**Summary of the Levens CE School Board of Governors meeting held on:**

**Thursday 12th December 2024**

The governing board met to discuss a full agenda of updates, approve policies, and plan key actions to support the school’s development.

The meeting began with apologies from Liz Heaton and Liz Brown. The Chair, Suzan Bishop, announced with regret her decision to step down as Chair in September 2025 when that re-election is due, following six years of dedicated service. Suzan cited time commitments as a factor and expressed her belief that it was time for change and fresh leadership. Governors expressed their gratitude for her leadership, service to the Levens School community and agreed to seek nominations for a new Chair at the July 2025 meeting. Suzan intends to stay on the Board as a governor

Updates on several important areas were shared. The school website review is on track to be completed by the end of December, and the emergency plan has been reviewed and updated. A new marking policy is being trialled this term, with subject leads in English and Maths monitoring its impact on pupil progress. Further steps to finalise the policy will be taken next term. The school’s GDPR compliance review will take place in January 2025, though annual updates made to website privacy statements, and there were no data breaches to report.

The budget review conducted in October by governors, staff and the external bursarial team, resulted in a positive financial position, aided by additional grants. The board approved audited school funds and acknowledged a generous £10,000 donation from a local company, secured with the help of a parent link and the Headteacher. The donation will cover ParentPay costs and fund the development of a new sensory room to provide a calm space for pupils. Governors expressed thanks to the generosity of the donor and discussed the possibility of setting up a charity in the future to manage future donations to support school activities and initiatives.

Governors discussed safeguarding and noted that the Chair and Headteacher are conducting an audit using the Ofsted framework this year. The Headteacher’s appraisal is scheduled for December 2024, and the Pay Review Committee has made recommendations regarding staff pay, that were approved by the Board, as in previous years.

The Headteacher and SEN reports prompted discussions on pupil attendance and staff wellbeing. Teaching assistants reducing their hours was clarified as a return to contracted hours rather than a welfare concern and sincere thanks was noted by the board for Mrs. Craggs, who is leaving school after years of valued service, in many roles in and more recently outside of the classroom on the sports field at Levens! Updates on school facilities included the installation of finger guards on doors, replacing a Velux window above Class One, and addressing various snagging issues from the new build and issues across the school estate were noted.

The school development plan, which outlines goals through to 2026, was reviewed. Governors also commended the school’s poverty-proofing measures, which consider the cost of all related school activities on families. Initiatives such as a free Christmas jumper day and adjustments to the uniform policy were praised, along with recognition of the extremely valuable contributions from the Friends of Levens School (FOLS) in subsidising costs for trips and equipment enjoyed by students.

Governors clarified their roles and responsibilities, agreed on a schedule for curriculum visits, and discussed various monitoring activities. A recent Geography visit highlighted engaging teaching and learning within the subject. Policies covering safeguarding, financial management, whistleblowing, educational visits, staff travel, teachers’ pay, and governor monitoring were reviewed and approved.

The meeting concluded with governors acknowledging the minutes of committee meetings and reaffirming their commitment to supporting the school’s progress in the coming year.

Fred Binley, Levens CE School Parent Governor

December 2024