



# Key Issues from the Governing Body November 2016



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*"Working in partnership with the wider community resulting  
in better outcomes for all"*

# INTRODUCTION

Guidance from the Department of Education recommends that all Governing Bodies make an annual statement to parents. We welcome this opportunity to report on the work we do to monitor the progress and achievements of the school and its children, and hopefully offering an insight into the work we do to support the life of our School.

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## Ofsted Report 2012

Our Ofsted inspection in Oct 2012 concluded that Southcote Primary school was *good*. [www.southcoteprimary.co.uk/pdf/Ofsted%20Report%20October%2020123024.pdf](http://www.southcoteprimary.co.uk/pdf/Ofsted%20Report%20October%2020123024.pdf)

At that time our school was not judged to be outstanding yet because:

- The school does not currently have enough teaching that consistently promotes the very highest levels of learning.
- New subject leaders are not involved enough in checking how their subject is taught and how well pupils make progress.
- The school does not use information on pupils' progress carefully enough to gauge how well the school performs compared to others nationally and to help plan for pupils to learn to the highest levels.'

The Governing Body provides challenge and monitors progress in these key areas through the School improvement plan (SIP), Head teacher KPI, target setting and data scrutiny, as described in the subsequent sections.

The Governing Body is also preparing for Ofsted by training, preparation meetings and self-assessment to improve both their strategic role and their ability to demonstrate the strengths and improvements throughout the school.

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## School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The Governing Body's core role is to monitor progress made against the School Improvement Plan. All meetings of the Full Governing Body receive updates on Plan. The four foci of the Plan are:

- Leadership & Management;
- Learning & Teaching;
- Behaviour & Safety of Pupils;
- Achievement of Pupils.

Progress made against each of the above se is monitored every six weeks at our Full Governing Body meetings.

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## The Head Teacher's Report

The Head reports termly to governors on the following:

- A termly update on progress against the SIP (See above);
- Termly progress and attainment data, presented by Key Stage/Year Groups; Gender; for More Able pupils; for those with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND); and for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium funding;
- Behaviour & Safety of pupils, with the report containing data regarding exclusions, any incidences requiring restraint and any incidences of bullying/racist/homophobic behaviour;
- Pupil Well-being, with information regarding specialist interventions in place for pupils.
- Attendance and punctuality figures, this data is presented by Year Groups/Classes, Gender, for pupils with SEND and for pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium;
- School context and mobility – numbers of pupils leaving or joining the school.

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## Target Setting

Every year the school sets Internal Targets for Foundation Stage, Phonics, end of KS1 and KS2 and levels of progress between KS1 and KS2. These targets are based on the latest data for our school, the Local Authority and national data, the expectation that pupils at Southcote Primary School will exceed floor standards, and the aspiration that our results should improve year on year.

Governors approve these targets at the beginning of each school year, monitor progress against them and assess whether these targets were met after the end of year results have been validated and analysed.

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*"...to foster respect for all, including ourselves, celebrating diversity and embracing a challenge"*

## External Evaluations

To assist the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body the school has employed the services of a School Partnership Adviser from the LEA who visits the school regularly. Her reports focus on key areas of teaching, identifying strengths and next steps for each year group and a review of Senior Leadership Team strengths and recommendations for ongoing improvement. Her reports are shared with the Governing Body and the most recent one also included the following:

- Learning walk;
- Book scrutiny;
- English and Maths subject lead interviews;
- SENCo interviews.

The findings of her visits are shared, discussed and agreed with the Senior Leadership Team and help to inform the development of the School Improvement Plan.

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## Expansion

Southcote primary school has undergone a large expansion project after the local authority required them to increase their yearly intake from 2 form to 3 form. This will see the number of pupils eventually increase from 420 to 630. It will be just three more years until the last 2 form entry year leaves and the school reaches full capacity.

During the build, governors regularly visited the site to understand progress. The Premises and Welfare committee also supported the Head to achieve minimal impact to the pupils and the local community. Now with the work complete the school is enjoying full use of its new facilities and governors continue to monitor the impact of the expansion on the ethos of the school. There are new challenges to overcome with more pupils, more parents and more staff. The governing body is often involved in staff recruitment and is, this term, focusing on communication with parents through their first governor newsletter.

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## Staffing

Governors approved the Staff Structure for 2015/16 in light of the ongoing school expansion plan. The Finance & HR Committee review specific staffing issues and opportunities for Development and Staff Training.

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*"...to provide a rich and varied curriculum, built on outside learning, creativity and collaborative learning"*

## Policy Approval

Governors ensure the school has all the relevant and required policies in place. All our statutory policies are reviewed regularly and can be viewed on the website:

[southcoteprimary.co.uk/about/school-policies/](https://southcoteprimary.co.uk/about/school-policies/)

The Premises and Welfare Committee is in the process of compiling a full and up to date view of all the school policies and renewal date with a more systematic review programme.

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## National Priorities

During this academic year the Governing Body has also monitored the way in which the school has successfully:

- Implemented a new National Curriculum and testing;
  - Monitored and supported pupil attendance;
  - Ensured that all pupils meet or exceed national expectations;
  - Promote British values through 'reflection time'
  - Developed distributive leadership throughout the school;
  - Established a Working Party to look at any potential opportunities arising from the Government's Academies program.
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## Statutory Requirements

The Governing Body has a number of statutory requirements including:

- Each learner receives the full statutory curriculum that the school provides;
  - Approving and monitoring the impact, on standards and attainment, of the Pupil Premium funds;
  - Monitoring the provision for pupils with SEND;
  - Complying with statutory financial duties, such as the completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard;
  - Approving the Sex & Relationships Programme of education;
  - Monitoring Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development;
  - Ensuring the teaching and promotion of British Values at Southcote Primary;
  - Monitoring the support of pupils with medical conditions;
  - Monitoring Equality in the school;
  - Monitoring the use and impact of the PE & Sports Funding.
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*"...to develop a lifelong love of learning through curiosity, enquiry and exploring possibilities "*

## Engagement & Communication with parents and the wider community

The Governing Body receives updates from SOS (Supporters of Southcote) meetings on a regular basis, and monitors parent feedback. Parents were invited to share positive feedback at the Summer Fayre, and are regularly invited to workshops and talks at the school which deal with both academic aspects and wider issues such as E-safety. Parents are invited into school for assemblies, class events and regular Muffins for Mums/Doughnuts for Dads class visits.

The school has worked hard over the year to develop links with the community, particularly during the expansion, during which the local community has been regularly consulted and kept informed. Pupils have been involved in visits to places of worship and other places of interest in the local community such as museums and parks; assemblies with a religious focus (such as Diwali); and speakers invited into school. Older pupils have been involved in the Bikeability scheme, and events such as inter school football and cross country.

The school swimming pool is often used by the local community who can benefit from lessons offered by a number of swimming schools.

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## Premises Issues

Governors have worked to resolve issues such as the parking and congestion problems in Silchester Road, and more recently in Shepley Drive at the back of the school. Phase 1 of the expansion caused electrical, heating & swimming pool issues in the rest of the school. Phase 2 of the expansion causing electrical outages in the school and serious electrical fault in new admin area.

There have also been issues with:

- Smartboards
  - Cleaning Contractor
  - School Travel Plan
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*"...to work in true partnership with our families, creating a school community that promotes the strengths of all"*

## Finance

The Finance Committee has:

- Reviewed and approved the school budget
- Regularly monitored actual expenditure vs. school budget
- Benchmarked expenditure against other schools.
- Reviewed staffing levels and costs
- Overseen contracts, service level agreements and lease renewals.
- Reviewed lettings policy and adjusted charges
- Regularly monitored the School Fund

The Pay Committee has monitored Performance Management decisions for staff; and governors have undertaken Performance Management Appraisal for the Executive Head Teacher.

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## Governor Visits and Link Governors

Governors attended the annual Governor's Day that took place in January. Governors spent time in the classrooms, eating lunch with the children, as well as individual committee meetings and a full governors meeting. This included a session on safeguarding for governors.

Each governor has a link role: [southcoteprimary.co.uk/about/governors-2/](https://southcoteprimary.co.uk/about/governors-2/)  
Link governors meets regularly with the lead teacher for their area to provide support, challenge and allow communication with the wider governing body. Visits are documented and are now logged on the Southcote Governor Google+ community to share the information.

Link governor feedback in the full governing body meetings has been changed to prioritise time to question these areas more thoroughly.

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## Governor Training

Governors have participated in training with Reading Governor Services on: RAISE online, Life after Levels, Ofsted framework, SEND Code of Practice, Safeguarding, SEN governors network, Pupil Premium governors network and have also attend Governor Briefings.

New Governors attend New Governor Training as this plays a key role in understanding the role and responsibility of a Governor. Governors also complete Prevent Training and utilize various online learning packages and website services which the school purchases.

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## Governing Body Membership

Governors have all completed a Skills Audit and these have been reviewed by the Governing Body to ensure skills are placed appropriately across the Premises and Welfare and Finance & Staffing committees and any working parties that are established.

Having reconstituted in 2015 (in accordance with the 2012 Constitution Regulations) we have recently appointed a Co-opted Governor with skills in Project Management to join our Premises and Welfare committee.

We currently have a vacancy for a Staff Governor and look forward to this being filled when new staff join the school in September 2016.

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## Self-Evaluation

This year the Full Governing Body, has undertaken a process of Self Evaluation identifying areas of strength and weakness. This process has identified two areas for us to improve:

- Developing a shared vision for the school that is clear, understood and well communicated to the local community, staff, parents and pupils.
- Engaging more effectively with parents, pupils and staff, so that governors are better informed about their views.

Encouragement is given for School governors to take up training courses and build the resilience of their role.

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*"...to ensure that all children leave with good moral values."*

# Southcote's Mission Statement

Working in partnership with the wider community resulting in better outcomes for all.

To foster respect for all, including ourselves, celebrating diversity and embracing challenge.

To provide a rich and varied curriculum built on outside learning, creativity, and collaborative learning.

To develop a life long love of learning through curiosity, enquiry and exploring possibilities.

To work in true partnership with our families creating a school community that promotes the strengths of all.

To ensure that all children leave with good moral values.

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