



Alexander Hosea Primary School

'Roots to grow, wings to fly'

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Headteacher: Mrs D Williams



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Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to update you on the work of the governors during 2017-18 before I hand over the role of Chair of Governors to Celia Rogers on 1st September 2018.

“The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.” (*Governance handbook for academies, multi-academy trusts and maintained schools, January 2017, page 9*). I shall cover each of these points below.

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

As you are aware Mrs Williams joined the school at the start of September 2017 and the visit from Ofsted followed 8 days later. The inspection process confirmed our assessment that we are a “Good” school and provided a useful opportunity to establish strong working relationships quickly between the governors and Mrs Williams based on a mutual understanding of the school’s strengths and vision for the future. This process will be continued into 2018-19 as a new 5 year strategic plan is created.

Ofsted praised the governing body for our self-reflection, knowledge of the school, commitment to training and effective monitoring systems. However there is no place for complacency and we are as challenging of ourselves as we are of the wider school. The 2017-18 Governor Development Plan ensured a focus was maintained on further improving all aspects of the governing body. This included a 360 review of the role of Chair of Governors, job descriptions for key roles within the governing body, expansion of the link governor role, succession planning for 2018 onwards and a skills audit that demonstrated we have a strong spread of skills, knowledge and experience.

We also held our first “Governor Day”, when we spent the whole day in the school. This allowed us to see all aspects of the school in operation and how the policies we help develop operate in practice. Governors met with pupils and staff, delivered an assembly, watched lessons, attended lunch and break times, conducted building and grounds checks and even had a game of stuck in the mud!

Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils

The governors use objective sources of information to challenge and strengthen the school. This includes data on pupil learning and progress, attendance, admissions, exclusions and data provided by the Department for Education. We have access to information gained from lesson observations, learning walks and book reviews. Governors also meet with a Local Authority School Improvement Advisor for expert advice.

Structuring regular link governor meetings with the school’s subject leaders has been a real success and will be a continued focus for next year. Monitoring the School Development Plan in this way has proved to be more robust, leading to a greater understanding of emerging operational priorities and successes.

The governors are delighted with the children’s outcomes this year and recognise the hard work pupils, parents/carers and school staff have contributed to achieve these results. The full national data reports for 2017-18 aren’t released until later in the autumn term but I have included the latest data the Government

has released for your information. Alexander Hosea pupils have outperformed the national comparison in every subject.

Key stage 1 comparative report		
Subject	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: Alexander Hosea School (2018)	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard nationally (2017)
English reading	90%	76%
English writing	93%	68%
Mathematics	86%	75%
Science	93%	83%

Key stage 2 comparative report		
Subject	Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard: Alexander Hosea School (2018)	Percentage of pupils of achieving the expected standard nationally*
English reading	88%	75%
English grammar, punctuation and spelling	88%	78%
Mathematics	81%	76%
English writing (teaching assessment)	94%	78%
Science (teacher assessment)	94%	82% (2017 data)

**Percentages for English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling, mathematics, and English writing teacher assessment (TA) are based on provisional headline information on the 2018 national curriculum assessments*

Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

In April, Steve Jones, one of our associate members carried out an extensive financial benchmarking exercise to enable the governing body to assess the financial efficiency of the school in comparison with other similar schools. I am very grateful to him for his considerable efforts in this regard. The findings were that overall the financial performance of Alexander Hosea School is favourable compared with similar size schools but did point to some areas that we are investigating further to see if savings can be made without compromising the quality of education on offer.

The national press has reported on the challenges schools face in relation to budgets. Alexander Hosea is no exception. Although the school currently has a surplus, running the school costs more than we receive from the Government meaning that there is an annual shortfall to be found. The School's reserves will not last forever. Work has already started on cost saving initiatives and income generating options include renting out rooms in the evening for South Gloucestershire Council training events.

The governors would like to thank the Friends of Alexander Hosea for their continued support. The money raised supports the school to be able to fund projects that otherwise wouldn't be able happen. Their work will continue to be of paramount importance to the school in the years to come. I would urge you to continue to provide your support to the events they run.

Oversight of the school's finances will remain a significant priority for the governors in the coming years.

It has been a privilege to serve as a governor at the school for nearly 5 years and I have gained an enormous respect for all the staff at Alexander Hosea School. On a regular basis I have discovered, witnessed and heard about the extraordinary lengths they go to in order to provide a broad, balanced and fulfilling experience for the children at our school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for the effort and care they extend to our children.

I know Celia will lead the governing body from strength to strength as the new Chair, supported by Aaron Smith and Dick Murray as Vice Chairs.

Best wishes,

Caroline Dalton

Dear Parents/Carers,

As from September 2018 I will have the privilege of being the Chair of governors at Alexander Hosea. I have been a governor since early 2015 and have been impressed by the time and effort that the governors put into their role, even though most are working full time. Having the luxury of being retired I also enjoy the privilege of being a classroom volunteer. In this way I see the dedication of all members of the school staff in providing the best education whilst also taking care of the children's emotional and mental wellbeing. I am also constantly impressed by the children's understanding of how they learn, their enthusiasm to learn and their good behaviour.

During the school year 2018/19 the governing body will continue to challenge both itself and the school. At the heart of all we do is what is best for the children, and we look forward to another year of high standards and positive outcomes for all.

Best wishes

Celia Rogers