

Holly Hill Infant School Governors Annual Statement 2022-2023

Holly Hill governors have the job of supporting the school leadership at Holly Hill and in holding the school to account in three areas, finance, educational performance of the children and ensuring the Christian values, ethos and vision of the school are met.

It has been an exciting year with continual improvement and some excellent results. Our proudest moment was our Ofsted result where we were recognised as a Good school in January 2023. Miss Taylor continues to oversee the school as Executive Headteacher, but increasingly works with other schools to share the excellent practice we have developed at Holly Hill, particularly through her role at MAST (Methodist Academies and Schools Trust). She also continues to work with the Governors on what Government academisation plans mean for our school, making sure we are one of the pioneers in a new trust, underpinning it with the excellent values we have developed at Holly Hill. We are in an excellent position to embrace the future.

Mr Carr now works full time as our Headteacher and continues to lead the school from strength to strength. The governors are ever thankful for his hard work in ensuring the children and young people in our care do exceptionally well. We are also grateful to the whole staff team for their dedication to the school which was evidenced in the results and our Ofsted.

The governors continue to use their expertise well by specialising in key areas and asking challenging questions to ensure the school provides the best provision it can.

Finance

In the Autumn term we look closely at school finance to make sure that the money received by the school is well spent. The Board were satisfied that the school is currently in a sound financial position at the moment. However, like all schools and many people at the moment, we continue to feel the effects of increased bills. The Governors continue to ensure we are able to put children first as we navigate these difficult financial times.

Last year, we were particularly concerned about the falling roll and the number of spaces we had. However, our reputation for excellent provision for children continues to spread, meaning we had a much larger number of people apply for a school place and so we look forward to the increase in Reception. The more children we have on roll, the more money we are given to provide education.

We continue to explore options and opportunities to help us navigate through the changing landscape in education, including the Government's vision for all schools becoming academies. We are in a good position and Miss Taylor continues to develop conversations so that we are at the forefront of these changes. This will provide us with opportunities to secure the future.

The Governing Board have looked at the use of money given for Pupil Premium children and are confident that it is being used wisely to allow for high quality teaching staff, additional specialist support, especially for speech and language, and for increased use of teaching assistants. Additional responsibilities have been given to teachers on a higher pay scale to enhance the curriculum and support the leadership team.

Educational performance

In Autumn 2023 the Governing Board looked at achievement and progress from the previous year. The Governing Body are really pleased with the results and outcomes for our children. We are celebrating an excellent set of results. The teachers and the whole school have worked incredibly hard through some difficult times to ensure that children do well.

We are measured by the number of children who achieve the expected standard or greater depth in each subject:

Subject	Expected		Greater Depth	
	Holly Hill	National Average	Holly Hill	National Average
Reading	66%	68%	14%	19%
Writing	64%	60%	10%	8%
Maths	71%	70%	16%	16%
Combined (Reading/Writing/Maths)	60%	56%		
Science	64%	79%		

Our bespoke curriculum continues to be adapted to ensure it meets the needs of all children. It is aligned with Holly Hill's vision, the OFSTED Outstanding grade descriptors and SIAMS Framework.

The school recognises attendance as key to the success of our children. It has been a particularly difficult couple of years with the effects of Covid and related anxieties. However, the school continues to be committed to working with parents to ensure children are in school. The school leaders provide regular updates to the Governing Body about attendance and are shown extensive information that shows how much hard work goes into supporting families to ensure they can get their children to school. It's so important that they attend so they are given the best start in life.

In recent years, the school has particularly focused on how we ensure excellent provision for all our children, including those who might have additional needs. We are committed to inclusive education and so have developed special provision for some of our children and appointed staff with specialist skills to support them. This continues to make others recognise us as a place of good practice for inclusive education.

Ethos and vision of the school

The Christian values and ethos at the school are evident from before you enter the school and are clear from the behaviour of the children and their excellent understanding and application of the values. The values are also well evidenced through the school website. The website is an excellent support for parents too. They are able to view assemblies, view the values and "big question" for the week and watch videos on how to support their children with reading.

The Governing Body continues to put wellbeing at the heart of its conversations. We believe that the whole school community should be given the chance to flourish. This often means we ask questions about teacher workload to ensure expectations are achievable and staff can do their jobs well.

Here are some quotes taken from our recent Ofsted:

“The motto ‘We work as one, no child is left behind’ embodies leaders’ high expectations for every child at this delightful school. Care, nurture and love are at the heart of everything that happens. Adults routinely go above and beyond for every pupil. Pupils repay this with excellent behaviour, hard work and meaningful relationships, which are a hallmark here.”

“Pupils are a joy to observe. They are polite, friendly and welcoming. Routines and behaviour expectations are well established and understood, and pupils readily adhere to them. Leaders provide a calm and orderly environment. Pupils are safe and happy. Leaders deal swiftly and effectively with any issues that may arise, including bullying. Pupils say that kindness is the key to their school. The school’s Christian ethos and values excellently support pupils’ personal development. As one pupil said, ‘Just be kind.’”

The Governing Body is a great team to work with and we love supporting Holly Hill. Here are some of the things that the Governors have said about Holly Hill:

“Holly Hill is a wonderful school where the warmth of the staff and students shines through. The progress the staff make with the children is miraculous and I feel so proud to be part of the Governing Board.”

“I love the ethos of the school: living life in all its fullness and how the school values carry through in all we do in the school, from the pupils to the staff. I love the atmosphere of love and drive to be the best one can be that I feel when I am in Holly Hill.”

“It is very fulfilling being a governor at Holly Hill and having a part to play in its growing success story.”

“Holly Hill has its own special magic.”

“The children here are really loved including all those children with their own particular difficulties.”

“You can feel the joy here.”

“Staff work so hard to bring life in all its fullness to the whole school community.”

We believe that the board has been able to support the school through prayer and in decisions made in all areas, to help it to fulfil its mission of “life in all its fullness” recognising the importance of education and the school environment for our children and their families.

Gary Hopkins
Vice-Chair of the Governing Body