



Langham Primary School

Governing Body Report to Parents

Summer 2024



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Introduction from the Chair of Governor

My name is Eve Oxley and I have been a governor at Langham for over 12 years in various roles. I have very recently taken over as Chair, from John Jones, who has decided to retire from the position after many years of service. Thank you, John, for all your hard work; I have big shoes to fill! I'm not up at school on a daily basis, as my children left Langham many years ago, but I'm a regular visitor at school and enjoy dropping into classes to see what the pupils are learning about.

It's been a busy year for everyone at Langham, we're very proud of the outcome of our OFSTED inspection in November last year. Remaining good and being recognised as outstanding in Early Years is a huge achievement. A massive well done all our staff, who work tirelessly.

This year has not been without its challenges, most people will be aware of the financial challenges that all parts of education are currently facing. As governors, it's been a permanent discussion point at our meetings, that the financial sustainability of Langham is becoming more and more precarious year on year, due to rising costs and diminishing funding.

In a bid to secure the sustainability of Langham for the future, we have looked at the possibility of joining a local multi trust academy. This would offer us a greater level of financial stability, shared resources & working practices, whilst retaining the unique features that make our school great.

After much research, several meetings and visits to other schools, we whittled the search down to two trusts that we felt were worthy of further consideration. The conclusion we have reached is that Langham would benefit most from joining Canonium Learning Trust.

The trust includes small schools similar to

Langham, which share the same vision and work together to overcome similar challenges. We are confident that this move will be extremely positive and benefit all our teaching staff and pupils, both now and in the future. We are at the very start of this journey and there will be a full consultation with parents in the new academic year. In the meantime, we are very happy to answer any questions you may have.

There have been a few changes within the governing body this year. As I previously mentioned John Jones has decided to step down as chair. We are also losing Mike Sherring, who has been a governor for around 14 years and has been our chair of Finance for many years. I would like to extend my thanks to both, we will definitely miss your wisdom.

As a result, we have a governor vacancy. Being a governor is a very rewarding role and is suitable for anyone with some enthusiasm and a desire to make the school even better. If you are willing to spare anytime, please do get in touch! Equally, if you know anyone from the local community who has a little time on their hands and might be willing to give some to our school, please pass on their contact details. More information will be sent round about this once the new school year has begun.

Finally, I would like to sign off with a huge thank you to our fantastic staff, governors, FOLS, parents, carers and anyone else who helps out at the school, without your time and commitment the school would not be the special place it is.

Enjoy the summer holiday. See you all in September!

Eve Oxley

Eve Oxley Governors.Chair@langham.essex.sch.uk

A word from the headteacher

Another year has passed. One group of children have completed their first year of Reception; another group of children are spending their last handful of days in primary, poised to make the leap into secondary education. I can say with every confidence that they are well prepared for it and I would like to think that their time at Langham has helped to mould them into the confident, hardworking, enthusiastic and considerate young people they are.

As you will see in the statutory assessment tables, our children continue to do well in their learning. We are especially pleased to see that children continue to do really well with their reading. Our OFSTED inspector recognised the unique character of Langham and in his feedback to us described it as a 'smashing little school'. Since the visit we have continued to build on our curriculum. Most significantly, we have redesigned our Computing curriculum offer. We will keep a close eye on the impact this has over next year.

Of course, Langham's unique offer is about more than achieving academic success for our youngsters. We want their experiences throughout their time in school to prepare them in every respect for the life ahead of them. This means providing rich opportunities, tapping into potential, instilling self-belief and having fun.

We have been looking for more opportunities for children to take the initiative and take on more responsibility when they reach the last two years of primary school. Your children are most definitely up for the challenge. Mrs Dawes started a 'Community Champions' scheme earlier this year which has already seen older children in the school shine as reading ambassadors, lead a Microbit computing club, do some lunchtime football coaching for Key Stage 1 and lead a drama group. This is something we want to build on next year.

Governors have made sure that staff have been fully involved in our deliberations about joining an Academy Trust and our teachers fully support the move to join

Canonium Trust. As well as financial benefits, we can see that the opportunities for closer collaboration with other schools and access to more training opportunities is going to benefit what happens in our classrooms.

It just remains for me to thank the staff and governors here for their dedication and tireless hard work for the school; the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and other adults for supporting us, and finally the wonderful youngsters who come to our school for making it the place it is.

Andrew MacDonald
Headteacher



Our Values

We are respectful

This is about having good manners and treating everybody with respect. We try and understand each other. We are a diverse community and are proud to be part of it. Respect is something we all deserve.

We are team players

Being a team player is important to us. We can do amazing things when we work together.

We persevere.

We know it gets tough sometimes. We encourage each other to persevere and are determined to do our very best.

We are kind

Small acts of kindness make our school a great place to be. Big acts of kindness can change the world and improve lives for everyone.

We are courageous

Sometimes we have to be brave. It is important to stand up for what you believe and be heard. It is important to try new things and face your fears.



School Governors: Who's Who?

Headteacher:

Mr Andrew MacDonald

Staff Governor:

Mrs Claire Arter

Mrs Arter makes sure that the views of school staff are represented on the governing body.

Parent Governors:

Mrs Louise Ray- Rouse

Louise is in charge of monitoring safeguarding, she sits on the pupil-related committee.

Mr Daniel Moles

Daniel is the chair of our premises committee.

Mr Danny Broadbent

Danny has recently joined and sits on the pupil related committee.

Co-Opted Governors:

Mrs Eve Oxley

Eve has recently taken over as Chair and sits on the premises, personnel & pupil-related committees.

Local Authority Governor:

Mr Ian Holdbrook

Ian is responsible for monitoring the school's provision for special educational needs, and ensuring that the school has a broad and balanced curriculum.

Associate members:

Mr David Morrell

David has re-joined the governing body this year. Prior to this served for around 12 years, before taking a short break. We are very grateful to him for returning, as he brings with him a wealth of knowledge & wisdom. David monitors the maths part of our curriculum and sits on the pupil-related committee.

What do school governors do, and how do I get involved?

Governors are volunteers who take responsibility for the strategic direction of the school. Working closely with the headteacher, we make sure that the school has identified the right priorities for improvement and have plans in place to address them.

At Langham, we have a termly Full Governing Body meeting where we receive a written report from the headteacher about all aspects of the school. We also have three sub-committees which focus on particular aspects of the school. Currently these are the Pupil Related Committee, The finance Committee and the Premises and Health & Safety Committee.

Individual governors also volunteer to visit the school and check that important aspects of running the school are operating as intended.

When we join an academy trust, the governing body will remain in place, though will focus more sharply on the curriculum, how well children are achieving and other pupil related matters.

There will be an opportunity to join us in September. If you think you might be interested, feel free to get in touch and we can arrange an informal chat about what might be involved.

Governors.Chair@langham.essex.sch.uk

Curriculum

Staff at the school have worked really hard over the last year or so to make sure that the curriculum is coherently planned, sequenced appropriately and sufficiently resourced.

This has involved staff re-writing schemes of work, identifying appropriate (and affordable) resources to support their teaching and monitoring how well it is working.

Governors have been involved in all this by scrutinising the school's curriculum documentation and looking at children's work to check that curriculum plans are being implemented.

This year, 'Developing Experts' has made a positive difference to the quality of science in the school and we have also been delivering a new scheme of work for RE using curriculum resources purchased from the Saffron Academy Trust.

A new scheme of work for computing will be implemented from September which will hopefully see us making the most of the new Chromebooks that were generously gifted to us earlier this year.



School Premises

The premises committee's main job is to continue to look after the health & safety of the pupils & teaching staff at our school. We perform termly health & safety reviews of all aspects of the building and surrounding areas of the grounds to ensure any maintenance

required is picked up by the committee, if it has not already been highlighted to Mr MacDonald by our caretaker. Action is then taken to prioritise & rectify issues highlighted.

As a local authority funded school, the Local Authority provides around £4.5k per annum 'capital funding' to maintain the premises. There are very tight conditions about how this money can be spent, and as I'm sure you can imagine it doesn't go very far. In recent years the funding has been used to fit new carpet to part of the school, replace a storm damaged fence and upgrade our intruder alarm.

In addition to the annual grant, a couple of years ago, schools were provided with a supplementary grant from the DfE to improve energy efficiency measures. Our allocation was £12k which we have chosen to invest in upgrading the lighting through the school to LED. We hope this work will be carried out during October half term providing us with much more bright (and energy efficient) environment.

When a school joins a trust and becomes an academy, ownership of the site transfers to the Academy Trust and capital funding comes directly from the DfE. Joining a larger partnership of schools should open more avenues of funding to invest in the site.

Our biggest frustration over the last couple of years has been over the community development funding (Section 106) that housing developers pay to improve local infrastructure and services when they build new houses. As a maintained school, this money is paid to the Local Authority and not direct to the school. There are strict criteria about what the money can be spent on and we have been working with the local authority on identifying a suitable project. Just when we thought we had secured a way forward with a new 'relocatable' classroom on the site, the RAAC crisis hit schools, the cost of installing a relocatable went through the roof and our plans once again hit the buffers.

These are merely setbacks and the Section 106 funding remains firmly in our sights.

School Finances

The funding 'challenges' that all schools face are well documented and are certainly a factor here at Langham. Funding from the DfE has decreased in real terms since 2010 due to a number of factors. These include:

- Changes to the Essex schools funding formula to the detriment of small schools;
- Pay and National Insurance contribution increases which have not been fully funded;
- Rising costs of energy and other supplies;
- Lower pupil numbers due to falling birth rates (schools are funded on a per-pupil basis).

The school has done an incredible job over the last few years to set a balanced budget each year, and this has been a real community effort. Teachers have helped to find ways of reducing costs; people in the school are effectively 'doing more for less'; FoLS (and therefore your contributions as parents) have been increasingly called upon to bridge the funding gap and help maintain a good stock of reading material for the children as well as resources for maths lessons. We have also been fortunate to benefit from some generous gifts in recent years as well that have helped to keep our technology at a reasonable level.

The good news is we have once again worked some magic and set a balanced budget for the 2024-5 financial year. To achieve this we have had to trim even more off our planned curriculum expenditure and are only projecting a negligible reserve of £2.5k at the end of the year. This leaves us very much at the mercy of circumstances.

It's not quite all doom and gloom though. On the positive side, we have seen our pupil numbers increase which will in turn increase our budget share for following years. However, I'm sure you can see why governors have been keen to identify a strategy that will ensure the school is in a better position to weather any storms ahead.

So why is joining a Trust the best strategy to overcome this constant challenge? As well as the quality of teaching and learning benefitting from working more closely with other schools, we are looking forward to the school benefitting financially too by achieving 'economies of scale' in professional support services, sharing resources and other joint procurement initiatives.

If you are interested in looking at school finances in more detail, the DfE financial benchmarking website is publicly available and includes more detailed figures as well as comparisons with other schools. [Schools Financial Benchmarking - GOV.UK \(schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk\)](https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk)



Pupil Attainment: Facts and Figures

Reception

A very high proportion of pupils achieved a good level of development at the end of reception this year. The figures are suppressed due to the low numbers of children in the cohort.

Year 1 Phonics Outcomes

This year 73% reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check.

100% of children who took the test again in Year 2 achieved the expected standard.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check

87% achieved a score of 20 or more out of 25.

Key Stage 2 Attainment (end of Year 6)

Table 2: Key Stage 2 Attainment (National Tests)

	Meeting Expected Standard in the Test		Average scaled score in the Test	
	Langham	National (Provisional)	Langham	National (Provisional)
Reading	81%	74%	107.2	105
GPS	81%	72%	107.3	105
Maths	69%	73%	103	104
<i>Combined</i>	69%	61%		

Table 3: Key Stage 2 Attainment (Teacher Assessed¹)

Subject	At Expected Standard or Greater Depth	Greater Depth
Writing	75%	46%
Science	88%	



¹ Our writing teacher assessments were subject to moderation by the Local Authority this year