in response to varying levels of special needs between cohorts. Some year groups might be assigned a teaching assistant to work in each class, as happens in Reception, although the teaching assistant will not be working solely with SEND children in that class. It was intended that the new year group leaders should become involved in the planning for meeting needs within their cohort.

#### **SEND guidance for school governing boards**

In June, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee considered the updated guidance for school governors which the Department for Education had published concerning their role and responsibilities in relation to children with SEND. All governing boards were asked to review the guidance and use it to reflect upon their own practice.

Governors considered that Kings Heath Primary can demonstrate that both school and governors are meeting the expectations. The committee believed governors could be assured that all the expectations listed in the checklist contained within the guidance are being met, although there must be a caveat about “working effectively with the local authority” through matters wholly outside of the school’s control. Governors expressed the view that it is particularly reassuring that Kings Heath Primary has a committee for the specific oversight of safeguarding and SEND matters. This places the school in a stronger position for meeting these expectations than many other governing boards.

## 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 special educational needs, and by pupils who 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.
- Instances where pupils have been severely absent. A pupil is deemed to be persistently absent if their school attendance is below 90 % and severely absent if their attendance is below 50 %.
- 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 95.0 %, while the national average for primary schools was 94.9 %.
- 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 93 %, compared to 96 % for other children in the school.
- However, the gap between attendance by disadvantaged pupils and other children had narrowed during the year. In 2023-24, attendance by disadvantaged pupils was 91.7 %, compared to 94.9 % for other children within the school.
- The persistent absence rate (that is, the number of pupils with attendance below 90 %) was also slightly better than the national average. In July, the persistent absent rate was 13.0 %, while the national average was 13.6 %.
- Four pupils had been severely absent during the year.

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

- **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 2025, are shown in the table below :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY ATTENDANCE SPRING TERM 2025</b>		
	<b>Pupils</b>	<b>YTD attendance</b>
Whole school attendance	672	95.0 %
Disadvantaged pupils	178	93.0 %
SEND pupils (with EHCP)	7	83.0 %
SEND pupils (without EHCP)	148	93.0 %

This report showed that in Year 1 and Year 5, attendance by Pupil Premium children matched the overall attendance figure for that cohort.

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

- **Department for Education attendance report**

Schools are now required to report attendance to the Department for Education (DfE) on a daily basis. The DfE has developed a data dashboard which helps schools to analyse their attendance data and benchmark their performance against other schools. This includes a report designed to provide governors with the information required for monitoring school attendance. In July, the Full Governing Body reviewed the DfE attendance report containing Kings Heath Primary data for the school year to 30 May 2025.

Governors noted the following points shown within the DfE attendance report :

- Overall school attendance for the school year to 30 May 2025 was 94.9 %, which exactly matches the national average and confirmed the internal reports being presented by the Head Teacher.
- Attendance by pupils eligible for Free School Meals was 93.2 %, which was above the national average of 92.4 %.
- However, attendance by pupils not eligible for Free School Meals was 95.5 %, which is marginally below the national average of 95.9 %.
- Attendance by children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support was 93 %, which is above the national average of 92.4 %.
- Attendance by children who do not require SEN support was 95.6 %, which almost exactly aligns with the national average of 95.5 %.
- Attendance by all pupils has risen from 94.6 % in 2023-24 to 94.9 % this year.
- Attendance by pupils eligible for Free School Meals has risen from 91.2 % in 2023-24 to 93.2 % this year.
- Attendance by pupils not eligible for Free School Meals has risen from 95.3 % in 2023-24 to 95.5 % this year.

Governors welcomed the clear improvement in attendance by children eligible for Free School Meals, which serves as a proxy for identifying children who are eligible for the Pupil Premium.

Governors thought it would be helpful to receive this DfE attendance report on a termly basis in future.

### **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 still needs to determine the most effective system for recording behaviour incidents. There remains an outstanding plan to move to the Arbor Management Information System, but a new version of CPOMS with additional facilities has recently been released.

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

- The data outcomes report for 2023-24 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.
- Governors reviewed a flow chart showing responsibility for behaviour development and management which the school had developed in response to staff requests for more precise guidance on the practicalities of behaviour management. Governors welcomed how the school had prepared guidance which was helpful without being unduly prescriptive. They noted how this guidance linked to points made within the staff well-being surveys conducted earlier in the year. This showed that the school had listened to feedback within the surveys, discussed concerns raised by staff with governors and had now developed a tool to meet staff needs.

### **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.

Other governor scrutiny concerning safeguarding included the following matters :

- **Online filtering and monitoring procedures**

In April, 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. The school had recently switched to a broadband provider named Talk Straight, and uses a

database named Netsweep. Filtering software uses tags applied to websites – anything which has been tagged as inappropriate will be blocked. The Netsweep database can be customized – for example, it is possible to allow teachers to access the YouTube website which by default is blocked for all users.

- 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.
  - Governors were shown the weekly procedure whereby the online monitoring alerts are reviewed. An infographic screen features a summary of the captures by severity and by source, alongside a list of the "Top ten high risk users". The Deputy Head Teacher works through the generated alerts, checking how each one has been generated.
  - 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, the word "Rape" was flagged when it appeared on a webpage for a Year 5 lesson about where various crops are grown in the world, including rapeseed. The phrase "Sexual abuse" was flagged when it appeared on the N.S.P.C.C. webpage accessed by a teacher preparing a lesson on the N.S.P.C.C. "PANTS" acronym to help children keep themselves safe.
  - Governors were informed that the overwhelming majority of the investigations show no grounds for concern. At times, children will be found to have typed 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. Monitoring activity to date has not highlighted any substantive safeguarding issue.
- **The S175 safeguarding self-assessment audit**  
Governors scrutinized the S175 safeguarding self-assessment audit for 2024 which was submitted to the local authority in September. Governors expressed their confidence that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place at the school, based upon the information provided within the S175 self-assessment audits. The S175 assessment for July had not been completed in time for presentation at the Full Governing Body meeting and would therefore be scrutinised during the autumn term.

### **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 :
  - A four-month roof renovation project, funded by the local authority. Works included replacing the Key Stage 1 hall roof, the skylights within the corridors, the nursery roof and the roofing above where Key Stage 2 classrooms were extended. This project was to be completed during the summer holidays.
  - Liaison with the local authority concerning the former Caretaker's House. It was reported in the autumn term that squatters had been occupying this property. It appeared that the long-term solution to this issue would be through Birmingham Children's Trust taking possession of the house and converting it into emergency overnight accommodation for up to three children. Governors supported the planning application for this change of use to the property.
  - However, by the spring, B.C.C. had abandoned this plan. It had sold the former Caretaker's House at auction and it was to become a residential property. The school raised security and safeguarding concerns about fencing with B.C.C. but were initially informed this was an issue to be addressed by the school, not the local authority. After the school persisted, governors were informed in July that B.C.C. had agreed to meet most of the costs for installing new fencing along the boundary with the former Caretaker's House. Kings Heath Primary was to contribute £500 toward this work.
  - In July, governors were informed that an application to the local authority to improve security fencing at the front of the school by raising the fencing and installing electronic gates had been successful. B.C.C. has agreed to pay £86,249 toward the cost. A quotation of £95,000 had been received for these works.
  - A major issue was identified with the playground drains. In heavy rainfall, huge pools of water build up in the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and the lower playground level. The school had been advised that the crux of the problem is that drains in the playground are too small.

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

- **Statutory compliance testing**

In May, 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.

During the autumn term, one governor reported on a scrutiny visit to review the paperwork and evidence which supported the statutory compliance declaration submitted to the local authority in 2024. The governor identified some concerns about the paperwork which supported the compliance declaration and recommended that a similar scrutiny visit be undertaken following the 2025 return.

- **Fire drills annual report**

In July, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a report on fire drills conducted during the year. Drills had been conducted in October and February, and only minor action points were identified. The school evacuation times were ten minutes in October and twelve minutes in February. A third, unannounced, drill was to be held on 17 July, this time with one entrance blocked.

- **Department for Education estate management checks for boards**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed guidance documents published by the Department for Education to help governors fulfil their responsibilities concerning the oversight of school premises. During the autumn, a new version of the “top ten estate checks for boards” was issued and all governing boards were asked to consider this document. In April 2025, the DfE published new “School Estate Management Standards” which provides more comprehensive guidance than the top ten estate checks. These standards identify all the baseline essentials for estate management which should be in place at all schools. It goes on to list best practices and/or more advanced arrangements to which schools might aspire. These advanced standards include such matters as building climate resilience and adaptation into the estate management plan and adopting a whole school approach to sustainability.

The committee thought this guidance helpfully identified actions required for good estate management and suggested the guidance should inform plans to revise office roles and responsibilities scheduled for the autumn term.

### **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 four 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.

- **Trauma Informed Attachment Aware School progress report**

In January, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee reviewed a report concerning the school’s progress in adopting the Trauma Informed Attachment Aware School (TIAAS) approach. The report was prepared in October 2024 by the Deputy Head Teacher at Colmore Infants, who is also the TIAAS local lead practitioner. The report considered Kings Heath TIAAS practice and featured photographs of regulation stations outside classrooms, calm spaces inside classrooms, the sensory room and outdoor sensory classroom.

The report concluded that Kings Heath Primary was in a good position regarding the development of the TIAAS approach. The next steps identified within the report were:

- The Senior Leadership Team should complete an assessment and develop a short-term action plan, with a view to seeking TIAAS accreditation.
- The Head Teacher should visit a reference school to see their TIAAS practice.

The Head Teacher reported that the reference visit confirmed his view that Kings Heath was on the right track. He thought the principal need was for school practice to become more consistent. TIAAS strategies had been implemented in some classrooms but not all. Some staff were proactive at adopting the TIAAS approach but others were less confident. These staff felt they would benefit from more support with practical implementation of the approach. Consequently, the Head Teacher believed it would be appropriate for Kings Heath Primary to apply for bronze level

accreditation under the TIAAS scheme and seek silver level accreditation when greater consistency had been achieved.

In June, governors were informed that the TIAAS accreditation evaluation had taken place and the school was awaiting the outcome.

- **School Council**

One governor planned to meet the School Council and report on their activities over the last year. However, it proved impossible to arrange such a meeting before the end of the summer term, so this report was deferred.

- **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 2024-25 school year. Governors were informed that while all year groups should have opportunities for excursions, the school was seeking to be more judicious about outings and ensure trips offer high quality experiences and educational value in return for the time and costs involved. It is becoming more common for people to be invited into the school to deliver workshops – and Year 5 and Year 6 children have even participated in online workshops. A recent example of this different approach had been to present a planetarium in the school hall, as an alternative to visiting the National Space Centre in Leicester. This event cost £350 and enabled the children to have a memorable experience but did not create any need to ask families to meet the cost of an educational trip.

- **Marvelous minds**

In June, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee received a report on the school's participation in the "Marvelous Minds" pilot scheme. This scheme was organized by the Educational Psychologist and involved Year 6 children looking from a scientific perspective at why children feel anxious and how the brain works. The intention of this teaching is to provide the children with tools which they can use to manage their anxieties which will help them with the transition to secondary school. Governors reviewed the handbook accompanying the programme, which included lesson plans, and a summary of pupil and teacher comments on the scheme.

Governors noted the following points concerning the "Marvelous Minds" pilot scheme :

- The overall response to the scheme had been positive. Pupil surveys of each Year 6 class showed that around two-thirds of pupils overall felt the programme had a positive impact upon their mental health. Children appreciated gaining a better understanding of how their mind and body work and thought the strategies to support emotional regulation were helpful.
- A recurrent negative comment was that the characters used within the programme were more suitable for a younger age group. These pupil comments were endorsed by their teachers.

Governors recognized that mental health concerns feature within Keeping Children Safe in Education, the statutory guidance on safeguarding in schools. They therefore commended the teaching of practical tools to support mental health and well-being and thought this programme might potentially become a standard feature of the school preparing children for their transition to secondary school. Some governors thought the insights from the programme might also be

helpful for parents to understand what their children are experiencing and to help them with transition.

- **The Outdoor Play and Learning scheme**

During the summer term, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee received a presentation from the Head Teacher on the school's recent subscription to the Outdoor Play and Learning scheme (OPAL). This presentation contained the following key information :

- OPAL is a strategic school improvement programme supporting improvement through play. The programme supports senior leaders to create sustainable change in culture and practice. The scheme is used by 1,800 schools across the United Kingdom.
- The Head Teacher and P.E. lead had visited some reference schools which use the OPAL scheme and had been favourably impressed. The Head Teacher thought this scheme offers a possibility to transform lunchtime and playtime provision and can address several current needs at Kings Heath Primary. A common lament is that there is little or nothing for children to do in the playground and that inevitably leads to behaviour problems.
- A two-year subscription to the OPAL scheme costs £5,000, but this can be funded through the P.E. / Sports Premium. The programme takes a strategic approach which commences with an evaluation of the outdoor area available to a school and how that area can be zoned. There is an emphasis on flexible rather than prescriptive usage of zones. Therefore, instead of a zone which could only be used for climbing activities, there will be an area which "could be used for football".
- Once zones have been established, the next step is to equip the area, and this will involve appealing to families to supply suitcases, crates and dressing up materials. There is a requirement for sheds to be acquired to store the play materials. An assembly to show children how articles might be used is arranged and then children are encouraged to be creative within the playground. The new strategy will involve a major paradigm shift in lunchtime provision at the school. The OPAL scheme involves calculating acceptable risk and participating in "safe enough" activities rather than eliminating all possible risks while children are playing.

Governors thought the OPAL scheme offered excellent potential benefits but thought these benefits will have to be carefully explained to families. There was particular concern to explain how this scheme would align with the fund-raising efforts of the Parent, Teachers and Friends Association for playground development.

It was recognized that leadership support would be essential if the OPAL scheme were to be successful. In July, the Full Governing Body appointed a link governor for the OPAL scheme for the 2025-26 school year.

- **Pupil Voice exercises**

The Head Teacher's half-termly report to the Full Governing Body usually included a Pupil Voice exercise, which offered governors insight into the views and opinions of children within the school. During the year, these pupil voice exercises included the following topics :

- The opportunities for student leadership which are available within the school. These opportunities included :

- Play leaders. These are older children who help younger children to play during lunchtimes.
  - Peer mentors. These are older children who help younger ones with parts of the school day they may find difficult and sometimes draw on their own experiences to do this.
  - School Council. The School Council meets regularly to talk about what is happening in school and to suggest improvements.
  - WOW ambassadors. The WOW scheme is an initiative which promotes walking to school and reducing pollution, which enhances pupil health through exercise.
- The results of a consultation with pupils on plans for the refurbishment of the Key Stage 1 playground. This consultation was linked to article 12 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children’s views should be respected. 119 children voted as part of the consultation, with 95 of them wishing to suggest some changes. Key points raised within the consultation included :
- Children would like a sheltered area where they can read and eat their snacks.
  - Every class wanted the roundabout to be retained as it was very popular, though often closed and out of use.
  - Children would like to be able to use the Outdoor Classroom area more frequently.
  - Year 6 children expressed concern about the number of First Aiders at lunchtime. There is one first aider in the Key Stage 1 playground at lunchtime and Key Stage 2 children can get into trouble if they go into the Key Stage 1 playground to seek first aid treatment.
- A practice discussion between the Head Teacher and some Year 6 pupils ahead of the TIAAS accreditation process, which would involve the assessor interviewing a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school and behaviour. Most of the children rated school behaviour as good. Quiet spaces within the school were considered helpful and the children thought it would be beneficial if more such spaces were available around the school.

## 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 scrutinized the performance management documentation for the 2023-24 appraisal cycle. The committee recognized that targets were closely aligned with school improvement priorities. Governors would welcome staff reflecting more on their performance as part of the appraisal process. The committee hoped that decoupling the performance

management appraisal from pay awards might encourage staff to be more open and reflective in these reviews.

- It was noted that some long-term staff absences had resulted in the Head Teacher having to take over the performance management of office staff and lunchtime supervisors.

The committee recognized that, from the 2024-25 school year, pay progression is no longer dependent upon a successful performance management appraisal. Nonetheless, the committee believed that scrutiny of performance management documentation remains important for the following reasons :

- To ensure that targets are suitably robust and appropriate evidence is being used to evaluate whether targets have been met.
- To ensure that targets are aligned with the School Development and Improvement Plan.
- To ensure that targets are promoting staff professional development.

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

- **Continuing Professional Development**

In June, the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee reviewed the training register which had been maintained over the last year. This spreadsheet listed teachers on the school staff and recorded the dates each person had received training on safeguarding, manual handling, Team Teach and the Prevent duty. Training on fire safety and paediatric first aid had also been recorded where applicable. The Head Teacher advised that from September, the school will be using the National College platform for training. That system will enable easier maintenance of training records.

- **Artificial intelligence and workload**

In March, the Deputy Head Teacher gave a presentation to the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee on how the school is exploring possibilities offered by artificial intelligence (AI) tools to reduce workload and open new possibilities. The following tools were being used :

- Otter AI. The school had recently taken out a subscription to a package called Otter AI. This is a meeting transcription facility which will record conversations, provide a summary of the discussion, and suggest next steps. This software has proven helpful for pupil voice conversations – all participants identify themselves at the start before going through a script of questions. Otter AI will automatically generate a summary of the conversation when it has finished.
- ChatGPT. The chatbot facility ChatGPT has proven useful in preparing texts for specific purposes. For example, in conversations with Early Careers Teachers about barriers faced by children in their class, ChatGPT can generate suggestions for strategies to overcome those barriers. The Deputy Head Teacher observed that most of the suggestions might be described as common sense by an experienced teacher but could offer immediate and useful help for an Early Careers Teacher.
- SLT AI. This tool is a subscription service for school leaders which can be used to generate documents such as SEND referrals to agencies or policies.

Governors were advised that AI facilities are creating what might be described as a paradigm shift within schools. At one point, IT facilities were a means of presenting information through graphs and charts. Later, as schools adopted packages such as “Learning by Questions”, IT became a

method for shaping and fine-tuning teaching and learning and adapting teaching within lessons. Now, AI is enabling IT to be used for more nebulous themes, such as summarizing conversations to offer insight into a child's learning experience. However, experience has shown there are limits to what AI can offer and careful oversight of the output from these tools is required. A recent request to generate some maths questions for division "without remainders" produced some results which the pupils found confusing. An attempt to use SLT AI to summarize the OFSTED consultation paper being considered by governors during the spring term produced four pages of gibberish.

- **School Improvement Advisor report**

During the autumn term, the Full Governing Body reviewed a report from the School Improvement Advisor on his recent work with subject leaders and senior leaders who had recently acquired new responsibilities. The report drew attention to the following points :

- There had been discussions focussed upon how subjects could be monitored and evaluated.
- There was a particular focus upon vocabulary – what vocabulary had been taught, could children recall that vocabulary and could they apply it ? Pupil samples suggest that pupils are learning the intended curriculum well in each subject but appear less secure in recalling and using specific vocabulary when talking about their learning. There was inconsistency across subjects in this respect.

- **The B.C.C. Equal Pay Programme - new pay and grading structure for support staff**

In April, the local authority asked governing boards at all maintained schools to discuss and approve a new pay and grading structure for support staff. This new structure was designed to address widely recognized weaknesses with the current B.C.C. grading structure for support staff. These included :

- Marked disparities in the spinal column points for each grade. Grade 2 roles cover spine points 3 to 8, while Grade 3 roles cover points 9 to 22.
- These disparities mean that the time required for pay progression to the top of a scale varies widely across the local authority. A Grade 3 role may take fourteen years to reach the top of the scale (by annual progression from points 9 to 22). However, a grade 4 role can progress to the top of that scale in only eight years (annual progression from points 23 to 31).

The proposed new structure therefore made the following changes :

- The number of grades will be reduced from five to four. These will in future be known as Grades A to D instead of Grades 1 to 5. All Grade 1 and 2 staff were to move to Grade A. Grades 3, 4 and 5 staff would move to Grades B, C and D respectively.
- There will be either five or six spinal column points within each grade. Therefore, through annual pay progression an employee will reach the top of their grade in a maximum of five years.
- The maximum potential earnings for current Grade 4 and 5 staff will increase after they move to Grades C and D. There will be no detriment to any employee resulting from these changes.
- For the vast majority of employees, the new grading system will have no impact on their salaries during the 2025-26 financial year. However, from April 2026 "accelerated pay

progression” will take effect. The annual increment along the new pay scale will be equivalent to two years of progression on the current scale.

Governors recognized the implications for schools arising from these proposals :

- Accelerated pay progression means that support staff employment costs will increase beyond expectations when schools prepared their budgets and strategic forecasts this year. The local authority was promising to cover additional costs incurred as a result of implementing the proposed reshaped pay and grading structure over the next three years, up to and including 2027-28, although no details of how and when such funding would be received had been published. Governors were informed that Emma Leaman, B.C.C. Equal Pay Programme Schools Lead, gave an explicit commitment at the briefing for governors on 6 May that this funding will be calculated to meet the precise costs for each school, not through a general-purpose formula.
- The Head Teacher advised that many Kings Heath Primary support staff are at the top of their respective grades and therefore the financial impact on the school should be relatively limited. Governors asked for the likely future impact to be estimated within the next strategic forecasts.

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee scrutinized the proposed new grading structure in depth and commended it to the Full Governing Body. Governors recognized that, as the local authority are the employers of support staff, school governing boards have no real option other than to approve the proposed new structure.

Subject to collective agreement between the trade unions and B.C.C. being reached, the proposed new pay and grading structure for support staff at the current grades 1 to 5 was approved.

The local authority had urged governing boards to approve the new pay and grading structure by 13 June due to an expectation that agreement with trade unions would be reached by 30 May and the new structure could then be implemented by the end of June. In practice, no such agreement with trade unions had been reached by the end of the school year.

## **2E. ENSURING THE SOUND, PROPER AND EFFECTIVE USE OF THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

### **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.

### **Overview of school financial position – outturn for 2024-25**

During the summer term, governors reviewed the official end of year balances for the 2024-25 financial year which had been published by the local authority alongside those for all other

Birmingham maintained schools. A summary of the outcome for the financial year is shown in the table below :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL 2024-25 FINANCIAL YEAR SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Opening balance (deficit)</b>	<b>(£85,012)</b>
Funding and income received	£3,905,901
Total expenditure	£3,745,245
In-year surplus	£160,656
<b>Carried forward surplus balance</b>	<b>£75,644</b>

The outcome showed an in-year surplus of £160,656, which was better than had been anticipated. This resulted in the cumulative financial deficit being eliminated one year sooner than envisaged when the 2024-25 budget was approved, with the school having a cumulative surplus of £75,644 at the end of the year.

Governors were delighted by this result and congratulated the Senior Leadership Team and staff for this outstanding achievement as it had required tight spending restraint to attain this goal. Kings Heath Primary had been in a cumulative deficit position since the end of the 2020-21 financial year. As the school was now in surplus, it would not be burdened by any requirement to enter into a formal deficit repayment plan with the local authority or to engage in regular deficit reduction meetings.

#### **Overview of school financial position – budget for 2025-26**

In the spring term, governors considered the school budget for the 2025-26 financial year. The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee closely scrutinized the proposed budget and then commended that budget to the Full Governing Body for approval.

The budget for 2025-26 anticipated school funding and income to the total value of £3,737,234. Total budget expenditure was £3,692,193 meaning that the school forecast a surplus of £45,041.

The budget was accompanied by a strategic forecast which envisaged further small in-year surpluses in 2026-27 and 2027-28. However, based on one governor’s research into likely future pupil numbers (which is outlined in the section of this report concerning “Scrutiny of pupil roll numbers”), governors thought the strategic forecasts were unduly optimistic and asked for a revised version with lower pupil numbers. In July, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a new strategic forecast, which now anticipated an in-year deficit in 2026-27. It was recognised that this forecast shows it is critically important for the school to keep pupil numbers as high as possible.

#### **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**  
There is a B.C.C. audit expectation that governors should approve each year 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.

As Kings Heath Primary was in process of implementing major changes to the school financial systems during the spring term, governors determined there was no point in completing an evaluation of those systems until after that implementation. It was therefore agreed that preparing a Statement of Internal Controls should be postponed until the summer term.

In July, the school advised governors that it was cautious about expressing their confidence in the robustness of the new systems when they had only been in operation for a few weeks, and there had only been a single payroll run using the new provider. Governors agreed it would be sensible to defer the preparation of the S.I.C. until the autumn term, when the new systems had become more embedded. A financial management risk self-assessment available within the B.C.C. Schools Financial Procedures manuals would be used for preparing the S.I.C. This evaluation could be conducted in phases during the autumn term, to avoid placing any undue pressure on the office team, with a view to the S.I.C. being presented to the Full Governing Body for approval in December.

- **School fund audit**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received the independent examiner's report on the School Fund for 2023-24 at their October meeting. The examiner raised no concerns.

Governors acknowledged a request from the Bursar that the list of staff members authorized to deal with school fund matters was out of date and approved a revised set of signatories and people with authority to communicate with Lloyds Bank concerning School Fund whenever that should be necessary.

- **Local authority template finance and governance monitoring reports.**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed the Governing Body Financial Assurance Checklist, which is a template report which B.C.C. expects to be presented to governors by the end of December each year. Governors noted the following key performance indicators listed at the end of the report :

- Staff pay represented 76.7 % of total expenditure.
- Kings Heath Primary spends 11 % of budget on the leadership. This is slightly below the Department for Education recommended limit of 12 %.

- **Strategic risk register**

During the summer term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed the strategic risk register. This register was overhauled and extended to include the most recent risks arising from Kings Heath Primary becoming a full cheque book status school and the mitigating controls required in the light of those risks. The committee expressed their appreciation to governors at another full cheque book school, who agreed to share their own strategic risk register, which had helped inform this work.

## **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 2024-25. 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	£132,695
▪ Targeted academic support	£44,527
▪ Wider attendance/behaviour strategies	£38,148
▪ <u>Total expenditure</u>	<u>£215,370</u>

**Review of Pupil Premium strategy at end of 2023-24 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 2024-25 were unchanged from the previous year. Therefore, in October 2024, the Full Governing Body reviewed the effectiveness of the strategy over the previous year. The Head Teacher presented the following tables to demonstrate how Pupil Premium funding had a positive impact on attainment by disadvantaged pupils :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 2 READING, WRITING &amp; MATHS COMBINED ATTAINMENT</b>						
<b>Pupils meeting age related expectations</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2021-22</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2022-23</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2023-24</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Bham 2024</b>	<b>National average 2024</b>
All pupils	53.1 %	64.2 %	64.0 %	+10.9	60.0 %	60.5 %
Pupil Premium	16.7 %	47.8 %	47.1 %	+30.4	51.9 %	45.3 %
Non-Pupil Premium	61.5 %	69.4 %	63.0 %	+1.5	67.4 %	66.8 %
Gap	44.8	21.6	15.9	-28.9	15.5	21.5

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE – GOOD LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT</b>						
<b>Pupils attaining overall GLD</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2021-22</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2022-23</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2023-24</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Bham 2024</b>	<b>National average 2024</b>
All pupils	66.2 %	69.7 %	71.0 %	+4.8	65.5 %	67.7 %
Pupil Premium	46.2 %	50.0 %	44.0 %	+2.2	58.9 %	Not available
Non-Pupil Premium	70.3 %	74.2 %	76.0 %	+5.7	68.2 %	Not available
Gap	24.1	24.2	32.0	+7.9	9.3	Not available

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY KEY STAGE 2 YEAR 1 PHONICS ATTAINMENT</b>						
<b>Pupils attaining expected standard</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2021-22</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2022-23</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2023-24</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Bham 2024</b>	<b>National average 2024</b>
All pupils	80.0 %	87.5 %	91.2 %	+11.2	80.8 %	80.2 %
Pupil Premium	53.8 %	68.2 %	85.0 %	+31.2	75.0 %	Not available
Non-Pupil Premium	84.4 %	93.9 %	92.0 %	+7.6	84.0 %	Not available
Gap	30.6	25.7	7.0	-23.6	9.0	Not available

Governors identified the key points shown within this data as follows :

- 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 47.1 % in 2024.
- The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers had fallen from 44.8 percentage points to 15.9. This was below the national average gap.
- The phonics attainment levels for all pupils had risen, but there has been a particular improvement for disadvantaged pupils. The percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining the required standard in phonics in Year 1 had risen from 53.8 % to 85.0 %
- The Head Teacher advised that very significant barriers in the 2023-24 Reception cohort, including high levels of special needs, had prevented the school from making similar progress with the percentage of Pupil Premium children attaining a Good Level of Development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The attainment percentage for disadvantaged pupils fell from 46.2 % to 44.0 %, and the gap with non-disadvantaged peers had widened from 24.1 percentage points to 32.0.

Governors also noted that the strategy to increase attendance by Pupil Premium children was bearing fruit, as shown by the table below :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY ATTENDANCE DATA</b>				
<b>Attendance rates</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2021-22</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2022-23</b>	<b>Kings Heath 2023-24</b>	<b>Change from 2021-22</b>
All pupils	92.7 %	94.0 %	94.0 %	+1.3
Pupil Premium	88.9 %	90.8 %	92.0 %	+3.1
Non-Pupil Premium	93.6 %	95.2 %	95.0 %	+1.4
Gap	5.3	5.6	3.0	-2.3

Attendance by children eligible for the premium had risen from 88.9 % to 92 %, and the gap had fallen from 5.3 percentage points to 3.0 points.

#### **Refining the Pupil Premium strategy for the 2024-25 school year**

In October, the Full Governing Body approved the Pupil Premium strategy for the 2024-25 school year, which planned to build upon the achievements of the previous year. The intended outcomes

were therefore based upon continuing the existing strategy. The targets are summarized in the table below :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY TARGETS 2024-25</b>		
<b>Strategy target</b>	<b>2023-24 outcome</b>	<b>2024-25 target</b>
GLD in Early Years Foundation Stage	44 %	60 %
Phonics attainment	85 %	85 %
Key Stage 2 RWM attainment	42 %	50 %
Attendance	92 %	96 %
Participation in clubs	26 %	30 %
Recorded behaviour incidents	31	25

Governors noted the following points when approving the revised strategy :

- The proportion of children on roll who are eligible for the Pupil Premium had increased from 21.2 % in 2023-24 to 23.0 %.
- Pupil Premium funding for the academic year would be £171,680, with an additional £43,690 in funding for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children. This created a strategy budget of £215,370.

#### **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. The latest data available for each target at that point is shown in the table below :

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY PUPIL PREMIUM STRATEGY TARGETS 2024-25</b>			
<b>Strategy target</b>	<b>2023-24 outcome</b>	<b>2024-25 target</b>	<b>Spring 2025 update</b>
GLD in Early Years Foundation Stage	44 %	60 %	48 %
Phonics attainment	85 %	85 %	50 %
Key Stage 2 RWM attainment	42 %	58 %	40 %
Attendance	92 %	96 %	93 %
Participation in clubs	26 %	30 %	31 %
Recorded behaviour incidents	31	25	18

The Head Teacher made the following observations to governors concerning this data :

- The Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) attainment was based upon teacher assessment as the SATs results had not yet been published. In July, governors were advised that 42 % of children eligible for the Pupil Premium attained age related expectations in RWM combined.
- There was a significant crossover in Year 1 between children with special needs and those eligible for the Pupil Premium. This explained why the school was anticipating much lower phonics attainment than during the previous year. In July, governors were informed that 64 % of Pupil Premium children attained the required standard, which was better than the 50 % May forecast though still a fall from 85 % in 2024.

- Attendance by disadvantaged children had improved this year from 92 % to 93 %, but it would not be possible to attain the 96 % target.
  - Participation in clubs has improved and the current 31 % participation level was slightly ahead of the 30 % target.
  - There had been a notable drop in the number of recorded behaviour incidents, with only eighteen recorded at that point. However, the school acknowledged that there has been a slight change in school practice which would reduce the number of recorded incidents, although this was not target-based. As part of the TIAAS approach, there is more emphasis upon resolving behaviour issues in class rather than referring to senior leadership for resolution. Incidents are recorded when senior leadership has to become involved.
  - The pupil premium strategy had been strengthened by the excellent efforts of the Family Support Worker. This worker had been funded by the Developing Local Provision project. Although that funding was to cease in summer 2025, Kings Heath Primary's improved financial position had allowed a funding allocation which will enable the Family Support Worker to continue assisting the school for another year.
- **Special Educational Needs funding**  
In October, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a comprehensive report on SEND funding and provision costs for the 2023-24 school year. The report incorporated :
    - **Resource Base placement funding and costs.** The Head Teacher reminded governors that the local authority is in the process of phasing out Resource Bases for Physical Disability, although this funding will be honoured for those children presently occupying Resource Base places within the school.
    - **Children with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) who do not have a Resource Base place and those children who have – or may potentially have – a SEND Support Provision Plan (SSPP).** The SSPP is a relatively recently introduced form of funding for children who are going through the application process for an EHCP or who may not reach those criteria but are clearly identified as requiring additional support.
    - **Notional SEN funding.** The notional SEN is part of regular school funding which is intended to meet general special needs, particularly high-incidence and low-cost needs. The allocation is determined within the Section 251 School Budget Share statement as follows :
      - 5 % of total pupil entitlement
      - 50 % of Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) funding
      - 50 % of Free School Meals Ever 6 funding (that is children who have been eligible for Free School Meals at any time during the last six years).
      - 50 % of low prior attainment funding

A summary of the overall funding and provision costs for each area in 2023-24 and forecasts for 2024-25 are shown within the tables below. Governors were cautioned that persistent issues with B.C.C. funding notifications alongside internal monitoring systems mean these figures are approximations.

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY SEND FUNDING AND PROVISION COSTS 2023-24</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Provision costs</b>	<b>Variation</b>
Resource Base places	58,500	101,000	-42,500
Other EHCP / SSPP pupils	61,600	143,000	-91,400
Notional SEN budget & top-up funding	424,479	424,479	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>544,579</b>	<b>678,479</b>	<b>-133,900</b>

<b>KINGS HEATH PRIMARY SEND FUNDING AND PROVISION COSTS 2024-25</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Provision costs</b>	<b>Variation</b>
Resource Base places	TBA	TBA	TBA
EHCP pupils	78,553	210,000	-131,447
SSPP pupils	11,760	70,500	-58,740
<b>Totals</b>	<b>90,313</b>	<b>280,500</b>	<b>-190,187</b>

The Head Teacher made the following observations in connection with this report and the calculated funding deficits :

- There remains a substantial deficit between the cost of special needs provision and the funding provided to the school.
- The number of younger children who require one-to-one support is increasing. One child on roll, who later joined a special school, required two-to-one support.
- Better links with nursery schools had helped the Early Years team to obtain a SSPP for some children who joined Reception in September 2024. While this is a positive development, the funding still falls short of the provision costs.
- Some of the youngest children in this report were at that point on part-time provision. The costs shown are estimates for when they will have full-time provision.
- The Birmingham Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review service (SENAR) advise there are no special school places available for children currently in mainstream schools with high level needs.

Governors thanked the Head Teacher for this helpful report, which remains important for understanding the school's overall financial situation. The Finance, Staffing and Premises were to receive a similar report on funding and provision costs for 2024-25 at their October 2025 meeting.

- **P.E. / Sports Premium funding**

The Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee reviewed the P.E. / Sports Premium funding report for 2024-25 at their summer term meeting. The committee were advised that the practice of hiring an on-site swimming pool each autumn over the last two years has had a great impact. 71 % of Year 6 pupils had attained the end of Key Stage 2 expectation of being able to swim twenty-five metres, compared to 54 % at the start of the year. The onsite pool enables all Year 3 children to benefit from an intense course of swimming lessons over a four-week period. All Year 6 children have swimming lessons when the pool is installed and the instructors assess the capabilities of each child. The children who cannot swim for twenty-five metres have further lessons until they reach that objective, so a dwindling number of Year 6 pupils have swimming lessons over the four-week period.

- **Devolved capital expenditure**

In July, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received a report on the planned use of devolved capital funding during 2025-26. The committee were informed that in 2024-25 (and previous years) B.C.C. had overruled the school’s choices concerning the use of devolved capital funding. Various items of revenue expenditure were re-classified as capital expenditure by the local authority. This had the result of reducing the school’s cumulative revenue deficit (and at the end of 2024-25 increasing the cumulative surplus at the start of the new financial year). However, this also resulted in the school having no carried forward devolved capital from previous years.

Governors were informed that Kings Heath Primary has a devolved capital allocation of £11,383 for 2025-26. This information had to be obtained from the DfE, rather than the local authority. The table below sets out the school’s plans for deploying capital funding. Any additional capital requirements would have to be funded from revenue expenditure, as the planned expenditure listed below already exceeds the devolved capital allocation.

<b>PLANNED USE OF 2025-26 DEVOLVED CAPITAL ALLOCATION</b>	
Contribution to main gates fencing	£5,000
Contribution to old Caretaker’s House fencing	£875
Cloud migration and backup	£5,699
IT hardware (laptops) purchase to date	£2,097
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13,671</b>

### **SCRUTINY OF PUPIL ROLL NUMBERS**

Governors recognized that vacancies on the school roll compounded the financial challenges facing Kings Heath Primary, as every primary school place occupied secures at least £4,955 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 2024, there were 666 pupils on the school roll (including thirty-nine children in the nursery) and twenty-seven vacancies. Eighty-six of the ninety available Reception places had been taken. In July, it was reported that there were 669 pupils on the school roll and twenty-four vacancies. Twenty of those vacancies were in Year 2 and Year 3.

### **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) statistics service. The committee looked at offers made in April 2024 for Reception admissions in September 2024. 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-eight applications last year. All sixty-eight applicants were offered a place.
- Kings Heath Primary was second preference on a further sixty-three applications. Five applicants were offered a place.

- Kings Heath Primary was third preference on a further sixty-three applications. One applicant was offered a place.
- Overall, in April 2024, Kings Heath Primary made seventy-seven 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 0.88, calculated by dividing sixty-eight first place preference applications by seventy-seven offers made.
- This ratio and the number of placements is broadly in line with many local schools. The most popular schools close to Kings Heath Primary were Moseley Church of England Primary, with a ratio of 1.73 (fifty-two applicants for thirty places) and Grendon Primary which had a ratio of 1.43 (forty-three applicants for thirty places).
- Kings Heath Primary ranked 88th out of 283 Birmingham schools in a list ranked by the popularity ratio of first preference applications to first preference offers and then by the number of first preference applications.
- 19.1 % of Kings Heath Primary's potential Reception pupils were eligible for Free School Meals. This is a lower percentage than all the other local schools, except Moseley Church of England Primary and Colmore Infants. However, this was the highest percentage recorded for the school in data stretching back to 2014-15.
- Demand for Kings Heath Primary places in 2024-25 was slightly higher than the previous year, and at the highest level since 2020-21. There were sixty-four first preference applications and seventy-six places offered for the 2023-24 academic year.

### **Birmingham birthrates and the implications for pupil numbers**

In May, one governor prepared a research paper forecasting future pupil numbers at Kings Heath Primary based upon government statistics showing the expected number of Reception age children in Birmingham in the future. The research paper included the following information :

- Demand for Reception school places in Birmingham has been falling in recent years, creating many vacancies in primary schools across the city.
- The government data anticipates demand will fall further over the next two years. It is expected there will only be 13,195 Reception pupils in Birmingham for the 2025-26 school year. This is lower than the 13,843 pupils for 2024-25, a figure which had already fallen from 14,474 in 2022-23. While tiny increases are forecast for 2026-27 and 2027-28, the projected figures remain below 2024-25 levels.

The governor made the following observations on the basis of her research :

- Kings Heath Primary cannot rely upon increased birthrates to fill places at the school – it has to compete for pupils against other local schools.
- Kings Heath Primary had been unable to fill the Reception cohort in any of the last four years. The current Year 3 cohort, which joined the school in 2021-22, has only eighty pupils. In each of those four years, a full cohort of ninety-six Year 6 pupils left the school, but pupil numbers were not replenished by new admissions. Consequently, the number of pupils for which the school receives funding has been steadily falling.

This suggests there are two alternative scenarios for prospective pupil numbers from 2024-25 to 2031-32 (both scenarios exclude the number of children in the school nursery). These were as follows :

- An optimistic scenario envisages the Reception cohort being full each September, with ninety new admissions. However, as children in the current (full) Years 4 – 6 cohorts leave, pupil numbers will continue to fall until reaching a nadir at 609 in 2027-28. From that point there will be a gradual recovery of numbers, rising to 626 in 2030-31, which is only one less than the present total of 627.
- However, a more realistic scenario envisages that the school will continue to be unable to fill the Reception cohort and predicts only eighty-six places are taken each year. Under this scenario, pupil numbers decline from 627 at present to 597 in 2027-28. From that point, while there is a small improvement, the numbers remain between 602 and 604 until 2031-32, which is around twenty-five below the current figure.

The governor noted that the budget plan had used 620 pupils in October 2026 as the basis for the 2027-28 forecast. Even under the optimistic scenario, this would be too high with only 615 pupils expected. The less optimistic scenario envisages only 607 pupils. At nearly £5,000 per pupil, that would represent a funding reduction of around £65,000, severely impacting upon the forecast position.

The governor acknowledged that committee minutes and papers from October 2023 show pupil numbers were forecast to decline from 627 in 2023-24 to 615 in 2024-25 and only 602 in 2025-26. In reality, pupil numbers have been better than those forecasts. Nonetheless, her research paper concluded that the school must think carefully about the numbers used for financial forecasting and must continue to focus on advertising the school and securing as many children as possible in each Reception cohort.

Governors thanked the governor for her illuminating and helpful research. The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee consequently requested, and later received, a revised strategic forecast for 2026-27 and 2027-28 based upon lower pupil numbers.

### **BENCHMARKING AGAINST OTHER SCHOOLS**

During the spring term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed a report prepared by one governor showing the findings of the new Department for Education (DfE) financial benchmarking service for schools which is called the “Financial Benchmarking and Insights tool”. The benchmarking analysis is based upon expenditure during the 2023-24 financial year. The new benchmarking tool compares school data with a basket of twenty-nine other schools deemed by the DfE to be “similar”, although a different basket is used for utilities analysis. The tool identified the following top spending priorities for the school :

- Educational supplies. School expenditure at £48 per pupil is less than 96.7 % of the similar schools.
- Premises staff and services. The school was calculated to spend £44 per square metre, which is higher than 43.3 % of similar schools. Governors did not see how this could possibly be judged to be a priority, as Kings Heath Primary sits in the middle of the basket.
- Utilities spending. This is deemed a high priority as Kings Heath spends £63 per square metre, far above any other school in the basket. Governors were advised that the utility spending was such an outlier that the accuracy of the data must be questionable. The range of spending across the basket of schools is highly variable, which implies there is a data issue. To test this theory, the governor had compiled a separate basket containing twenty-nine other large Birmingham schools. Within this basket, Kings Heath utility expenditure ranked twelfth of the thirty schools, which

indicates school expenditure is in line with other local schools and points to a problem with how B.C.C. prepared the Consistent Financial Reporting data submitted to the DfE which is used for benchmarking.

Governors noted the other key points from the comparison with the basket of Birmingham schools:

- Kings Heath Primary ranked lowest in total expenditure per pupil.
- Kings Heath Primary ranked lowest in expenditure on “Non-educational support staff and services” and “Educational supplies”.
- Kings Heath Primary ranked twenty-sixth of thirty for expenditure on “Teaching and teaching support staff”.
- Kings Heath Primary ranked twenty-fourth of thirty for expenditure on “Premises staff and services”.

### **OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS**

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

- **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.

- **Insurance review**

During the autumn term, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed the school’s insurance arrangements and explored the possibility of switching from B.C.C. insurance to the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA). The government website describes the RPA scheme as follows :

*“The RPA provides comprehensive risk protection for public sector schools and is an alternative to commercial insurance for the education sector. Under RPA, the UK government covers the losses instead of commercial insurance. It covers risks normally included in a standard school’s insurance policy and is priced per pupil or placement regardless of any claims.”*

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/join-the-risk-protection-arrangement-rpa-for-schools>.

The RPA scheme was originally established to provide insurance to academies and was later opened to maintained schools. According to the government website, over 10,000 schools in England have joined the RPA scheme, which represents nearly half of all schools in the country.

The committee was informed that the school had looked into the potential costs of the school switching to the RPA scheme. At a cost of £25 per pupil, RPA insurance would cost about £16,400. It had been difficult to uncover the premium currently charged by B.C.C., but Schools Financial Services believed the school was presently paying £18,465. There would therefore be a potential saving by switching.

The committee agreed in principle that the school should switch to the RPA insurance scheme. However, as the school was in the midst of major changes involving the move to full cheque book status, it was decided to remain with B.C.C. insurance for another twelve months before considering this topic again in autumn 2025.

- **Playcare rental agreement**

The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee carefully considered the school's rental agreement with Playcare, the wraparound care provider. A trio of governors looked into the history and background to the current agreement which had not been revised for several years. These governors prepared a series of options for future charging arrangements. The Head Teacher and Chair of the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee subsequently met one of the Playcare trustees to discuss the future rental agreement. Following that meeting, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee approved a plan which agreed rent charge increases in September 2025 and September 2026, with annual inflationary rises from September 2027 onwards.

- **Catering service**

In October, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee reviewed a report on the performance of the school catering service over the previous year. The committee were assured that catering provider Taylor Shaw have confirmed there are definitely two chicken options – halal meat and non-halal meat. The uptake of school meals by month was included within the catering report. There were 62,679 meals served during the 2023-24 school year, which represents around 1,620 meals per week. The year-on-year comparisons show 15,544 meals were served from May to July 2023 and 17,064 meals from May to July 2024 – an increase of 1,520 meals (9.8 %).

In February, the Head Teacher advised the committee that the school was happy with the service provided by the current contractor. In view of the number of major financial/administrative systems changes which were to be introduced during the year, alongside changes to other contract providers, the Head Teacher recommended rolling over the catering contract for another year and retaining the services of Taylor Shaw. Governors accepted and approved the Head Teacher's request.

- **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.
- Received reports on the tendering process followed concerning the cleaning contract and the performance of the new provider.
- 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.
- Agreed to increase nursery charges for Wednesday afternoon sessions but asked for this topic to return to the committee next year with further information which would facilitate a fuller analysis of nursery charging.

## PART 3. SPECIAL PROJECTS DURING 2024-25

### 3A. STAFF WELL-BEING SURVEYS

At the start of the school year, the governing board introduced a new initiative for gauging and supporting staff well-being. The governors were not keen on the idea of holding a general-purpose staff survey, as this would probably involve a large amount of work for undefined purposes. Instead, it was agreed there should be a short and quick staff survey which would be conducted as a “pulse check” once each term. There would only be three questions within each survey :

- a. A self-assessment rating of the respondent’s current well-being using a 1 to 10 scale.
- b. A themed question which would usually be chosen by the Safeguarding and Inclusion committee. This would be something pertinent to the school at that moment.
- c. An open question asking if there were any item the respondent wished to raise or celebrate.

The Chair of Governors issued the survey and invited staff to participate. The Well-being link governor collated the survey returns and discussed the findings with the Head Teacher before these findings were presented and discussed more widely with the governing body. The Chair of Governors provided feedback from each survey to staff.

The themed questions chosen during the year were as follows :

- *By this time next year, what changes would you like to see in the school ?*
- *What would effective communication look like to you ?*
- *Has technology and new systems introduced into the school helped or hindered your workload ?*

The summer term survey results had not been reported to governors by the end of the school year. However, the findings from the autumn and spring surveys included the following points :

- Thirty-seven people participated in the autumn survey, which governors thought represented a good response. Participation in the spring term survey was lower, with only eighteen people responding.
- Most staff rated their current well-being within the range of three to seven.
- There were many complimentary observations about how staff support each other and work together.
- A common theme was the impact of reduced staffing and the lack of teaching assistants in classrooms at a time when the levels of special needs within the school are increasing.
- Some safeguarding concerns were raised over lunchtime arrangements and the access to First Aid. The Head Teacher had promised an immediate review of the matters raised.
- There were requests for adjustments to how staff are allowed to take their planning, preparation and assessment time, to allow for more working from home.
- Some points were raised about school behaviour policy, with some people seeking more guidance on how to manage behaviour while following the TIAAS approach.
- Answers to the spring term question about effective communication suggested there is nothing wrong with the communication media employed by the school to disseminate information in the

form of staff briefings and newsletters. What emerged was that concern about “communication” relates to people feeling that their concerns are being heard.

The Governing Body believed it would be helpful to establish a culture where people are aware that governors regularly consider staff well-being. Several survey returns thanked the governors for undertaking this initiative. When issuing the final survey of the year, the Chair of Governors drew attention to how school leaders had responded to points raised within the previous surveys. There was now a Menopause policy in place. More guidance has been prepared to help staff implement the Behaviour policy expectations.

At the end of the year, governors concluded that the termly well-being surveys had been a positive innovation and should continue next year. In addition to the importance of considering staff well-being, governors viewed this exercise as an important method of triangulating the information about the school which they are receiving from school leaders.

### **3B. BECOMING A FULL CHEQUE BOOK STATUS SCHOOL**

In September 2024, B.C.C. made the following important announcement concerning the future provision of services to schools :

- B.C.C. would cease to offer HR, Payroll and Pensions services after 31 August 2025. All maintained schools would therefore need to appoint their own payroll and HR provider.
- This change created an associated requirement for all maintained schools to become full cheque book schools. A full cheque book school operates its own bank account and is responsible for managing all funding received and payments made by that school, rather than the local authority making payments on behalf of the school. This represented a major and fundamental change to financial management at Kings Heath Primary.

The local authority announced these changes within the context that B.C.C. would be “re-implementing” its HR and financial systems (which are known as the “Oracle 1B systems”) following a flawed implementation in 2022. B.C.C. had concluded that the Oracle 1B systems are unsuitable for the needs of schools and therefore schools should move to alternatives. In September 2024, B.C.C. decided that it would not be providing any alternatives and therefore schools must make their own arrangements.

#### **MONITORING THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW FINANCIAL, HR AND PAYROLL SYSTEMS**

Throughout the year, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee received full reports on the progress of the project to identify and implement the new financial, HR and payroll systems. These reports included the following key points :

- Moving to full cheque book status would remove some current workload while introducing a series of new responsibilities. All non-payroll income and expenditure would henceforth be handled directly through the school’s own bank account. There will be no need for any suspense arrangements for items which cannot be reconciled automatically with the local authority ledgers, and no need to use the problematic “Simplified Loader” facility to make payments. This will be replaced by a requirement for regular bank reconciliations.
- There would be many operational changes involved which would necessitate staff training. Procedures for making BACS payments must be introduced which will require uploading BACS data

files onto a suitable commercial banking platform. There would be accountancy requirements in the form of preparing year end accounts. The most significant responsibility would be monthly payroll reconciliations. Governors recognized that, ultimately, this change is widening the expectations upon School Business Managers and Bursars to encompass HR / payroll and accountancy responsibilities.

- B.C.C. stated that all non-cheque book schools would have access to a Barclays bank account operating under the local authority corporate umbrella. Using Barclays Bank would enable the local authority to supply a cash advance to any school in urgent need of funds more swiftly than if other banks were employed. Governors recognized that using Barclays was inconvenient for the school, as the nearest branch was located in the city centre. However, governors thought the wisest option was for the school to open a Barclays account under the local authority umbrella to mitigate possible cash flow risks.
- The school wished to move to full cheque book status as early as possible in 2025. However, during autumn 2024, the local authority decreed that schools currently in a cumulative financial deficit position - which included Kings Heath Primary - may not convert until 1 May 2025 at the earliest. Therefore, the school worked toward that date and successfully became a full cheque book school on 1 May. The delay proved advantageous as by that time the school no longer had a cumulative financial deficit. There was therefore no requirement to agree with the local authority a cash advance for operational purposes and a formal deficit repayment plan.
- A formal procurement exercise was conducted to identify a new payroll provider, which resulted in “EduPAY” being appointed. The new payroll system was implemented on 1 June, with parallel runs between current and new systems staged during April and May. A substantial data checking and cleansing operation was required in association with the migration of the payroll system.
- Although the B.C.C. Human Resources (HR) traded service was to cease on 31 August 2025, B.C.C. planned to retain some staff to provide an audit and compliance function in line with its statutory duties. A key remaining issue will be to understand the new culture and position of the local authority when it is undertaking this “oversight and verification” role. At the end of the school year, it remained unclear which functions will, in practice, be retained by the local authority and how the audit and compliance oversight will be exercised. The local authority will remain the employer, but the absence of the HR service will require schools to take decisions which were not previously a local responsibility. This creates considerable risk for schools. Various decisions by different schools offers much potential for legal disputes through equal pay claims. It was noted that, at the same time as settling historic claims arising from failing to treat all their employees equally, B.C.C. was creating widespread opportunities for future claims through this absence of clarity.

#### **NEW CONTROLS REQUIRED FOR A FULL CHEQUE BOOK SCHOOL**

Governors recognized that the transition to full cheque book status necessitated the introduction of new financial controls within the school. The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee sought regular information on the controls being introduced and how they were operating. These controls included the following items :

- **Cash flow monitoring**

Governors recognized and stressed the importance of keeping a close eye on the cash flow position, through timely and frequent – ideally weekly – bank reconciliations. This is for the following reasons:

- To ensure there are sufficient funds available to meet the school payroll obligations. Previously, even for cheque book schools, B.C.C. could be expected to fund the payroll costs and collect the money retrospectively. External payroll providers will not be in a position to subsidize schools in this fashion. Consequently, payroll costs must be supplied before the payroll can be run. Governors were advised that Kings Heath Primary must anticipate monthly payroll costs in the vicinity of £220,000 - £250,000.
- To ensure any fraudulent activity is identified quickly and prompt action can be taken in response.
- To have sight of the cleared balances and the funding available.

In July, the Finance, Staffing and Premises committee had their first sight of a cash flow forecast running from May 2025 to the end of the 2025-26 financial year. Using the opening balance agreed with the local authority on 1 May, the report identified the receipts to be expected in each month of the year, the anticipated expenditure for that month and from there calculated the projected bank balance at the end of each month.

The committee welcomed this vital report. However, governors requested that the actual cash balance at the end of each month be shown on future versions of this report. This will enable governors to be assured that all outgoings have been included and have confidence in the accuracy of the forecast.

- **Documented operational procedures**

Governors recognized and appreciated that the conversion to cheque book status required some members of staff to acquire new responsibilities and additional skills. The Finance, Staffing and Premises committee emphasized the importance of preparing documented operational procedures outlining how these new responsibilities were to be exercised. This would protect the Head Teacher, Bursar and other staff members charged with the responsibility of managing and disbursing school money. It would also provide contingency for absence arrangements in the event of a key member of staff being away for any reason.

In July, the committee reviewed a report on financial processes at the school following the conversion to cheque book status. The report concerned invoicing, BACS payments, purchase card usage and arrangements that have been created for using the school bank account. The committee thought this was a welcome introductory report for governors, but there remained a requirement for clear operational procedures to be defined. The committee asked the Head Teacher whether DRB, who provide financial consultancy support to the school, could offer support in preparing the operational procedures – perhaps by adapting documented procedures in use at another school.

### **3C. RESPONDING TO THE OFSTED INSPECTION CHANGES CONSULTATION**

During the spring, all school governing boards were invited to consider proposed changes to the OFSTED inspection methodology and contribute to a consultation on those changes. The following principal changes were proposed :

- There will no longer be a single grading for the overall effectiveness of a school. Instead, schools will receive a series of gradings on a wider range of evaluation areas.

- A five-point grading scale will replace the current four-point scale. In practice, this means that the current judgement of “GOOD” will be split into “STRONG” and “SECURE”, with “STRONG” being the higher rating.
- All inspections will be graded inspections. The current practice of ungraded inspections will cease.

The Teaching, Learning and Curriculum committee considered the questions asked by the OFSTED consultation paper in March and commended a response to the Full Governing Body. It was agreed to submit the following responses to the key questions :

### **What do you think about our evaluation areas ?**

The evaluation areas seem sensible and appropriate. It is particularly welcome that a new evaluation area for “Inclusion” has been added. For a governing board, it is encouraging to see the “Leadership and Management” category superseded by an evaluation of “Leadership and Governance”.

Kings Heath Primary governors thought the previous “Quality of Education” evaluation area was rather nebulous and poorly defined when it was introduced, so its replacement in practice with separate evaluations for “Curriculum” and “Developing Teaching” should be a positive development. It is also commendable that an evaluation of “Achievement” should be introduced, as this was notably absent from the previous evaluation of education quality.

In the light of national concerns about school attendance, it is sensible that “Attendance” should become an evaluation area in its own right, rather than be subsumed within “Behaviour and Attitudes”.

However, it is concerning that increasing the number of evaluation areas risks increasing pressure and workload upon school leaders, which would be contrary to the stated intentions of changes to the inspection regime. The practical impact of these changes could be that, instead of sitting one major examination and being graded accordingly, schools will now be sitting up to ten separate examinations in the course of an inspection. It is questionable whether it will be possible to inspect such a wider range of evaluation areas properly and in any great depth within the course of a two-day inspection.

### **What do you think about including data alongside report cards, for example information about how well children and learners achieve ?**

In principle this appears to be a commendable innovation, particularly in view of OFSTED’s stated intention that the report card should be a tool for prospective parents to use when comparing schools. The practical value would depend upon what information is chosen, how it is presented and how easily it can be understood.

If academic achievement is to feature more prominently within the report card than current inspection reports (as is suggested by introducing the new “Achievement” evaluation area), contextual information may be helpful. This might involve, for example, showing the proportion of pupils eligible for Free School Meals alongside the SATs or GCSE results.

There is much Department for Education data available which could potentially become a helpful addition to the OFSTED report card. Examples might be the school contextual data within the

Inspection Data Summary Report, or the school attendance data which is now being gathered and published on a fortnightly basis.

**What do you think about our working definition of inclusion, and how we will inspect inclusion?**

As stated in the response to the proposed evaluation areas, introducing a new “Inclusion” category is a welcome development. However, the definition of the role of leaders is concerning when it states, “They make sure that all children and learners access a high-quality education, taught by experts with high ambition”. Primary school teachers are not “experts” or even specialists in the subjects they teach, and this may be an unfair expectation to include within a formal inspection definition.

It is also questionable whether working in a “close and effective partnership with parents and carers and other agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for every child and learner” is a matter wholly under the control of a school. A partnership with other agencies is only possible when those agencies have capacity and resources to engage with schools on an effective basis. In recent years, some agencies have not been in a position to engage with schools in such partnerships. It seems unfair for schools to be judged on those partnerships under these circumstances.

**What do you think about our proposed changes to how we carry out an inspection ?**

Removing ungraded inspections so that all inspections are graded seems a simpler arrangement which should ensure that schools know more clearly what to expect when they are due for inspection.

## **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 Pupil Premium link governor discussed the implementation and impact of the Pupil Premium strategy with the Head Teacher. The link governor particularly scrutinized participation by disadvantaged pupils in clubs and sought clarity on whether places were being reserved for Pupil Premium children, rather than allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The governor encouraged the school to examine how participation by disadvantaged pupils in the Year 6 residential event might be increased.
- At a later link meeting in June, this governor noted how participation has increased this year, with 31 % of children eligible for the premium involved in one or more clubs. There remained an outstanding requirement for club participation data to be captured within the school's Arbor Management Information System. It was noted that the number of children within the school eligible for the Pupil Premium has grown from 134 in 2023 to 179 this summer. This may reflect changing financial circumstances but may also arise from better systems for checking eligibility which are now being used by the school.
- The safeguarding link governor held meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss how the school is meeting safeguarding expectations and with the Head Teacher to discuss school attendance and attendance improvement actions.
- The English link governor met the Writing lead to discuss the Talk for Writing approach. The challenges of fitting this approach into the Year 6 curriculum were considered.
- The SEND link governor held meetings with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The unavoidable administrative paperwork required to support pupils with high-level needs was discussed along with The Hub provision.

### **4B. OTHER GOVERNOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

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

- One governor liaised with the Head of Music at Queensbridge School to discuss possible opportunities for raising the cultural capital of Kings Heath Primary pupils through experiencing the highly accomplished Queensbridge School orchestra.
- One governor met the assessor considering the school's application for accreditation under the Rights Respecting School Award scheme during the summer term.
- The Chair of Governors presented proposals for how governors might receive training to view policies through a cultural lens. This would enable governors to consider, when policies are reviewed, whether they

- a) Accommodate the range of attitudes and values that exist across and within communities.
- b) Create or sustain barriers for people from minoritised communities.
- c) Require further school resources to implement in a way which is culturally competent.

#### **4C. OTHER STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES**

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

- Administration of medicines
- Admissions criteria (nursery)
- Allergy, anaphylaxis and asthma
- Anti-bullying
- Appraisal
- Attendance – pupils
- Attendance – staff
- Behaviour & statement of behaviour principles
- Business Continuity Plan
- Capability procedures – support staff
- Capability procedures – teachers
- Care and control
- Charging and remissions
- Code of conduct – support staff
- Code of conduct – teachers
- Complaints
- Critical Incidents
- Data protection
- Discipline – staff
- Early Careers Teachers
- Educational visits
- English
- Equalities Scheme
- E-safety
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- First Aid
- Freedom of Information
- Grievance procedures
- Health & safety
- Home school agreement
- Kings Heath Code of Conduct
- Lettings
- Managing organisational change
- Maths
- Menopause
- Pay
- Privacy notice – pupils
- Privacy notice – staff
- Probation
- Purchase card
- Relationships and Health Education
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Security
- SEND
- Some other substantial reason
- Support. children with med. conditions
- Teaching & Learning
- Volunteering
- Whistleblowing and serious misconduct
- Workload

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

- Asbestos
- Child abduction
- Fayres, fetes and events
- Fire
- Kitchens and catering
- Multi-Use Games Area
- Nature area and pond
- Out of hours clubs
- Playgrounds
- Playtimes and lunchtimes
- Site security
- Slips, trips and falls
- Sports Day
- Toilets and bathrooms
- Working at height

## PART 5. GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS 2024-25

### 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	18/07/2025
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	01/09/2023	31/08/2027
Spencer, Miss Claire	Local authority governor	17/12/2022	16/12/2026
Webb, Mr Robin	Co-opted	22/05/2023	21/05/2027
<u>Resignations / departures during year</u>			
Way, Mrs Rebecca	Elected staff governor	01/03/2021	28/02/2025

#### Notes on governing body membership

- Dr Bishop stood down from the governing board at the end of the school year.
- Dr Migliarini was granted leave of absence for six months, starting in May, due to her work commitments.
- At the end of the school year, there were two co-opted vacancies and a vacancy for a staff governor.

## 5B. GOVERNOR ATTENDANCE RECORDS

### Full Governing Body

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Called</b>	<b>Apologized</b>	<b>Attendance %</b>
Bailey, Mr Kyle	5	6	1	83%
Beusch, Mr Danny	5	6	1	83%
Bishop, Dr Beth	6	6	0	100%
Brownsword, Mrs Fiona	4	6	2	67%
Clabon, Mr Paul	6	6	0	100%
Court, Mr Mark	6	6	0	100%
Coxsey, Ms Gemma	6	6	0	100%
Cragg, Mrs Gemma	2	6	4	33%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	4	6	2	67%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	5	6	1	83%
Migliarini, Dr Valentina	1	4	3	25%
Naven, Mrs Michelle	6	6	0	100%
Spencer, Miss Claire	6	6	0	100%
Webb, Mr Robin	4	6	2	67%
<b>Resignations / departures during year</b>				
Way, Mrs Rebecca	2	3	1	67%

All meetings were quorate. Dr Migliarini was granted leave of absence during the summer term.

### Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Called</b>	<b>Apologized</b>	<b>Attendance %</b>
Bailey, Mr Kyle	6	6	0	100%
Beusch, Mr Danny	6	6	0	100%
Bishop, Dr Beth	5	6	1	83%
Court, Mr Mark	6	6	0	100%
Coxsey, Ms Gemma	6	6	0	100%
Spencer, Miss Claire	4	6	2	67%
Webb, Mr Robin	5	6	1	83%
<b>Resignations/departures during year</b>				
None				

All meetings were quorate.

### Safeguarding & Inclusion Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Called</b>	<b>Apologized</b>	<b>Attendance %</b>
Brownsword, Mrs Fiona	3	3	0	100%
Court, Mr Mark	3	3	0	100%
Cragg, Mrs Gemma	2	2	0	100%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	3	3	0	100%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	3	3	0	100%
Naven, Mrs Michelle	2	3	1	67%
Spencer, Miss Claire	3	3	0	100%
<b><u>Resignations / departures during year</u></b>				
Way, Mrs Rebecca	2	2	0	100%

All meetings were quorate.

### Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Called</b>	<b>Apologized</b>	<b>Attendance %</b>
Clabon, Mr Paul	3	3	0	100%
Cragg, Mrs Gemma	2	3	0	67%
Hetherington, Ms Janet	1	3	2	33%
Holmes, Mrs Liz	3	3	0	100%
Migliarini, Dr Valentina	1	2	1	50%
Naven, Mrs Michelle	0	3	3	0%
<b><u>Resignations / departures during year</u></b>				
None				

All meetings were quorate. Dr Migliarini was granted leave of absence during the summer term.

## **5C. GOVERNING BODY OFFICERS 2024-25**

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

Behaviour : Janet Hetherington

Early Years Foundation Stage : Gemma Cragg

English (reading, writing and phonics) : Gemma Coxsey

Equalities : Danny Beusch

Governor induction : Fiona Brownsword

Maths : Danny Beusch

School Council / Pupil Voice : Robin Webb

Staff well-being : Liz Holmes

The Governing Body of Kings Heath Primary School

September 2025