



# GOVERNOR BULLETIN

ISSUE 13  
JULY 2022

Governors	Roles	Type	Terms of Office
Peter Parkin-Child	Chair History link	Co-opted	24/09/2019 - 23/09/2023
Cilla Hollman	Vice Chair EYFS, Geography, Music, Eco link	Co-opted	09/07/2019 – 08/07/2023
Esther Bland	Headteacher	Staff	01/09/2018 -
Jessica McFarlane	Safeguarding, Anti - bullying & PREVENT link	Co-opted	25/09/2018 – 24/09/2022
Rev. David Mundy	RE, Pastoral link	Ex-officio foundation	01/10/2018 -
Jonathan Lingham	Numeracy link	Parent	15/11/2018 – 14/11/2022
Deborah Walker	Literacy (writing) link	Foundation	01/05/2019 - 30/04/2023
Victoria Freiss	ICT/e-safety link	Parent	11/11/2019 – 10/11/2023
Tom Plant	Literacy (reading) link	Parent	25/05/2021 – 24/05/2025
Kellie Wilson	Deputy Headteacher	Co-opted	13/07/2021 – 12/07/2025
Olivia Cousen	Teacher	Staff	02/09/2021 – 01/09/2025
Lauren Kallides		Parent	03/03/2022 – 02/03/2026
Roger Wilkinson	Health & Safety link	Local Authority	29/03/2022 – 28/03/2026

The aim of this Governor Bulletin is to give you some insight into what our role as a governor is within the school, as well as updating you on the issues we get involved with. But, most importantly, I want these bulletins to reinforce that we, as a Governing Body, are here to work with all those who have a vested interest in the success of Dukes – and so please feel free to stop and chat to us when you see us around and about.

As we come to the end of another jam-packed academic year, with lots to reflect on and be proud of, it is with great sadness that I write my final governor bulletin as your Chair. So, whilst I will fill you in on all the school news shortly, firstly I would just like to take this opportunity to say a few personal words.

My governor journey began over seven years when my eldest son joined Dukes and now that my youngest son is off to secondary school, it's time to hand the reigns over to someone else. Being a governor has enabled me to feel fully involved with the school and its direction, as well as providing the opportunity to get to know other like-minded individuals with a passion for Dukes; but most importantly it has given me a real appreciation of how hard all the staff work to provide our children with the best education possible. So, to everyone at Dukes, thank you for making my sons' primary school memories so special!

But enough about me and my misty-eyed musings, let's get on with the bulletin and address the really important stuff – like how we are seeking to smash our next Ofsted inspection, what are the future plans/focus for the school and how our Jubilee celebrations went!

### ***So, what do Governors do?***

The Governing Body is made up of a mixture of volunteers - members of the community, church and local authority, parents, and staff. We meet as a Full Governing Body (FGB) six times a year and these meetings usually take place after key school data becomes available. Our aim is to work closely with the Headteacher to raise standards and make sure the school provides a good quality education. We do not manage the day to day running of the school - we help shape its focus and direction. We ensure accountability to parents, staff, and others for the school's overall performance, support the Head and staff, as well as offer constructive challenge.

### ***Ofsted***

The school leadership team continue to work through the action plan that seeks to respond (and surpass) the key development points outlined by the Ofsted inspectors (reading/phonics, curriculum, and subject leadership). As part of this plan, the Governing Body received curriculum presentations from Subject Leaders across a range of subjects within school. It was great to hear first-hand how we have taken Ofsted comments on board and built them into our existing curriculums that were being implemented prior to the inspection; as well as how we have received great feedback from our National Leader for Education visits. Once again, it highlighted how dedicated our staff are and how we are pushing the standards of the quality of learning. Whilst I won't be here for the next inspection, I know that staff and senior management team are setting the school up with the strongest position we can be in; and I can't wait to hear about the change of our rating!

### ***Recent Meetings / Strategic Direction***

It has been great to get back to face-face meetings, as we have been able to hold our last three meetings in school. The main focuses of the meetings continue to be on our School Improvement Plan and those actions associated with our Ofsted feedback. Full details of the Plan can be found on the website under 'Statutory Information'.

At our last meeting, we reviewed the headline performance data from the end of year assessments and discussed how these will feed into the 2022/23 School Improvement Plan. It was great to hear of the excellent progress being made in relation to Phonics across Early Years/Year 1, as this provides the solid platform for future learning. In addition, the school's focus on encouraging and improving reading at all levels (evidenced through actions such as updating the school library) has proven successful in terms of pupil progress. This means that writing will now be the key focus for next year.

With this in mind, the following areas will be included in the 2022/23 School Improvement Plan:

- Writing – to ensure a cohesive approach is applied across the whole school
- Maths – to ensure a consistency of approach is undertaken across all key stages
- Curriculum – to continue the implementation of our new plans and to monitor the impact
- School culture – to ensure we are observing the right behaviours and attendance of pupils (after what has been an unsettling period)

As always, the governing body will continue to support and challenge the leadership team in the achievement of the above; and we look forward to seeing the progress made.

### ***Pupil Numbers***

It has come to that time of year where we say goodbye to our Year 6 pupils, and we wish them continued success as they move into their period of secondary education. We had a large cohort of pupils in this year group, however our pupil numbers are looking very healthy thanks to a good pipeline of enquiries and applications for places with the school. This means we will be in a good place for the start of the next academic year which, as I have mentioned previously, is good for the school as not only a reflection of our reputation in the local community but also in terms of funding.

We were also pleased to learn that we have welcomed three families from Ukraine into the school, enabling sibling groups to remain learning in the same place. It's only right that we show our support to those families displaced by the war, and we hope that the children settle into their new lives surrounded by friendly faces.

### ***Buildings / Investments***

As previously reported, we are seeking modifications to the school hall that are needed to enable whole school assemblies to take place (along with improved lunchtime facilities). Whilst progress is not being made as quickly as we would like, we continue to work with council's Property team to move things forward.

### ***PTA Jubilee Celebrations***

It was great to see the amount of time and effort the staff and children spent on celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee; as well as the excellent event organised by the PTA. Hopefully this has inspired some parents/carers to get involved with the PTA and ensure that we continue to hold such events, as they make a real difference to the wellbeing and education of our children.

I was tasked with judging the school's Bake Off competition (it was a hard job but I took one for the team) and the standard of entries was excellent. Congratulations to the winning entry from Rowan - it was truly delicious. Alongside sampling the tasty treats, I was also involved with judging the Jubilee Art competition. Again, the standard of drawings and paintings were outstanding; and it was a hard job deciding on the winning entries. I even got to give a special Chair of Governors Award to a brilliant technicolour picture of a corgi that I was particularly impressed with – well done Anthony. I may commission you to paint a picture of my own dog !

### ***Fond farewells***

Amongst the post feel-good vibes of the Jubilee celebrations, we are sad to say goodbye to two long-serving members of our governing body, **Deborah Finney** (our Foundation governor) and **Jess McFarlane** (our Safeguarding link governor). The team won't be the same without you.

Deborah leaves at the end of this term, having served on the Governing Body for the past 12 years!! During this time, her knowledge of the education sector and insight into the learning standards expected of the school have ensured the governing body has been able to both effectively support and challenge with equal measure. In

addition, her connections with external organisations have meant that the school has benefitted from multiple avenues of support. Thank you for all your hard work over the years.

Jess will be stepping down when her term of office comes to an end in September, due to external work commitments, and we thank her for her hard work over the last eight years! Jess has played an invaluable role as our Safeguarding governor and is one of our most proactive governors in terms of visiting the school. She has undertaken focus groups with pupils about key issues, as well as heading up our Finance Committee; and I know both Mrs Bland and Miss Wilson have found her support to be second to none when dealing with some serious issues. We all wish you the best of luck in your exciting new role and who knows, maybe we'll see you back on the board in a couple of years' time?!

### ***Happy Summer***

That just leaves me to wish you all a very enjoyable summer break, the best of luck to our Year 6s and a massive thank you to all the staff at Dukes for their exceptional efforts over the past year.

Stay safe and best regards

Peter Parkin-Child  
Chair of Governors