

Elsworth C of E Primary School

Governors Newsletter



December 2024

Welcome to our Newsletter!

Letter from the Chair

As we approach the end of another hard-working term for all involved with Elsworth C.E Primary school I wish to take the opportunity to wish everybody a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

The school attendance record is impressive when compared to the national figure. This is a particularly positive result which enables the school to continue to be successful.

May you all have an enjoyable holiday before we start looking forward to the New Year with anticipation.

With best wishes,

Nick Wright

Chair of Governors

"Pupils are proud to attend this school. They speak positively about being part of a small school where everyone is known, accepted and cared for." Ofsted 2023

A huge well done to all our staff and pupils for your hard work and achievements in 2024. We wish you a wonderful Christmas break.



Role of Governors

Governance is a key part of a successful school. The school governing body has four core functions.

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure it's money is well spent.
4. Ensuring the voices of the stakeholders are heard.

Vision and Mission

“...act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God” - Micah 6:8(b)

This year the Governor's worked with the School to develop and approve our new vision and mission for Elsworth CoE Primary School. The next step this year is to embed that vision and mission into school life to become something we all live and breathe. We will likely be having our SIAMS inspection next year. This is an inspection by the Church of England. It looks at questions around our vision including how our vision enables adults and children to flourish, how it's reflected in the curriculum and collective worship and how it creates a culture in which everyone is treated well and a culture of justice and responsibility

Whilst this is all theologically rooted in Christian values the aim is not to convert or indoctrinate pupils. We hope our families who may not share a Christian faith do share in the importance of the values outlined in our vision. These are values we hope can build a positive community regardless of religious belief.

Vision:

Our vision at Elsworth C of E Primary School is to develop motivated, aspirational and courageous learners. Through embracing the Christian values of honesty, happiness and compassion, we lay the foundations as a community to love and serve one another and to make a difference.

Our Mission Statement:

At Elsworth C of E Primary School all are welcomed, listened to, celebrated and respected for who they are and who they may become.

Our dedicated and enthusiastic team lead learning through a bespoke, ambitious curriculum, which promotes natural curiosity. We encourage and support everyone to be reflective and take responsibility in all aspects of school life.

In our small rural community every individual is inspired to pursue their own personal interests, find joy in the little things, express their creativity and care for one another.

What have the Governors been doing to improve the School this term?

- Approving and monitoring the School Development Plan (SDP) for 2024/25 to ensure all aspects of learning and wellbeing are of the highest quality in Elsworth C of E Primary School. We have also developed our Self Evaluation Form (SEF), which forms part of the SIAMS Church of England inspection, and will continue to monitor and develop our SEF. We have created a SIAMS working party to focus more on this. Governors are also looking to embed our new vision and mission within our policies and development planning. Governors are also specifically looking for how our mission is being delivered in our monitoring visits this year.
- Focusing on ensuring and being part of a culture of safeguarding. All governors complete annual safeguarding training and a few do additional training including our safeguarding governor and cyber security link governor. Our safeguarding governor, Cathy, continues to do an excellent job making regular monitoring visits this year and reporting back and is following a Knowledge safeguarding audit checklist to ensure all areas are covered. We have also reviewed the main Safeguarding policies for the year.
- Ensuring high standards in Health and Safety including investigating the best form of staff wellbeing survey to ensure our staff are well supported by the school. We have an excellent staff team and we want to retain them! External painting was also completed over the summer to protect the building's woodwork
- Reviewing key policies, including our Attendance, Positive Behaviour Policies and various HR policies in detail. Governors follow best practice advice on policies ensuring statutory obligations are met and policies are robust and followed to improve outcomes.
- The Learning and Standards committee monitors learning outcome data. They have reviewed the initial data for this year and looked at how targeted interventions are being used to support pupils who need additional support whilst ensuring that that doesn't take away from wider teaching time. The committee also have standing items around staff and pupil wellbeing and the breadth of curriculum as we hold these equally important for children's development as well as safeguarding. This includes outdoor learning and Den provision.
- The Finance and Health and Safety Committee has been monitoring the school's budget ensuring value for money and money spent to maximum benefit of our children. They have been looking at pay reviews and spot checks on payroll to ensure all processes are running smoothly. The school is in a good financial position thanks to a lot of hard work in this area by staff. The committee has also reviewed HR policies including ensuring an equitable policy which considers all elements of family and parental leave to ensure the school remains supportive and inclusive for all members of staff.
- Governors also support the school's Eco Council which is going from strength to strength.

"Governors know the school well and provide appropriate support and challenge. They carry out their role effectively." Ofsted 2023

Thank you to the PTA

The Governors are very grateful to our active PTA and all those who volunteer and support school events. There have been some wonderful festive events this term with the Shopping evening at Franks Farm, cake sales, school disco, wreath making and Christmas fayre. We always enjoy welcoming visitors at Elsworth especially Father Christmas and even that cheeky Grinch!

It's wonderful to have so many events aimed at bringing the community together in different ways and to have such support for the school.

School Fund

Historically Governors have asked for a voluntary contribution of around £25 per child to support extras such as new benches, reading books and computing items. We are very grateful for all the past contributions to this.

This year the Governors are mindful of the recent cost of living squeeze impact on family budgets. We also are grateful to have an active PTA achieving a lot of fundraising and families supporting this. The governors have therefore decided that the school will not be asking for this donation this year.

For those who would like to make a contribution please consider the PTA's Sponsor a Brick scheme (details in the next section), which is also aimed at past pupils and staff. We will also be launching an Amazon Wishlist for the school next year where families can choose to support by buying specific items for the school.

Elsworth's 70th Anniversary

We had some wonderful School celebrations this term to mark the Elsworth CoE School's 70th Anniversary. A huge thank you to those involved in organising these. The Governor's very much enjoyed the Church service led by Bishop Dagmar, welcoming past Elsworth students including those from when the school first opened at its current site and seeing the students' work, dances and tea party. A special thank you to Helen Strutt of Lellibelle cards for the beautiful 70th anniversary logo.

The PTA launched a sponsor a brick scheme that has already been successful in raising funds for the much needed KS2 changing room refit. If you know anyone who was a past pupil or staff member then sponsoring a brick can also make a nice gift. Full details of the scheme are on the school's website:
<https://elsworthprimary.org/sponsor-a-brick/>

Meet the Governors

We have 10 Governors at Elsworth

			
Nick Wright Chair of Governors	Clair Harrison LA Governor Chair of Learning and Standards Subcommittee	Cathy Martin Chair of Finance Subcommittee	Kirstin Bicknell Foundation Governor
			Foundation Governor vacancy
Philip Gaskin Co-opted Governor	Hannah Holland Parent Governor	Lisa Kilian Parent Governor	
			Helen Andrews
Alan Mansey Foundation Governor	Dinah Papworth Foundation Governor	Kylee Todd Staff Governor	Clerk to Governors

A bit about our Governors

Nick Wright

Chair of Governors

I am an arable farmer from Conington and a director of the White Swan pub. My four children attended Elsworth C of E Primary school between 1994 and 2006 and thrived. They went onto Swavesey Village College, Sixth form in Cambridge and beyond to university. I was chair of governors when my children attended Elsworth and I was delighted to be asked back for a second term.

I am an experienced councillor having been chair of Conington Parish meeting for 25 years and district councillor for the Caxton and Papworth Ward at South Cambridgeshire district Council for 18 years. My interests are local history, rugby, cricket and enjoying our wonderful countryside.

Clair Harrison

*Chair of Learning and Standards
subcommittee*

I became a Governor again at Elsworth school last year after a break of a few years. My background is Primary teaching and so I try to bring my knowledge and understanding of education to my role as Governor. Both my daughters came to the school and loved their time here. The school is very close to my heart and I love to spend as much time as I can working with the staff and children!

Cathy Martin

Chair of Finance and Health and Safety subcommittee

After qualifying as a social worker, I spent a number of years working in an inner-city area in child protection. I left work to travel and start a family, and lived in Dubai, Paris, Edinburgh and Derby before settling in Cambridge in 1995. I have four grown up children, all of whom were educated in a local Church of England primary school, where I have been a governor for the last 20 years. During my time in governance, I have had a number of roles and responsibilities including being a long serving Chair of Governors. I joined Elsworth in April 2021 and look forward to working alongside the other governors in continuing to promote and develop the school.

Kirstin Bicknell

I am an integrative psychotherapist and counsellor who runs a private practice in Elsworth. I was Chair at Elsworth Pre-School and have over 18 years experience in the voluntary sector, most recently as a trustee for Evolve Community Counselling Charity. My background includes arts administration, project management, marketing and fundraising and I'm a qualified secondary school teacher. I became a Foundation Governor in September 2020 and have a particular interest in wellbeing and inclusivity.

Philip Gaskin

I am a PhD-trained scientist currently working remotely for a US biotechnology organization in Business Development. My family moved to Yelling three years ago, and my daughter joined Elsworth CE Primary School in September 2022. I previously served on Huntingdonshire District Council and am pleased to have been co-opted to the Board of Governor's at Elsworth so I can help contribute to the success of the school in the coming years.

Hannah Holland

I've recently become a parent governor. I have one child, in Year 2 and another who will join in 2024. I have spent my whole working career in Education, working for two of the largest educational publishers and assessment awarding bodies in the world. The last 8 years being with Cambridge University Press & Assessment, as a Principal Business Analyst. My role is to help turn ideas into sustainable, fit for purpose solutions. I feel privileged to be working with the other members of the Governing body, to work towards ensuring our children have the best possible learning experience at our school.

Lisa Kilian

I was born in South Africa but have lived in the UK for almost 20 years. My son started in Reception last year and I have a very keen interest in promoting the success of Elsworth C of E Primary School.

By means of profession, I am a Chartered Accountant and work for a biotech company located in Cambridge. I have a tremendous passion for development, effective communication and collaboration.

I feel it is a privilege to serve on the Elsworth C of E Primary School Governing Body and look forward to ensuring our children are given the best opportunity to learn and thrive at our school.

Alan Mansey

I am a retired Civil Engineer from Boxworth and have lived in this area since 1986. My son attended Elsworth C of E Primary School from 2007 to 2014 and following retirement I am pleased to contribute to the school as a Foundation Governor. I was an LEA Governor of Bourn Primary School from 1997 to 2001 where I chaired the Finance Sub-Committee and was a member of Appointment Committees for teachers and a Headteacher.

For most of my career I was employed as a government Construction and Maintenance Manager working on the UK and overseas MoD estate. My interests are playing tennis, walking, and volunteering at IWM Duxford.

Dinah Papworth

I spent my working life in the Food Industry - firstly as Sales Director of a pork manufacturing business - and then I started up a delicatessen import business where I was Managing Director for several years.

I retired to bring up my two daughters and moved to Conington 20 years ago. As they have now 'fled the nest' I have been looking for a new challenge. I feel honoured to have been asked to be part of the governing body and welcome the opportunity to give something back into the community.

Kylee Todd

We are very grateful to Mandie Thomas, our wonderful Deputy Head for her years of service on the governing board. Mandie has handed over the baton of Staff Governor to Mrs Todd and is taking a very well deserved break from the Board. Mrs Todd is our Sapphire Class teacher and is bringing her valuable perspective on Early Years and experience as a teacher to our Governing Board.

Clerk to Governors

Helen Andrews served as our temporary clerk last year and brings a huge amount of education governance experience to the role.



ELSWORTH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNORS WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OUR STAFF,
PARENTS, CARERS AND CHILDREN A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU BACK IN 2025!