



North Road Community Primary School
Enjoy learning, succeed in life



Jamie Taylor Art

Governors' Report to Parents 2019 - 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

This year's Annual Report to Parents by the Chair of Governors, is somewhat a "game of two halves". September 2019 we made a fantastic start having achieved excellent SATs results and introduced another bouncing cohort of Reception children into North Road. This Report has to contain certain components, so I will endeavour to complete this, despite the national crisis of Covid 19, which interrupted and changed all our lives so unexpectedly.

It has been my privilege to serve as Chair of Governors for a further year. I am very much a hands on Chair of Governors, as those who know me will acknowledge. We were all so eager and enthusiastic as we launched into another exciting, academic adventure together in September 2019, only to be brought to a complete standstill in March 2020 by Covid 19.

I began by meeting with Mrs Stillie every fortnight to ensure a partnership of support and challenge in fulfilling my role and then had to master the art of "Zooming" to be able to continue. I had loved helping in classrooms on a regular basis, attending every event but they too, had to stop. I was involved at the start of the year in my regular duties of recruitment, formal lesson observations, accompanying classes on school trips, playground duty and I met regularly with the School Improvement Advisor etc. Having spent thirty seven years in secondary education myself, latterly in school leadership, as an

Academy Assistant Principal, worry not if you see me “in charge” anywhere, I am qualified! As every colleague knows, I thoroughly enjoy immersing myself in the “life” of North Road School – then I was prevented from visiting and I missed everyone so very, very much.

One major characteristic of North Road did not change in March 2020 –the total dedication of the entire team at North Road, which was unswerving in the crisis. Mrs Stillie, who always goes way beyond the extra mile for every pupil in her care, took on the responsibility of guiding the school unexpectedly, through very choppy and uncharted waters. Mrs Stillie immediately displayed deliberate calm and boundless optimism, made effective decisions amidst uncertainty, quickly set up communications networks to inform all stakeholders and demonstrated huge empathy and concern for everyone's wellbeing.

The Covid 19 crisis placed extraordinary demands on all Headteachers. It wasn't a "routine emergency" for which we have plans prepared. This was a situation that required innovative thought and mostly improvised responses - which Mrs Stillie did admirably. It was not a *control and command* pre-prepared scenario.

It is with my significant 37 years of experience and confidence that I can reaffirm to every parent that your children were, and still are, in ***the best*** hands. Despite the interruption and hastily prepared and researched “home education for all” your children will this year, progress academically and develop as confident and aspirational young people. We can handle this! The Headteacher and staff have been tested to the extreme in 2019 -2020 but I am even more, full of admiration for all that they have achieved.

We must also thank parents for their feedback during the crisis and for being part of the extended team through challenging times, at times, becoming “teachers” themselves.

Mrs Stillie took the time to respond to parent feedback immediately – many parents advised us that working from home and home schooling was a significant challenge, so the office printer came into its own, by producing a small mountain of learning booklets which were hand delivered to every home. Thank you for continuing to talk to us throughout a most difficult time.

The generic role of the Governing Body is to monitor, challenge and support the school. There is a wide ranging skill set (*education, finance, media,*

business, HR and others) in our full complement of governors. Governors also give up their time and are wholly involved in the life of the school, most are parents and therefore are naturally invested. We are very proud of the inclusive, supportive and celebratory school ethos at North Road Community Primary School. We were determined that this would be sustained.

Every Governor upheld their specific responsibility to oversee at least one aspect of school life, ranging from finance, subject regulation and SEN. All bases are covered between us. Governors also spend a great deal of time scrutinising data, comparative data with similar demographic schools, ensure policies are up to date and make every effort to ensure the school performs well, comparable to county and national targets. You will often see the Governors in school doing lesson observations, meeting with teachers and pupils – and having lunch! We all know the best part of our visits is having lunch with the children in the hall. Unfortunately, this has had to come to a halt since March but our Governing Team are committed to finding new ways to support the teaching staff and pupils at North Road – even if this has to be virtually for the time being. We are a committed crew and work alongside the Headteacher and all the staff, to form a very strong team, constantly striving to improve and raise standards for every pupil. Our meetings have continued on schedule, on screen!

The Governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the Headteacher and staff are regularly and rigorously appraised and held accountable for their responsibilities. This has continued and using Zoom, these aspects have been achieved and are nonetheless in place, despite the difficulties 2020 brought.

It is the Governing body's duty to ensure that the school gives "value for money" and works within budget constraints – which has been an especially daunting task in these challenging times. We thank the county for its support of resources and sensible guidance, throughout the times and additional costs brought about by Covid19. You can be secure that North Road Community Primary school has a steadfast team of Governors, who wholeheartedly contribute to the very strong 'Team' ethos that envelops the school and which has sustained its bond throughout this demanding time. Each and every one of us is dedicated to promoting the progress of every child and ensuring that each child *is included*, so that they can experience a wide range of opportunities to inspire their personal development as well rounded individuals. This may not have gone quite as planned this year but 2020-2021 will see the entire team

seizing the gauntlet to get ahead and retrieve the opportunities and successes that we want for every child.

The Governors are especially proud of North Road's compelling emphasis on ensuring that every child's mental health and wellbeing is nurtured throughout their time at the school. The effects of the pandemic brought the importance of this to the fore. North Road has a recognised reputation across South Gloucestershire and our Headteacher and ELSA (Mrs Difford) have supported many other schools in the county, with their expertise and skills set, in this sphere. Every child's safety, welfare and progress was at the forefront of all decision-making every single day and throughout their time away from school during the pandemic. Activities and helpful pursuits were constantly uploaded on line for parents to support their children. Safeguarding has always been an outstanding aspect of North Road, this too was unwavering during the unexpected and worrying times of 2020.

I believe that the set of "School Values" **Respect**, **Perseverance**, **Pride**, **Responsibility**, **Ambition** and **Positivity**, which I've always believed are the *secret ingredient* which create such a happy, positive vibe at North Road, helped our children to cope with the crisis, which they and their parents, unsuspectingly found themselves in. These values which resound from every child and every adult and which resonate from every member of our school family, buoyed the children through tempestuous times.

The composition and members of the Governing Body can be found on the school's website.

The School Development Plan is the overall "working document" that maps out the curriculum, translates to academic action plans and informs lesson planning. This of course had to be abandoned from March 2020. It will resume once the Head and staff feel that the time is right. Currently there is a Recovery curriculum in place, "Somewhere After the Rainbow", where the predominant focus is settling the children back to school routines safely and confidently. The staff are also focusing on "gap analysis" for every child. This will allow effective, personalised catch-up programmes to be put into place. This will be monitored throughout the term and scrutinised by the Governing Body. Integral to this will be a new set of tracking data monitoring every child's progress, using quite sophisticated tables of data. This careful tracking of

progress and assessments, will inform future developments, interventions and lesson planning. North Road, as a small school, can ensure that every child is “known well” and that each child can benefit from personalised intervention strategies devised by their teachers. This has never been more important!



OFSTED view of our school:

In February 2017 the OFSTED Inspection confirmed that North Road Community Primary school had sustained **GOOD provision** for our pupils. The leadership team is striving to achieve “outstanding” provision in our school. In many areas we are *almost there*. All of the improvements suggested in the 2017 inspection have been implemented successfully. There have been many instances where North Road has been striding ahead of the county eg Mental Health Programmes and the Risk Assessments for a full return to school, were upheld as excellent practice. We can anticipate our next OfSTED inspection or “visit” at any time.



I must also report the successes of the “Domino Alliance” to parents. During the course of this year Mrs Stillie, teaching staff and myself, as Chair of Governors, have been working closely with a cluster of other schools – Bailey’s Court, The Tynings, Holy Trinity, Rangeworthy and Wellesley who now form



This alliance has proven to be hugely beneficial to all member schools. It has allowed a group of schools to come together to commission various training opportunities; allow Headteachers vital, mutual peer support; allow Heads of subjects the chance to share ideas and resources, which in turn has led to significant improvements; Chairs of Governors have benefitted from sharing ideas and joint training also.

As you might imagine, from March onwards, the shared experiences and support added capacity to all sorts of aspects, especially resources provision and costs etc. and for developing home learning.

The School Improvement Advisor has said: *“Everyone is in total agreement that the Domino Alliance has been a fantastic success this year and that there is great potential for further collaborative support going forward.”*

The DOMINO Alliance is hailed across South Gloucestershire for its effectiveness in working together for the good of all member staff and pupils. We look forward to further exciting developments in 2020-2021 and hopefully without interruptions and for teaching and learning to become the highest priority again!

Our School Aims - continue to be, to provide a school community where:-

- Children are happy, safe and secure
- Children feel their ‘voice’ is heard
- High quality teaching and learning takes place
- Children’s learning and wellbeing are at the centre of everything we do
- Children’s achievements are celebrated and reinforced
- Creativity and curiosity can flourish
- Everyone and everything is treated with respect
- Children are encouraged to be independent, think for themselves, accept challenges and persevere
- Good behaviour and honesty is expected and everyone is encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions
- Inclusion, diversity and pride are promoted
- Children feel part of the wider community and prepared for their role as citizens

Although we were interrupted as a school community, we did strive to ensure that the children were encouraged to uphold these aims through activities made available and class sessions with their teachers.

Results and Progress Tracking:-

The national SATs testing, did not take place in May this year.

Teacher Assessments were submitted to receiving schools, in KS2.

In KS1 receiving teachers were made aware of levels that were “frozen” March 2020. Gap analysis assessments by receiving teachers will occur in Term 1 and start to be implemented Term 2.

Curriculum:-

Governors form a specific sub-committee for Curriculum and Pupils

North Road constantly strives to provide all pupils with exciting and stimulating learning, it is at the forefront of all planning.

There is a detailed curriculum map available on the school website where parents can see upcoming topics for each class, this will enable you to seize opportunities to engage in dialogue with your child at home. Look out for the class teachers' topic letters to parents, which will inform you *how* to involve yourself in these topics at home. Do look at the website information you will be amazed at the amount covered!

We would encourage every parent to participate and collaborate fully in your child's learning.

Personal Development:-

A prominent focus throughout North Road Community Primary School is the celebration of successes, achieved both inside and outside of school.

Information on these is shared with parents and the community via "Tweets" from Mrs Stillie, in newsletters and emails, pictorially on the website, in the local media at every opportunity, communications home etc.

This became a vital lifeline during "lockdown" ensuring children were kept in touch. There were also weekly welfare phone calls home to speak to the children and to ensure the children felt secure that NRCPS staff *were there for them*. Communications via calls, email and the website tried to ensure and reassure, both parents and children, that we were all still "connected" despite the unforeseen circumstances.

All credit must be conveyed to Mrs Stillie and the staff for their endeavours. Every chance to highlight individual or group success continued to be celebrated in daily communications. A plethora of accomplishments can be traced throughout the *Tweets* that appeared daily.

Every opportunity was seized to acknowledge and publicise the pupils, for their accomplishments and endeavours achieved during Lockdown

Budget and Finance:-

Governors form a specific sub-committee for Resources and Pay

The Governing Body has a specific responsibility for ensuring that the budget is spent prudently and effectively. We have skilled financial experts on the Governing body who closely monitor the incomings and outgoings, anticipate budgetary requirements, predict future spending and carefully manage the funds allocated to the school. That *went to the wall* rather in 2020!

As you might imagine, the Budget has *taken a hit*, due to Covid19. Lots of extra staffing hours, equipment and resources have had to be acquired, to ensure the safety of all children and staff for a full return to school in September 2020.

Due to great thrift within school and Mrs Stillie's ingenuity in keeping a sharp eye on finance, we managed to cover the extra costs despite funds from Government departments not yet being available to us.

Friends of North Road:-

We continue to be hugely grateful to the Friends of North Road, under the leadership of Mrs Katherine Gray, for their fund raising, to enhance resources for the children. The new fitness trail and climbing equipment on the school field has been thoroughly enjoyed by all pupils and the outgoing Year 6 had the privilege of the inaugural recreation on the equipment, as part of their Leavers weeks.

However, major fund raising events did not occur in 2020 and they would hugely value your support in 2020-2021 to continue their provision.

Visit their section on the school website and look out for calendars of events!

More Information:-

Ensure you follow us on Twitter – Mrs Stillie does like to “tweet” almost daily! The school website is constantly updated with photographs, celebration of successes, forthcoming events etc. **Make a note to visit the website regularly!**

<https://www.northroadprimaryschool.co.uk>

This is also where you will find more information about our school, including all our policies and the complaints procedure.

As I close, I must applaud all teaching staff, teaching assistants, office and site staff but most especially the Headteacher, Mrs Stillie for their **TREMENDOUS** work during the most difficult of times.

"Real Leaders are forged in a crisis." This is definitely the case at NRCPS.

We know there will still likely be challenges ahead. We know that these cannot necessarily be anticipated or planned for. However, rest assured that Mrs

Stillie and the team at NRCPS, are hugely motivated, positive and very upbeat, about what they are determined to achieve. Together the Governors and school leadership have a clear vision to ensure that NRCPS sustains its reputation for being a happy, caring, healthy, reflective and achieving school, which always looks forward and continues to improve, year on year. At the heart of this vision is the desire to ensure every pupil, has every chance and is given every opportunity to succeed in their academic, social or sporting goals.

Finally I must also thank all of our parents and my colleagues on the Governing body for their support and feedback during this very difficult year. We are obviously unclear about what the future academic year may hold for us, quite yet. However, you can be confident that at NRCPS, we will endeavour to ensure that every resource possible will be in place, to support every child, for their academic progression and mental health and wellbeing, **IF** we find ourselves in another time of crisis. We will be **as ready as we can be!**

I am in and around school all the time. I am in the playground at drop off/collection times, as I have two grandchildren at North Road. Please do come and have a chat and make yourself known to me. 2020 – 2021 has begun in a very positive, exciting and energised way at North Road Community Primary School and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to continue to serve as Chair of its Governing Body.

Stay Safe - Hands, Face, Space – our new watchwords!

Mrs Sue Rigby – Chair of Governors



