



## **Annual Statement from the Governing Body**

### **Bede Burn Primary School**

The core functions of the Governing Board are:

- To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- To hold the Head Teacher to account for educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance of staff, and;
- To oversee the financial performance of the school, making sure its money is well spent.

Bede Burn Primary School has been through significant changes over this past academic year, from the impact of Covid-19 and the departure of the prior Head Teacher from the school. The Governing Board of Bede Burn Primary School has been working to reappoint to the vacant substantive Head Teacher post. Unfortunately we were unable to appoint following our first round of interviews resulting in the Governing Body agreeing to the interim appointment of Helen Smith as our Head Teacher.

The Governing Body are incredibly assured by the interim appointment of Helen Smith who has joined the school at an incredibly difficult time, Helen has worked collaboratively with Bede Burn staff and Governors to respond to Covid-19 pandemic. Helen led a collaboration between St Oswald's and Bede Burn to enable pupils from both schools to access safe school provision through these unprecedented times, we the Governing Body and staff from Bede Burn want to recognise and thank Helen for all she has done during this period.

The second round of Head Teacher interviews were placed on hold due to the pandemic, the Governing Body will be discussing the recruitment of this post at their September 2020

Governing Body meeting to make a decision around what is best for our pupils of Bede Burn and its staff moving forward. Helen Smith has agreed to remain as Interim Head Teacher at Bede Burn till we appoint to a substantive Head Teacher.

**The School Improvement Plan (SIP):** Bede Burn Governors work in co-operation with the Head Teacher and Senior Management in the writing and monitoring of the SIP. The SIP is monitored and reviewed termly, with an evaluation overview being completed and presented to governors through regular internal and external reports. Due to the departure of our Head Teacher and Covid-19 pandemic the focus on completion of last year's school improvement plan moved away from progression and completion of actions and towards risk assessments and the joint collaboration between St Oswald's and Bede Burn school provision for pupils during the pandemic.

The School Improvement Plan for 2020-2021 has now been defined and the key areas for the coming academic year are as follows:

**1. Quality of Education**

How can we successfully strengthen the Curriculum so that it is ambitious, meets the needs of all learners, and provides the opportunities for learners to develop their skills and abilities to prepare them life in Modern Day Britain?

**2. Quality of Education**

How can we ensure reading is prioritised so ALL pupils can access the full curriculum offer?

**3. Behaviour and Attitudes**

How can we ensure our pupils have high attendance, come to school on time and are punctual to lessons?

**4. Leadership and Management**

How can we as leaders create coherence and consistency across the school so that pupils benefit from effective teaching and consistent expectations?

## 5. Leadership and Management

How can we ensure we support all stakeholders following the COVID 19 outbreak?

### Composition of the Governing Body

Name, Role and some information about our Governors
<p><b>Mrs Helen Smith, Head Teacher:</b> Helen took up the post of head teacher at Bede Burn in March 2020, one week before COVID lockdown. This has been challenging but Helen is so excited to get to know all of the stakeholders especially the children. In addition to her Head Teacher duties, she is also the school lead on Safeguarding, Learning and Teaching and Assessment. She has been in the teaching profession since 2001 and has been head teacher at St Oswald's CE VA Primary in Hebburn since 2013. Helen is extremely passionate about ensuring each and every child have an education which equips them for life in Modern Day Britain and above all else, she wants to ensure each child has a time at Bede Burn being the best they can be in a safe and happy environment.</p>
<p><b>Mrs Linda Reiling, LEA Governor &amp; Chair of Governing Body:</b> Linda is a Senior Commissioning Manager for Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism as well as the Transforming Care Lead for Children and Adult within NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group. She has worked in the NHS for over 16 years in numerous health posts which enables her to bring her wealth of knowledge and skills into the governing body. Linda has an active volunteer timetable as Chair of Sunderland Amateur Swimming Club and Chair of Bede Burn Primary School Governing Body, she believes in giving back wherever possible. Linda has a BA Hons and MSc in Transformational Leadership which has helped her whilst serving 4 of our previous Head Teachers as a LEA governor. Linda believes in continuous improvement both personally and professionally, she commences her PhD in October 2020 with a focus on Autism which is another area of expertise she brings to the Governing Body. Linda previously served as our Vice Chair for a year before being appointed as Chair of the Governing Body in June 2018, Linda has recently been re-elected for another 2 year term as Chair.</p>

**Mrs Nicola O'Doherty, Co-opted Governor & Vice Chair of Governing Body:** Nicola has been a governor at Bede Burn Primary School for 6 years now; she has a retail management background and brings many skills to the governing body. Nicola is passionate about the school both as a school governor and as a parent. Nicola is the link governor for English and it her role to ensure the school is meeting their objectives at a subject level and at a school improvement plan level however she also works with the lead teacher to evaluate our strengths and areas of improvement for this core subject area, as well as being link governor for the new school Opal Play initiative.

### **Name, Role and some information about our Governors**

**Mr Jason Ail, Co-opted Governor:** Jason is a group accountant and brings accountancy scrutiny skills into our governing body. Jason lives in the local community with his family; he has two daughters that have both attended Bede Burn Primary School. Jason felt that he needed to help the school in any way he could, as a Group Financial Controller for a national business and someone who is heavily involved in their village associations and clubs. Jason feels he can improve the schools relationships locally along with his working experiences to help guide the school in the future.

**Mrs Amanda Lenny, Co-opted Governor (staff member):** Amanda has 31 years' teaching experience across the Primary age range; she has worked beyond the normal scope of a class teacher through roles such as the Leading Math's teacher for South Tyneside LA. Amanda has worked supporting teachers to improve the delivery of math's lessons which has helped her to become one of the LA's math's specialist teachers (MAST). Since 2016 Amanda has fulfilled the Assistant Head Teacher, SENDCO, Computing and Music lead. In recognising the importance of being a lifelong learner, Amanda has completed the NPQSL and 2 PGCE's in Children's Education, in addition to the NASENCO Award to further her knowledge.

**Mrs Jane Parkes, Staff Governor:** Is a member of the support staff team and has been for 29.5 years. She currently supports in Year 5 and covers PPA across the school. She is responsible along with another colleague for delivering Kid safe and running breakfast club. Jane is also a UNISON rep too and she firmly believes in equality and diversity and

is not afraid to challenge anyone who doesn't follow the school's policies and procedures. Over the years Jane has seen lots of changes to staff and the curriculum, she is an active member of the governing body, holding the head teacher to account through rigorous questioning and appropriate challenge, during regular reviews and discussions. Jane is the link governor for Health and Safety and she regularly liaises with the site supervisor, Mr McKeown about H&S issues.

### **Name, Role and some information about our Governors Cont...**

**Mr Nigel Yarrow, Co-opted Governor:** Nigel is an ex-teacher who worked at Jarrow School, he has been a governor at Bede Burn since his daughter was a pupil here and she is now a University Lecturer. Nigel contributes to the community by commanding 2214 (Usworth) Sqn Air Training Corps two evenings per week. Nigel is the link governor for the school website; it's his role to ensure the website fulfils its statutory requirements, to make sure the information is accessible, accurate and up to date and as user friendly as possible.

**Mrs Karen Guthrie, Parent Governor:** Karen is the owner and founder of two local businesses which she feels will help bring the fun and creative element to the governing body. Karen attended Bede Burn Primary as a child so she has a very strong connection with the school. Karen lives in the village and currently has one child in Bede Burn Primary, with her second child due to join in 2021. Karen joined the governing body as a parent governor as she felt her enthusiasm and love for the school could help get the best for all current children as well as future children coming into the school.

**Scheme of Delegation:** Please refer to the scheme of delegation in relation to the various committees that each Governor is responsible for - linked on our website in the governors section: <http://www.bedeburnprimary.co.uk/governors-information/>

**Link Governor Roles:** Please refer to the current link governor table in relation to the various link governor areas that each governor is responsible for – linked on our website in the governors section: <http://www.bedeburnprimary.co.uk/governors-information/>

## **Link Governor Annual Updates**

**Mr Nigel Yarrow, Website Link Governor:** Often the first contact point for anyone wishing to learn about our school is the Website. Consequently the website is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it fulfils the requirements laid down by responsible government department, the Local Authority and the wishes of the Governing Body. The first part of each review is to see if the statutory requirements have been met. Secondly the website is viewed to see that it is accurate, current and attractive. Lastly one topic is chosen at random e.g. Special Educational Needs or Progress in Mathematics and examined by 'going in cold' through the website to find the required information. The results of the reviews are fed back to the Head Teacher, the school office and the Governing Board with comments and recommendations regularly throughout the year.

## **Mrs Linda Reiling, Strategy and School Improvement Plan Link Governor:**

This has been a year of change for Bede Burn School with the departure of the prior Head Teacher to pastures new. The Governing Body didn't appoint to the role of Head Teacher following the first recruitment cycle. They quickly re-advertised and shortlisted individuals for the Head Teacher post however due to Covid-19 and lockdown the decision was made to hold the interview process until the Governing Body reconvened in September 2020 where Head Teacher recruitment is to be discussed.

During the absence of a substantive Head Teacher we have been very lucky to secure the time and skills of Helen Smith who is also the Head Teacher at St Oswald's CE VA Primary School. Helen is a very experienced and dedicated Head Teacher who has been the foundation to enable us to provide provision across Bede Burn and St Oswald's during Covid-19, she has worked incredibly hard with the staff at Bede Burn to prepare for our children to return to school in September 2020 ensuring all risk assessments and processes are in

place to ensure everyone's safety, she has also been working to develop the school improvement plan based on the OFSTED framework and assessing where Bede Burn are now currently against that new framework.

My role over this past year has been focused on leading the Governing Body and supporting the staff and Head Teacher throughout these unprecedented times.

**Mrs Jane Parkes, Health & Safety Link Governor:** I attended the Health and Safety training with Stephen Bell on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019. He explained that H&S has 4 key areas. These are:

- Duty of care;
- Safe place of work;
- Clear communications;
- Risk assessments.

We need to manage H&S for Legal, Moral and Financial outcomes. The key responsibilities for Governors are:

- To have a H&S governor;
- To ratify H&S policies and procedures;
- To carry out inspections and audits;
- To ensure compliance with H&S procedures;
- To ensure school reports acts of violence and accidents;
- To have a risk register with control measures;
- To oversee responsible guardianship for H&S.

The Local Authority and Governors are responsible for:

- Right level of insurance;
- H&S policy that is communicated to all staff;
- To appoint a competent person;
- Training and information;



- A safe place to work;
- Keeping up to date with H&S changes;
- Risk assessments.

During COVID 19, our Head teacher, Helen Smith, produced a comprehensive Risk Assessment that covered all areas of school, inside and outside. This was ratified by us as governors, the Local Authority and our trade unions. Helen is continually following the government guidelines to write another Risk Assessment ready for starting the next academic year in September.

**Mrs Nicola O'Doherty, English and Play Link Governor:** This year, alongside my role as link governor for English, I have also become link governor for the new school Opal Play programme. Opal Play is a primary school programme designed to improve the play provision across the school, with the overall aim of providing benefits to engagement, learning, physical activity and pupil wellbeing. I am part of a team of school staff who have met regularly each term to plan and evaluate this new initiative, with the aim of having the new plan up and running within 18 month. As the link governor for English I have met termly with the English lead, where we review progress made and areas for further development. There has been a whole school focus on strengthening the English provision across the wider curriculum and as link governor I feedback progress to the governing board and how this progress links to our School Improvement Plan.

**Policies:** As governors we are responsible for the development of and implementation of policies which play a vital role in ensuring the effectiveness of the school and its staff in meeting its obligations to its pupils, parents and other stakeholders. We ensure that policies are regularly scrutinised and updated to reflect national expectations and government legislation.

**Finances:** As governors we ensure that we set and regularly monitor the current and three year budget of the school, to ensure that monies are utilised correctly to provide best value to our school working against the Schools Financial Value Standards.



**Covid-19:** Staff and Governors are all aware that the return to school following lockdown will present specific pastoral challenges as we seek to support children as they adjust to changes in the delivery of their education and ensuring their safety and that of our staff.

**Future Plans:** The year ahead will come with a number of challenges around the appointment of Head Teacher, return to school under Covid-19 guidance as well as ensuring our school is fully compliant against the new Ofsted framework and new curriculum.

The new curriculum and formulation of the School Improvement Plan will result in reallocation of Link Governor roles to ensure we continue to act as the critical friend of the school, acting objectively to ensure each of these areas deliver against that plan.

As Governors we undertake not only scrutiny of the school, but also of ourselves. We have a calendar of scheduled meetings and link visits, and in addition attend committee meetings and convene special meetings as and when required. As Governors we will continue to serve our school.