

## **Governors' Annual Report 2024-2025**

It gives me great pleasure to report on another very successful year for the school, which now boasts a record number of children on roll. At the start of the Autumn term EYFS welcomed 24 children, who have flourished under the excellent care of Mrs Keast and Mrs Hickton. In May, the year 6 pupils acquitted themselves very well in their SATs, notably in reading, performing in line with the national average scores. Their results are a testament to the hard work and commitment of their teaching and support staff, notably Mrs Greaves. As one of the school's development objectives, Mrs Browne and English lead, Mrs Alderson, have been researching effective ways to improve pupils' writing outcomes, and have implemented a small step approach to the teaching of English, with the aim of building independence in writing. Old Dalby School is part of a collaborative group of local schools, which enables staff to access training and support in order to share best practice.

Mrs Horan's work in her role as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) co-ordinator continues to ensure that appropriate provision is made for all children with additional needs. She has been instrumental in securing funding for another SEND Support Worker. In this capacity, Miss Brooks has proved a great asset, providing invaluable support for children from all classes, both academically and pastorally.

In February, Mr Gavin Beetham visited school to complete the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The process was thorough and supportive, culminating in a very positive report. It concluded that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school, enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It noted that kindness is at the heart of the school's Christian vision and is evident throughout the school. As a result, pupils and adults are happy, fulfilled and valued.

The completion of the hall extension enabled a return to whole school Collective Worship, enhanced by music and a screen! The SIAMS report observed that Collective Worship is inclusive, inspirational and welcoming, and is valued by the school community. Consequently, pupils engage well and are developing spiritually. Special festivals have been celebrated by the whole school at the village church of St. John the Baptist, with services for Harvest, Christmas and Easter. VE Day 80 was marked by the whole school, with time spent remembering the Second World War generation and talking about the importance of peace and tolerance in the world.

Another strength highlighted in the SIAMS report was that parents trust school leaders and staff to treat them well and with respect, thus creating effective partnerships. This was evident during the well-attended open afternoon in March, which celebrated British Science Week. The school is also very fortunate to enjoy the support of a superb PTA, who once again organised an incredibly successful summer fair, raising over £2700 for school projects, led by the indefatigable Ms Julia Birkin. The Community Meals project has continued to provide financial support for families of children in KS2.

The SIAMS report perceived that pupils are eager to have their voices heard and to make a difference. This leads them to accept responsibilities and strive to make their school and community a better place. Nowhere is this more evident than in the work of the newly formed Student Council, which has proved very effective, organising a toy sale to raise money for the Air Ambulance, proposing designs for the new playground markings and raising £270 to donate to Comic Relief.

The school continues to provide a wealth of extracurricular opportunities for its pupils. As part of their PE provision, pupils have participated in at least twelve different sports, ranging from athletics to rugby. They have enjoyed competing at a variety of external competitions, including the local swimming gala, tennis and sportsability events. EYFS and KS1 took part in a mini-Olympics, ably supported by Year 6 pupils. Friendly rivalry between Houses was once again in evidence on Sports Day, with some splendid performances on the track. After-school club has continued to prove popular, with more activities on offer, such as dodgeball and crazy golf. We are indebted to Mrs Bryan for her boundless enthusiasm and tireless efforts to promote physical activity. We are confident that the school will retain its School Games Platinum status.

In the arts, the whole school marked World Book Day in March with a week of book themed activities and challenges. Years 3 and 4 took part in a music festival at De Montfort Hall. Through the 'Music for Schools Foundation', some pupils are benefiting from small group music lessons. This has been made possible by a donation from the disbanded Old Dalby Singers, the intention being to support children who desire to learn a musical instrument. Perhaps the musical highlight of the year was the "Playground Proms" event in the summer term, provided by Graffiti Classics. A string quartet entertained pupils and staff for an hour with a very high energy performance of classical pieces and some modern ones too. By the end, all agreed that classical music was certainly not boring!

In December, KS1 children were in good voice, delighting parents with their nativity performance of "The Hoity Toity Angel". The KS2 production of "Goldilocks – the Revolting Rhymes Edition" in July was equally well received.

School trips are valuable for developing independence and confidence and are always fondly remembered by pupils. Year 2 pupils enjoyed their residential trip to Beaumanor Hall, whilst Osprey class visited Rutland Water. Years 5 and 6 benefited from a trip to the Warning Zone, a Leicester-based charity dedicated to teaching life-skills, such as understanding risk and consequences of our actions.

There have been some changes to the Governing Body. At the start of the academic year, we were delighted to welcome Mrs Julie Gillies as our new Clerk. Not only does Mrs Gillies provide administrative support to the Governors, but her expertise and advice have proved invaluable. Two new community governors have been appointed: Dr Jennifer Glover-Woollard and Mr Christian Cordy. Both bring with them a wealth of experience in the education sector. We were sorry to say goodbye to staff governor, Mrs Tress Fowkes, at the end of the summer term. During her time as Governor, Mrs Fowkes served on the Premises Committee and was responsible for overseeing Governor training and development. In her role as Wellbeing Governor, she showed sensitivity and discretion in representing the interests of the school staff. The governors are most appreciative of the care, attention and commitment Mrs Fowkes gave to her work on the Governing Body and would like to thank her sincerely for her service.

Governors have undertaken training during the year on a variety of subjects. These have included online Safeguarding Training from the National College and Strategic Risk Management in Schools. We are indebted to parent governor, Mr Michael Nicholson, for rewriting the school's Risk Register.

Governors have conducted a number of visits during the academic year. The visits have examined safeguarding procedures, SEND provision, the teaching of phonics, early reading and spelling, RE and Collective Worship, writing and the English curriculum. Governors make

recommendations based on these visits, acting as a 'critical friend'. These visits remind us of the outstanding achievements of our pupils, made possible through their hard work and the commitment of the school staff, led by Headteacher, Mrs Browne.

As Governors, it is a privilege to serve Old Dalby C of E primary school. Throughout the past academic year, we have worked collaboratively with staff to ensure continued progress and improvement across all aspects of school life. The governors have carefully overseen the school's strategic direction, financial management, and safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that policies and practices reflect the best interests of every pupil. Thanks to the collective commitment and hard work of all involved, the school has made significant strides in achieving its goals and remains dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and enriching learning environment for all our children.