



Governor Spring Newsletter

March 2024



Welcome to our governors Spring Newsletter. This term seems to have flown by, there is certainly always a lot going on in school!

The aim of these newsletters is to pass on information about who we are, what it is like to be a governor and what we do. If, after reading this you would like more information or to discuss any aspect of governance then please get in touch through Lynsey, our clerk -

clerk@bridekirkdovenby.cumbria.sch.uk

Meet our Governors:

We are fortunate to currently have a full team of 14 governors with 4 new members since September filling our remaining vacancies.

Ian Holdsworth - Co-opted Governor

I grew up in Dorset, close to the New Forest and the sea. My wife and I moved to Cockermouth in 2021 after 35 years in London where I'd been a senior production journalist and deputy letters editor on the Financial Times. I first trained as a maths teacher so can hopefully add and subtract as well as edit and spell - all potentially useful skills for a school governor! I was already looking for a way to volunteer in our new community when I saw the school's advert for a "co-opted" governor. I hope my background will be a valuable addition to the experience and skills on the governing board. I'm a keen fell-walker and count comedy, music, science and philosophy among my other interests.

Nicola Martin - Foundation Governor

Foundation governors are nominated by the Diocese to join our governing board.

My professional background is in Business & Development Management within the fields of international development, higher education and the local charity sectors. I join the governing body as a foundation governor and member of the local church community at St. Bridget's, Bridekirk and look forward to supporting the development of enhanced community links and shared learning.

Philippe Kitchin - Local Authority appointed Governor

I grew up in Cockermouth before moving away to university and for work, then returning at the end of 2019. I have two children, one in P2 and the other will hopefully be starting in reception this September.

I am a Chartered Mechanical Engineer with 17 years experience in the defence and civil nuclear industry covering both technical and policy areas.

My current role involves looking after the strategy for nuclear materials security and nuclear safeguards and I hope to bring my skills and experience on strategy to the school governor role.

We currently have a fantastic team of governors that have great experience. I am looking forward to working with them all, the school staff, parents, students and the wider community to help ensure Bridekirk Dovenby school provides the best opportunities and start in life for our children.

Rev. Roy Annetts is our new Ex-Officio Governor which means he sits on the governing board as part of his role within St Bridget's Church, Bridekirk.

Parking



We are aware that parking outside our school can be difficult and occasionally dangerous and would like to reiterate the message Mrs Fish sends out in all her communications on the matter. Please follow the guidance sent out in the recent traffic management plan and parking leaflet. Only park where it is sensible and safe for everyone, please take your time and follow the highway code, for everyone's safety! Parking is often discussed at length in governors meetings and we would like to share this timeline to show some of the actions that have been taken by governors, school and other agencies to try and help with the situation

Date	Action	Personnel involved
Autumn 2017	Meeting to discuss potential carpark and use of land adjacent to school.	PC, School, Legal support, Local stakeholders
Spring 2018	Approval sought and obtained from diocese. Support from CCC & highways. Police consulted. Surveys and quotes received for work.Governor newsletter inc. parking issues and asking for parental support.Application to Windfarm fund via CCF, rejected due to lack of community benefit.	Diocese, School, Governor, CCC, Highways, police
Summer 2018	Parent survey and traffic surveyEmail to parish council re. grass verge and turning in driveway, no support available.2 x Parent meeting in school – 3 attended. Highways at one meeting, actions raised and carried out, various options discussed.Meeting with highways RE flashing lights.Governor newsletter inc. traffic update.	School, governor, PC, Parents, Highways
Spring 2019	School & CCC discussed bus parking. Requested police presence, road safety signage and a letter to go to parentsGovernor newsletter inc. information on yellow lines/zigzags and parking guidance	School, CCC, Police, governor
Autumn 2019	Parking letter from school to parents with police guidance.Traffic working group set up, 4 parents attended. Parking area on school website set up to share informationSchool attended parish council meeting to request help/support	School, Parents, governor, PC
Spring 2020	Contact with highways/CCC/Police regarding yellow lines & zig-zags and flashing light timings. Lines and zig-zags painted. Police to carry out road safety talks with pupils (postponed due to covid).	CCC, police, highways, school, governor
Autumn 2020	Road safety signs purchased	School
2021	Governor newsletter, reminder of yellow lines/zig-zags. Discussions with 2 x parents following near misses.Website information updates, information given to children. Road safety week in school, banner purchased for railings. Communication with Enforcement team about officer presence around school.	Governor, school, parents
Spring 2022	Letter to parents regarding near miss	Governors, school
Autumn 2022	Meeting arranged with parent to discuss ideas/solutions. Parent didn't attend. Follow up with parent and staff member. Ideas unenforceable (one-way system, parking on main road). Contact with CCC re. Enforcement team, request for presence at school.Zoom meeting set up by governor for parents to share ideas, none attended. Second meeting 1 attended.	Governor, parent, staff, CCC
Spring 2023	Allerdale road safety grant applied for and received set of play traffic signs. Letter to parents re road safety.	Governor, staff, school
Summer 2023	Suggestions for drop-off zone, discussed with school/governors but nowhere to turn makes it unenforceable.Discussion with school/bus company re near miss	School, governors, parent, bus company
Autumn 23	Meeting with parent to address concerns and discuss what has been done so far. School pick-up arrangements changed to make more space on roadside. Communicated to parents.School contacted about additional disabled parking bay, been created and signage purchased.Headteacher had conversation with local resident re. turning in driveway and condition of road, consider fundraising.	School, parent, governor, FOBDS
Spring 2024	Letter to parents re sensible parking. Link to website information including updated traffic management plan (also sent to parents). Parent parking leaflet produced and discussed in classes with teachers. Near miss forms sent in. Visit by Judith Chandler (H&S manager CCC). PCSO visited after school.	Parents, school, staff, CCC, police

Please be assured that School and governors will continue to send out letters and reminders about the parking situation as well as continuing to collect near miss forms and discussing issues with parents and visitors. If you are involved in or witness dangerous parking or driving then filling in a 'near miss form' is really important to help us evidence the issues that are being faced.

Special thanks to Julie Hodgson who has carried out much of this work on behalf of the governors in recent years.

Governor vision

Our vision and strategy document is available on the school website. These are some of the ways we have been working towards it this term:

- Increasing our links with the community. We will be available to chat to at various school events coming up. Come and see us at the FOBDS treasure hunts after school next week!
- Looking at Greener Governance and ways to reduce our carbon footprint and bring down energy usage in school.
- Being involved in the recruitment of the new School Business Manager. We continue to support training and development of this role in school.
- Undertaking finance training to support the best strategic decisions to be made about school resources.
- Engaging with Cumberland Council and our local MP on parking matters.

Governor monitoring

Monitoring visits are an important opportunity to go into school and meet with staff and pupils. They are focussed visits which are organised with school staff and then reported back to all governors.

Curriculum Buddies meet with staff & children a minimum of twice a year to discuss specific subject areas and take responsibility for asking questions and working towards related areas of the School Improvement Plan. They will further their knowledge of their areas and contribute towards school self-evaluation.

Class Buddies will build up a relationship with the children in that class and follow them through their time at Bridekirk Dovenby School. They will come to know the complexities of the children in that cohort and be able to consider the progress they are making. Governors will meet the teacher and pupils at least twice a year or more if particular problems arise and support is required.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Class Buddies	Leah Coe & Ian Holdsworth	Abby Gartland & Zoe Brentnall	Sarah Smith & Nicola Martin	Rose Rowlands & Philippe Kitchin	Silvana Hewitt

Our most recent visit has been a Class buddy visit with a focus on how the new behaviour policy and strategies in school are being implemented and received by the children.

We also take time to discuss staff well-being and any recent health & safety or safeguarding issues for the class.

Attendance

We are extremely pleased that school has achieved an FFT attendance award for the autumn term. We support our schools continued focus on high attendance, it is important to help our pupils make the best progress they can. Please help school with this by avoiding any unnecessary time off for your children.



FFT National
Attendance Award
2023/24

Parent surveys

Thank you to all the parents who took time to respond. Your feedback really helps the school leadership team and governors assess and continue to develop what is offered at Bridekirk Dovenby.

Great news that 100% of parents who responded would recommend our school to other families!



Spotlight on: **Safeguarding**

Keeping all children safe in school is of the highest importance to us all. To find out more about the guidance all schools follow, take a look at the government document: [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#).

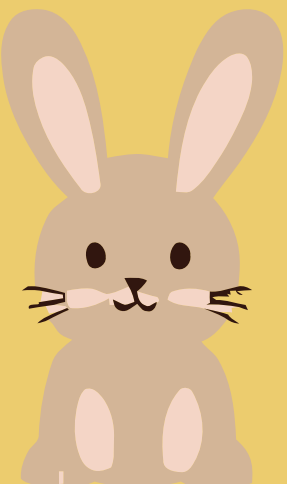
These are just some of the ways governors oversee all the important work school staff do in this area:

- The Safeguarding link governor (Rose Rowlands) meets with the Safeguarding lead (Mrs Fish) in school every half term
- All relevant policies are up to date, governors read and agree these and they are available in school and on the website. There are boards in school (Adult and child-friendly) with lots of information about safeguarding and how to act on concerns.
- Online safety is taught throughout school and is monitored by governors. Checks on the filtering & monitoring systems take place regularly
- All governors ask about safeguarding concerns on monitoring visits to school and would act upon anything reported
- All visitors to school are signed in. New visitors receive information about safeguarding in school and everyone who works/visits children in school have the relevant DBS checks
- staff and governors involved in recruitment of new staff are trained in Safer Recruitment procedures to make sure we get the right people to work with us
- The next governor monitoring visit this term will look at the implementation of the new behaviour policy and ensuring pupils feel safe, happy and supported in school



If you would like more information about navigating the online world with your children and keeping them safe online then you can download the National Online safety app for free.

Also watch out for Mrs Fish's weekly 'Wake up Wednesday' updates from the National College. They contain lots of useful information to help support childrens safety and wellbeing.



*Finally, wishing everyone
in our school
community a very fun,
happy and healthy
Easter holiday!*

