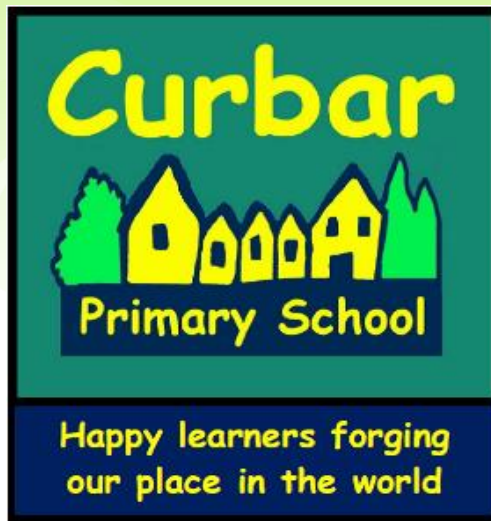


the Governors' Newsletter



Curbar has had quite a year.

Not only has everyone at school stepped up to the challenges presented by Covid, they have supported and worked with Longstone Primary School and have consistently maintained our principles of developing happy children who are keen to learn.

In the background, we have been working on

- the budget
- the school improvement plan
- recruitment
- and on ensuring we have a full, well trained governing body to support and help manage the school.

Read on for a summary of the year.

‘Why do schools have governors?’

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland every state school must, by law, have a governing body.

Their job is to provide strategic management to the school, acting as a ‘critical friend’, supporting staff but asking the difficult questions too.

Their 3 key functions are:

1. To ensure the school’s strategic vision is clear. Asking, “Why are we doing it like this or not like that?”
2. To hold the Head teacher accountable for the educational performance of pupils. Asking, “Why did group x do better than group y? Why are we in the top 10 %, not the top 1%”
3. To oversee the budget, making sure all money is well spent. Asking, “What benefit do we get from spending £x on that?”

They are not involved in the day-to-day running of the school.

Collaboration with Longstone Primary

We have been working with Longstone Primary since September last year. Mr Beahan became Executive Head of both schools, his Class 3 teaching hours being taken on by Mr Heynes who became their full time classteacher. This enabled a 50-50 Headshare to take place. This was a short-term measure to help a local school who had failed to recruit a new Head. The governors at Longstone would like to thank the Curbar community for being willing to help in this way. The arrangement has worked well, and we are hopeful that it could provide further benefits for our staff and children once we are able to work more closely together as Covid restrictions reduce. With this in mind, we have agreed to extend the arrangement for a further year, to September 2022. During this time, we will be considering whether it may be beneficial to both school communities to continue this on a longer term or permanent basis, or whether to draw the arrangement to a close. We will be seeking advice from Derbyshire County Council as well as contacting staff, families and the wider community for their views. This process will start in the Autumn term.

Finance

The budget setting process involves a detailed check by the Head Teacher and the School Business Officer. The Chair and Vice-Chair of governors are then involved with the staff in discussion with a Derbyshire County Council finance officer. The budget for 2021-2 has recently been through this process and has been approved by the full governors' meeting. Fortunately, the outcome is a balanced budget without any reductions in service. Even better news is that the predicted budgets for the next three years also show healthy positions. This is due in part to cost savings made by the school and in part to a recent increase in pupils joining the school.

Health and Safety

Governors always have a role to ensure the Health and Safety of the school and those within it. This year we have been regularly working alongside the staff to ensure that our Covid working arrangements are in line with the latest DfE guidelines. This will continue as the situation evolves.

School Improvement Plan

Work on the SIP was put on hold during the time of remote learning. We have now resumed work on the priorities that were identified prior to the pandemic, and which are still relevant now, namely:

- 1) To continue to raise achievement in maths
- 2) To continue to develop a rich, balanced curriculum
- 3) To continue to develop pupil and staff personal development

Each of the above has action points that are measurable and managed by the governing body.

Our curriculum will ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to catch up, build their skills and develop the necessary vocabulary at each stage.

The school's SIP can only be delivered by our dedicated staff, so we will ensure that they receive relevant training and support to continue their professional development.

Covid, unfortunately, will be with us for some time to come, so we will ensure that strong contingency plans are in place for remote education provision should it be needed.

Educational achievement

The statutory end of year tests have been cancelled this year, however teachers have continued with their detailed use of formative assessment to inform teaching and summative assessments to provide point in time assessments. Overall, we have been very pleased with how our children have continued to make progress during the last year. Teachers have focused on pupil well-being however the process of catching up on lost learning has already begun and indeed the school has hit the ground running; already implemented plans to boost the children's academic opportunities by recruiting an additional member of staff part time for the summer term to target specific learning needs as part of the government's 'catch up programme'.

Recruitment – School Business Officer

We thank Suzanne Cass for her efficiency, friendliness and hard work, not least in agreeing to extend her leaving date when we failed to find a suitable candidate in 'Round 1', which clashed with both Covid and Christmas. We wish her much happiness in her retirement. 'Round 2' was much more successful, providing several good candidates. We are very happy that Nell Wakerley accepted our offer and started work this term. Nell previously worked in Edale Primary School and is also the Chair of Governors in a local federation of primary schools. Welcome Nell!

New Governors

We are delighted to welcome two new governors to the team: Charlotte Cooper, as Local Authority governor and Kelly Scott, elected as a Parent Governor. A few words from them:

"Hello there, my name is Charlotte Cooper and I am the new local authority governor for Curbar Primary School. Being a local authority governor means that although I have no children at the school, I am a Curbar resident who has an interest in the running of it. I am new to the role and to being a governor, so am still learning. I am very pleased to be a part in the running of our great local primary school and to taking a more active role once Covid regs allow."

"I'm Kelly Scott and have a child in Year 1. I've been a governor since last Autumn which has been a great way to get involved with school life, in spite of not having actually sat in a room with my fellow governors yet! It has been a pleasure to listen to the expertise on the governing body, so having undertaken the introductory training I have continued to learn about the role. The past year has been challenging and it has been so rewarding to see the care and consideration put in to keeping children safe and happy throughout by the staff team. I'm always happy to have a chat at the school gate and look forward to continuing to support the school as the year progresses."

Governor Vacancies

Angie Cottle will be stepping down as parent governor at the end of term. She has been a governor since 2017. Angie has put so much into helping the school - being a governor has been just one of these. We will miss her input and thank her for her commitment to being part of the school's governing team.

This means we will be electing a new parent governor during June and July. You will receive an email about this shortly after half term. You do not need any particular experience or knowledge of education to be an effective governor. Being a governor is being that 'critical friend' that is on your side, is always there to listen but also questions and challenges you to do your best. To find out more, please contact any of the governors listed below, or call Jane Taylor on 0751 6476832.

A reminder of who's who and their particular responsibilities:**Standards and Curriculum Committee**

Helen Walton, chair of committee

Jane Taylor, chair of governors, SEND, Pupil Premium

Kelly Scott

Angie Cottle

Linda Berry

Simon Beahan

Resource Management Committee

George Wolfe, chair of committee, vice-chair of governors
Safeguarding and Anti-bullying

Jane Taylor, chair of governors

David Jackson, GDPR

Alan Cain, Health and Safety

Charlotte Cooper

Simon Beahan

SIP responsibilities**1. Maths**

Helen Walton

2. Curriculum

English – Jane Taylor

Mathematics – Helen Walton

Science – Alan Cain

Computing – David Jackson

PE – Angie Cottle / Charlotte Cooper

RE – Angie Cottle / Charlotte Cooper

DT – David Jackson

Music – Kelly Scott

Foreign Lang. – Kelly Scott

PHSE – Angie Cottle / Charlotte Cooper

History – George Wolfe

Geography – George Wolfe

3. Welfare

Angie Cottle

You are always welcome to email us. Each governor has an email address with the following format:
firstname.surname@curbar.derbyshire.sch.uk

