**Annual Report to Parents 2023-2024**

The Governing Body has been busy again this year.

**Staffing**

We started the year with the challenge of recruiting a new headteacher and consider ourselves to have been fortunate in receiving applications from a strong field and being able to appoint Miss Penarski ready for a January start. I am sure you have all been as delighted as we have been with how quickly she has established herself as the headteacher, the continued development of the school, and her concern for our children and their families. As you are already aware, Mrs Upton Mrs Mather and Mrs Gaskell are sadly leaving us this summer – so the year ends as it started, this time with the recruitment of a new deputy head teacher who will take responsibility for Special Needs as well as having a key leadership role. We hope to complete this process before the end of term and will keep you updated as soon as we are able.

**New: Penwortham Stars Preschool**

Challenges lead to opportunities and we are delighted that budget, intake and curriculum delivery developments have allowed us to move forward with long held plans for preschool provision to be part of our offer. We are looking forward to our first preschool intake as well as our new reception pupils who will join us in September. Families we have spoken to on the playground are delighted by this development and look forward to the possible expansion of our preschool provision in the future.

**Governors**

Governing Body membership recruitment is a national challenge – people have busy lives and governance is a hefty responsibility. We had a vacancy this time last year for a co-opted governor and having invited expressions of interest in last year’s report were delighted to welcome Mrs Jane Wilson to fill that vacancy from November. This year Mrs Gaskell, Mrs Lambert and Mr Barnish will finish their terms as co-opted, staff and LEA governors respectively. They have all served more than one term of office and given generously of their time to our work. Mr Barnish has been a governor for many years – serving as Chair for part of that time. As a school we are grateful to all of them. Again, if any of you are interested in becoming a governor please contact Miss Penarski, Mrs Jones or any governor for more information.

**Meetings**

We have had more full governing body than committee meetings this year, but we have continued to hear reports and discuss the curriculum, standards, achievement data, behaviour, safeguarding, finance, resources, staffing, premises and wellbeing throughout the year. Governors continue to work closely with subject leaders and remain well informed about the curriculum, ensuring challenge so that academic standards remain high, questioning the impact of decisions made on pupil outcomes, ensuring the building is safe and well maintained.

**Community**

This year this has actually meant that governors have been hands on as well: apart from many of them being in the painting party giving the outside of the building a total facelift, Mrs Davies has been painting murals around school and hanging the landscape paper with Mr Wolfe in the library, and Mr Jones was co-opted into replacing the door furniture on the main entrance doors. We are very grateful for the time and energy happily given.

Festivals, competitions, trips and visits have proliferated throughout the year: our children continue to have a very richly enhanced curriculum. Governors continue to be regular participants in all of these activities, as well as attending class and celebration assemblies, School Council and Eco Council meetings. Governors, staff and pupils enjoyed being part of the local community with our involvement in the gala procession. As this is being written, we are looking forward to Sports Day and other class outings – even a geography walk being made into a teddy bears’ picnic by the reception class.

**Pupil Voice**

At the risk of repeating myself again, what remains clear to us in every interaction is that our – your – children are very happy in school, their behaviour is excellent, their attendance is high, they have a positive attitude to learning, to all aspects of school life, they take themselves out of their comfort zone into a growth mindset, have a regard for each other’s welfare, and definite ideas about what they would like to see happening in their school. The inclusion of pupil and parent voice and active involvement in developing the new school badge, refining our school values into 4 easily remembered words, revamping the exterior of the school, developing the new library, school reception area and mindfulness suite are testimony to this. Thank you for your continued support and involvement.

**PTFA**

In particular this year, we are grateful for the continued work and support of the PTFA: additional funds are always welcome and have been vital in funding initiatives such as the Mindfulness Suite and Library, but they also provide important opportunities for our children and indeed the whole school community to come together at events such as the discos, bingo and of course the Christmas and Summer Fair. Thank you doesn’t feel like enough.

**The School Team**

As a Governing Body we are always grateful for the energy and vision of Mrs Hesketh and now Miss Penarski in leading the school, to Mrs Gaskell for all her support as Deputy Headteacher, and to every single member of our school team – teaching, non-teaching and volunteers - for the determination, dedication and joy of learning that they continue to bring to our children every day.

Penwortham Primary School Governing Body