

The William Ransom Primary School

Governing Body Annual Report

2022-2023



“At William Ransom, we are committed to providing our children with a safe and nurturing environment that will enable all children to reach their potential, academically, socially, physically and emotionally. Our vision is that every child becomes a confident, self-motivated, resilient and independent learner with a lifelong zest for learning.”



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Governing Body 2022-2023

Funda Shibli (Chair)

Andrew Fennemore (Vice-Chair & Chair of Personnel)

Mary Driver (Headteacher)

Matt Abbott

Nina Achal

Ian Albert

Kevin Briggs

Jane Buchanan (Chair of Finance)

Cassie Clark (Chair of Learning & Teaching)

Sam Hankin

Anna Jackson

Susie Kholodenko (from April 2023)

Perry Maranian (Sept-March)

David Massey

Jack Wells (Chair of Premises)

Victoria Wheat (Associate Member)



Please see the school website for further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body.

...from the Chair

Welcome to the Governing Body's Annual Report for 2022/23. I hope this report will give parents and carers an insight into the work of the Governing Body and reflect on some of the things which make our school such a remarkable and inspirational place for our pupils.

Another school year draws to an end, and what a momentous year it has been for both our nation and William Ransom. We began on a sombre note with the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, but we ended it with joyous celebrations as we witnessed the coronation of our new monarch, King Charles III. The school community came together in school and at home to commemorate this special occasion.



However, the most significant event for us was the announcement of Mrs Driver's retirement at the end of this academic year. This Annual Report is dedicated to Mrs Driver who has been our exceptional Headteacher for the past 16 years. In the following sections, you will find a special tribute to Mrs Driver, but I would like to take this moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for her unwavering dedication, passion and leadership. She has been the heart and soul of our school, guiding us towards constant growth and success. Under her remarkable leadership, pupils have not only thrived academically, but have also been encouraged to explore their passions, develop their talents and become well-rounded individuals ready to make a positive impact on the world. Her steadfast belief in the potential of each pupil has inspired countless young minds to reach for the

stars and achieve their dreams. On behalf of the Governing Body and entire school community, we extend our deepest appreciation and warmest wishes to Mrs Driver as she embarks on a retirement filled with joy, relaxation and new adventures.



The Personnel report will go into more detail about the Headteacher recruitment process which took place following Mrs Driver's announcement, but I would like to thank all the staff, pupils and Governors who took part in the assessment and interview days. We were delighted with the outcome and look

forward to welcoming Mr Tony Plunkett as our new Headteacher from 1st September.

It has been an absolute pleasure to witness our pupils embrace their learning and actively participate in the wonderful lessons and activities organised by our dedicated staff throughout the year. We extend our sincerest thanks to all the staff for their unwavering focus and commitment. It is a privilege to be working with such a fantastic team of people.

In September, we were delighted that Anna Jackson was re-elected as Parent Governor and in May, we welcomed our new Co-opted Governor, Matt Abbott, and our new Staff Governor, Mrs Kholodenko. Each of them bring their own area of expertise and experience to complement those of the existing members. Look out for 'Meet the Governors' in this report to find out more about them. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Maranian, the outgoing Staff Governor, for his dedicated work and commitment to the Governing Body over the last four years. Furthermore, we express our gratitude to Nina Achal, who is stepping down after completing her full term as Parent

Governor, as her youngest child moves on to secondary school. Nina has been our Training Governor and I would like to thank her for her invaluable contributions to the school and Governing Body.

As of September, Andrew Fennemore, my Vice-Chair, will become a Co-opted Governor which will leave two Parent Governor vacancies for the upcoming year. Letters will be sent out to all parents in September inviting nominations for the two vacancies. Letters will provide detailed information about the role and responsibilities of a Governor as well as the skills we are seeking to complement those already on the Governing Body. If you are interested in becoming a school Governor, please visit the school's website for the [Governors' Code of Conduct](#) or you can contact me at: governors@wransom.herts.sch.uk

We are incredibly proud of our Year 6 and Year 2 pupils, who demonstrated outstanding attitudes and efforts during their statutory testing in May. After the SATs, Year 6 embarked on their School Journey to PGL Bawdsey Manor in Suffolk, where they experienced an exciting and rewarding week filled with exhilarating activities. We extend our gratitude to the staff members who accompanied them. I had the great pleasure of accompanying Year 6 to the Lion King in London. They were impeccably behaved, and in awe of the show and meeting some of the actors afterwards. Their questions for the actors were thought-provoking and insightful, and they gained many great tips for their own performance of the show. We wish all our Year 6 pupils the very best as they move on to the next phase of their education and wish them all the best in their secondary schools next year.



My sincere thanks to my colleagues on the Governing Body for their continued support, dedication and giving of their own time. A special thank you to Andrew Fennemore, my Vice-Chair, for supporting me. It is important to remember that Governors are volunteers and do have their "day jobs". In addition to attendance at full Governing Body meetings, Committee meetings and training sessions, Governors have visited the school to witness teaching and learning in action. This is an

important part of our responsibilities and at the end of a formal visit, each Governor completes a standard visits' form. This details the focus of the visit; classes visited; summary of activities seen and provides appropriate comments, which is then passed to Mrs Driver and fed back to the Governors.



We are also incredibly fortunate to have a strong School Parents' Association (SPA) that has organised and delivered fantastic events throughout the year, raising important additional funds for the school. The summer fete, in particular, stands out as a remarkable success, with a record number of visitors and funds raised. On behalf of the Governing Body, I extend our heartfelt thanks to the SPA for their hard work and unwavering commitment to the school.

Wishing you all a truly wonderful summer break. We look forward to welcoming you back in September, ready to embark on new adventures and continue our amazing educational journey together.

Funda Shibli

Finance

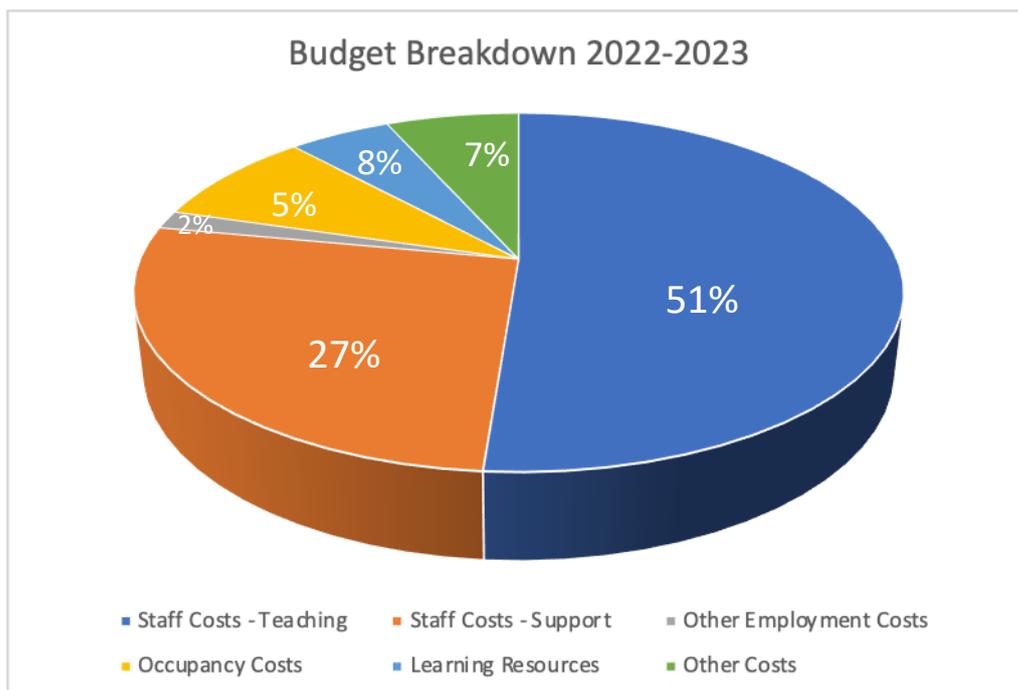
The Finance Committee is responsible for agreeing the annual budget and financial planning linked to the priorities in School Plan for Evaluation and Development. It is there to ensure that all the school's money is spent effectively in the best interest of the children. We do this in a number of ways:



- meeting half termly to review the monthly budget monitoring reports.
- benchmarking our school's spending against similar schools to ensure we are broadly in line with them and challenge variances with the school leadership team.
- review the "Schools Financial Value Standard" to check William Ransom meets the basic standards necessary to maintain a good level of financial health.
- ensuring the Finance Committee has members with appropriate skills.

Through close budget monitoring by the Finance Committee and diligence from all school staff, I am pleased to say that William Ransom ended this financial year with a very healthy carry forward – while maintaining high standards of education, improving facilities and providing a wide range of activities and learning experiences you can read throughout this report.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that the school is eligible to receive additional funding called the Pupil Premium for any child who receives free school meals. You can see how Pupil Premium is spent at William Ransom on the school website. If you think your child is eligible for free school meals, the office staff will be happy to answer any questions and assist with the application.



Jane Buchanan

Learning and Teaching

The key role of the Learning & Teaching Committee is to monitor and challenge the school to ensure pupils receive a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, meeting the needs of all pupils, including any specific needs they have.

We review the school's aspirational goals for the coming year each autumn and agree how we will challenge and monitor the areas of the School Plan for Evaluation and Development that have a particular Learning & Teaching focus. For 2022/23, these were:

- Progression across year groups
- Science knowledge and assessment
- Wellbeing
- PE
- Early Years Foundation Goals



Progression across year groups

The Learning and Teaching Committee have recently been able to look at some contextual data for William Ransom pupils, where we compared pupils' current attainment levels to their attainment at the end of their previous Key Stage; this helped us to ensure that children were on track to reach their full potential at their next assessment points. It was a helpful exercise, and the committee was grateful to Mrs Wheat for crunching the numbers for us. It was clear that the Senior Leadership Team have a firm grasp of this data and that class teachers use this when planning and delivering lessons and interventions, and when children transition into the next year group.

Science knowledge and assessment

The Science subject leads have worked hard this year to raise the profile of Science teaching in the school and the Committee have enjoyed hearing positive updates on the Headstart Science teaching and assessment materials which were introduced for all year groups at the start of the year. The scheme is helping to ensure that the science curriculum is comprehensively covered and that children are secure in their knowledge. In March, the subject leads planned a whole school Lego focused Science week which proved popular with the pupils.

Wellbeing

We were so proud (and not at all surprised!) that the Wellbeing focused Hertfordshire Commissioned School Visit in November 2022 was very complimentary of the school's provision. The report stated that the overriding feeling at William Ransom is "one of care, and that everyone is valued." The visiting consultant was impressed by the school's PSHE curriculum, commenting that it taught the children how to be kind and confident; pupils told the consultant that teachers know them, and that they feel safe and valued at William Ransom. This year, Governors have been encouraged to feedback on wellbeing when they visit the school to ensure that this focus remains a priority.



PE

Feedback from teachers and the Senior Leadership Team is that the implementation of a new whole-school PE scheme-of-work has gone very well this year. Lesson observations carried out by Senior Leaders and by the school's Hertfordshire Improvement Partner show that the new scheme ensures clear progression of skills by allowing pupils to revisit learned skills and challenging them with new ones within each lesson.

Early Years

The Committee have been updated at each stage as William Ransom has adjusted their provision in Reception in line with changes in the new Early Years Framework and building on recommendations from the Commissioned Visit last academic year. Some changes include the improvement of the outside area and a clear distinction between playtime and "Discover and Do" time. Mrs Kholodenko (our new Staff Governor) recently updated us on how Reception staff are currently working closely with the Year 1 staff to ensure a smooth transition into KS1 for the pupils.

In summary, it has been another busy year at William Ransom, and it is always so great to hear of the new innovations that are constantly bubbling away in the classrooms! If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to take a look at the recently updated curriculum areas on the school website as subject leaders have worked hard to summarise the provision and application of their subjects. The work that the William Ransom staff do to ensure our children are encouraged and challenged in their learning and supported pastorally is always appreciated by the Governing Body.

As we reach Mrs Driver's final weeks at the helm, the Learning and Teaching Committee would like to thank her for the vision she has maintained for the school and the values that she has instilled in the pupils that have passed through. It has been a pleasure to work with you and we wish you all the very best in your retirement.

Cassie Clark

Meet the Governors

Hi, I'm Matt, a new co-opted Governor at this wonderful school. Unlike many of the Governing Body, I have no connection to the school at all, so hope to bring a fresh perspective. My wife and I moved to Hitchin in May 2022, leaving London in the quest for space and countryside in this lovely town. I grew up just down the road in Luton so am reconnecting with lots of places I enjoyed growing up. I'm currently a Civil Servant leading on reforms to the Private Rented Sector, which I am hopeful has given me a few skills I can use in this role. Outside of work, I'm keen on holidays (who isn't!), participating in two of Hitchin's excellent running clubs (Bubble Works and Hitchin Hares) and enjoying trips to watch Hitchin Town and Luton Town FC.



Having joined the Governing Body after the May half-term, I have only attended one full Governors' meeting so far where it was great to meet Mrs Driver and a full complement of Governors working to support the school and its staff to continue its excellent work for the pupils. Over the coming months, I look forward to visiting the school, meeting parents, pupils and teachers. I'm also looking forward to using my experience to ensure the school continues to provide a brilliant learning experience and happy environment for all to thrive in.

Matt Abbott



Meet the Governors

I am excited to have been elected as Staff Governor and am really looking forward to sharing my knowledge and skills with the Governing Body and further supporting the school in this way.

Most of you will know me as one of the Reception teachers but outside of school I am a mum to two boys, a football coach and a big lover of dogs.

I haven't always been a teacher though but when I was five, it was what I wanted to be when I grew up. In between then and growing up, I studied Russian language at university, lived in Moscow for 3 years, had a career in the city and then decided it was time to fulfil my childhood dream that had stayed with me.

My passion for education and teaching, like a child's journey through school, started in Early Years and I feel honoured to be responsible for making children's first year in school special and to embed a love of learning early in their school lives.

There are exciting times ahead and September will be a little different. But I believe the ethos of the school will not change. I am looking forward to being part of the new generation of William Ransom learners and continuing to have children and their wellbeing at the heart of all we do.



Susie Kholodenko

Personnel

The membership of the Committee has been stable this year and we have continued to meet termly.

Having completed their teacher training year last year, Mrs Rowley-Jones and Mr Sears have both made fabulous progress as Early Career Teachers. In September, we also welcomed Mrs Herbert as a Year 5 teacher and Mr Palmer as maternity cover for Miss Vivian's Year 2 class. Over the course of the year, Mrs Kershaw, Mrs Ozdemir, Miss Morgan, Miss Pastor, Mrs Garcia, Miss Hunter and Mrs Armitage all joined as Teaching Assistants. Miss Pretty, Miss Dyson and Mr Braddock were also part of the staff team during this academic year.



In terms of committee business, we have had a busy year. Since William Ransom expanded in 2016, this is the first year where the school has been 'full' (where each year has 60 children). More children bring both added complexity to the smooth-running of a school as well as some additional funding. Therefore, in the Autumn Term, we reviewed the Senior Leadership structure of the school resulting in the regrading of our Assistant Headteacher posts to become Deputy Headteachers. Having covered the leadership of the school whilst Mrs Driver was Interim Head at Pirton school last year, Mrs Hall and Mrs Wheat have stepped up to their new roles admirably.

We were also very busy after Christmas when Mrs Driver informed the school community that she would be retiring at the end of this academic year. It goes without saying that we will miss her terribly. The responsibility to select and appoint a new Headteacher falls to the Governing Body and most of the Personnel Committee were heavily involved. We also had responsibility to keep both staff and parents informed of our progress, and to support the wellbeing of school staff during this process.

Mrs Driver was kind enough to let the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body know of her decision in advance which allowed us to swiftly begin the recruitment process straight after her announcement. As a result, we were able to make an offer to appoint Mr. Plunkett in a timely manner, giving him ample opportunity to provide the necessary term's notice to his current school and start his Headship with us in September.

Whilst Mrs Stephenson and Mrs Mills left us at Christmas, there are no further staffing changes to announce at the end of this academic year – the notable exception being the imminent retirement of a certain Headteacher. Fellow Governors will have paid tribute to Mrs Driver throughout these pages, but I wanted to add my thanks and all best wishes to Mrs Driver as she embarks on her retirement after a truly inspirational 41+ years at William Ransom. In my role as Chair of Personnel, I particularly want to thank her for her leadership of the school's staff team – a comment in an article in The Comet referred to Mrs Driver as the 'best Head I ever worked for' – I'm sure that many members of staff, both past and present, would wholeheartedly agree.

As is customary, I also want to express our gratitude to everyone at William Ransom for everything you do in creating a school that is so inspirational for the children's young minds and where such great learning (both academic and beyond) takes place every day. Thank you.

Premises



It has been interesting for the Premises Committee to see the school building being used by two classes in each year group for the first time this year.

With pupil numbers at approximately 420, the Committee has been able to advise and support the need for additional space. In February 2022, the school gained some flexible use space with an extra room installed at the back of the old school building. The Committee helped with the procurement and specification of the room which is great addition to the school as it helps with music

lessons, meetings and also allows teachers quiet time to focus on planning, preparation and assessments. It is fantastic to see the benefits brought about by this space.

The Committee has also assisted with issues arising around the flat roof on part of the school and whilst not completely resolved, we have managed to obtain assurances and will continue to monitor the situation closely.

It has also been pleasing for the Committee to see the completion of resurfacing works to the north playground. This has meant better use of this space by the children especially for netball matches.

You may have noticed some CCTV signs around the school premises and the Committee supported the replacement of the previous security system earlier this year. This is beneficial to the safety and welfare of the school community during the school day and also useful during out of hours.

A few other health and safety items the Committee has helped with over the last year include the new fencing between the car park and the field and progressing the works to trees along the footpath outside the school gates.

We will continue to assist and support the school community in looking after our premises next year and wish to thank you all for helping.



Jack Wells

Child Protection

Child protection and safeguarding are key areas of Governor responsibility. Our designated Child Protection Governor (currently Mrs Buchanan) has termly meetings with Mrs Driver to help fulfil the monitoring role of Governors. All Governors receive child protection and safeguarding training which is updated every few years.

Happy Retirement

Mrs Driver!



Following Mary Driver's retirement announcement, a reporter from Governor News caught up with Ian Albert, who has been a School Governor since 1999. Our reporter asked him for his memories of Mary's time at the school.

Reporter: When did you first meet Mary?

Ian: Hard to remember. It was when my daughter Louise was a pupil at the school between 1995 - 2001. But probably on one of those evenings when she tested parents on their maths ability or taught us to use a measuring stick. Don't ask! So embarrassing.

Reporter: What was your first thought when you heard Mary was retiring?

Ian: Blimey. Was it really as long ago as 2007 when Governors appointed Mary to lead the school? So much has happened since then.

Reporter: What has Mary brought to the school in her time as Headteacher?

Ian: As a near neighbour, I will resist from saying more parking problems! Note to parents - please follow Mary's advice and park more carefully!

But the transition to a school with 50% more pupils and more staff has been remarkably managed by Mary and her team. And, of course, inspiring so many children in a lifelong love for education and learning.

Reporter: What's Mary's greatest skill?

Ian: Her ability to mime loudly and clearly, the words of every song in the school plays. Mind you, she did write a lot of the lyrics!

Reporter: I heard that Mary wrote a lot of other songs. Is that right?

Ian: Well not exactly Brit Award winners! But she did write an amazingly useful song to explain the difference between mean, mode and median (who knew!) and many other greatest hits.

Reporter: Mary has an innovative approach to teaching history. Do you agree?

Ian: Oh yes! Mary has an innovative style in all subjects but especially history. I'm not sure though that Michael Gove would approve of Mary's idea of Neville Chamberlain and the Appeasement T-Shirt. Sounds more like a rock band!

Reporter: What will you miss about Mary?

Ian: Her willingness to try almost anything to help the school. Right from the days as Miss Suggett being put in the stocks at the Summer Fete for children (and some Governors) to throw wet sponges at her. I believe she came full circle and ended up in the stocks this year too!

Reporter: Is there a film character that you would liken to Mary?

Ian: That's easy. Since Donny Osmond hasn't starred in many films, Indiana Jones of course! After Mary's exploits on the zip wire, and her well known love of snakes, there's no better stand in for Indiana Jones 6.

Reporter: Is there any final words you would like to say?

Ian: In all seriousness, Mary's unfailing kindness after my wife Linda passed away will never be forgotten by me and my daughter Louise. But knowing as well how she helped so many others, not just me, during difficult times. And, of course, simply the best teacher and Headteacher! Thanks so much Mary and have a wonderful retirement!



Ian Albert



The Driver behind William Ransom...

In a realm of knowledge, she stood tall,
With dedication, she gave her all.
For **41** years, she faithfully served,
William Ransom's legacy forever preserved.

15000 lessons, a teacher profound,
Guiding young minds, their potentials unbound.
Three thousand, one hundred and 20 days,
A journey of learning, in countless ways.

A crown she wore, Teacher of the Year,
TES bestowed, her achievements clear.
In 2001, a prestigious honour,
For her unwavering passion, like no other.

900 students, she directly taught,
Moulding their futures, as dreams were sought.
Over a decade, she led with might,
To **1100** more, she shed her light.

The **3rd** Headteacher, a legacy profound,
William Ransom's guardian, honour renowned.
As Headteacher, she led with grace,
A beacon of wisdom in every place.

With a **seven-million-pound** expansion grand,
A school transformed by her guiding hand.
With each brick laid, a vision realised,
A haven of knowledge, she epitomised.

Riding the zip wire, fearless and grand,
For the school and community, a helping hand.
£7500 raised, a noble quest,
A defibrillator funded, many impressed.

Productions **aplenty**, a stage alight,
End of Year Shows, dazzling and bright.
A **hundred thousand** times, voices raised high,
Singing Hams and Yams, and Cookies, oh my!

Year after year, school journeys embarked,
In the wilderness, young explorers sparked.
Governor meetings, **240** and more,
Building a strong foundation, to the core.

Five OFSTED inspections, she did withstand,
Guiding the school with a skilful hand.
In **2009** and **14**, "Outstanding" proclaimed,
A testament to her leadership acclaimed.

Now as she bids farewell, her journey complete,
A legacy of excellence, undeniably sweet.
For forty-one years, she walked this noble path,
In the hearts of many, her legacy shall last.

We extend our gratitude, sincere and deep,
For the years she devoted, the promises she'd keep.
Thank you for nurturing minds with care,
For being a pillar of strength, always there.

Sam Hankin

Supporting children to thrive through effective Risk Management

Schools are not only places for learning but also the spaces where children spend a significant proportion of their time. It is essential then that we prioritise their safety and well-being, and ensure they thrive academically, emotionally and socially. This is where effective risk management is critical. As a Governing Body, we work with Mrs Driver and her Senior Leadership Team to identify, plan for, track and monitor key risks to the school's strategic vision and plan. These aren't the day-to-day operational risks, but the strategic risks that threaten the achievement of our school's strategic objectives. The Governing Body currently track just over twenty risks within a document called a Risk Register. These include financial risks (e.g. failure to maintain adequate cash flow), compliance (e.g. risks associated with protecting data), learning (e.g. risks that interrupt learning, for example Covid in the past) and premises risks (e.g. potential risks of damage or injury from trees on the outside of the school's perimeter).



Unlike with academy schools, maintaining a risk register isn't compulsory but it is good practice for maintained schools to have one. The Governing Body developed our risk register following Governor training on Risk Assessments in 2021. I was able to support in this area using my experience of working on risk management for a large international charity, where funders often require grant holders to use *risk registers*.

Each term our Committees (Premises, Finance, Learning and Teaching and Personnel) review risks to the school's strategic objectives relevant to their area. They assess the likelihood and the predicted impact of key strategic risks as well as the controls in place to mitigate these threats. This ensures risk assessment is discussed in Committee meetings and as an agenda item in full Governing Body meetings. For example, "Insufficient leadership development and succession planning" is a key risk that the Personnel Committee and the Governing Body track. Following the announcement of Mrs Driver's retirement after 16 years as our remarkable Headteacher, this risk became even more pertinent. Now with the successful appointment of our new Headteacher, we have introduced a new risk focused on "staff wellbeing and managing change". Having a Wellbeing Link Governor and the Personnel Committee, regularly assessing staff development and succession planning, are two examples of internal controls to manage these risks next year. Effective risk management helps ensure strategic priorities and improvement plans for William Ransom are maintained or are met especially as we move into a new era.



Anna Jackson

Travel Plan



This year, we have been raising awareness of sustainable and active travel to school in order to improve the health and wellbeing of our children. We have worked very closely with our Active and Safety Travel Officer from Herts County Council who has supported us in raising the profile of this throughout the year. Over the course of the year, we have taken part in several activities that have promoted safe, active travel within our school community. In the Spring term, Reception and Year 1 took part in virtual lessons that focused on a range of safety aspects including the importance of wearing seatbelts in cars and crossing roads safely. In the Summer term, Year 2 children took part in Scooter training where they were taught how to use their scooters safely on public footpaths. All children in Year 5 had the opportunity to take part in Bikeability training where they were taught to safely cycle on the local roads around the school. They also all received 'distractions' training where they covered the dangers surrounding the use of mobile phones while walking.

Where possible, throughout the year, we have also been using public transport or walking to school, promoting the use of sustainable travel. This year, both film club and the Year 5 children travelled by train when visiting the British Film Institute in London and Airbus in Stevenage respectively, whilst many classes across the school have walked to local venues such as churches and book shops.

We have also taken part in a number of national initiatives such as Be Bright, Be Seen; Cycle to School Week; National Road Safety Week; Walk to School Week; and Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel Week – where we came fourth in Hertfordshire for large primary schools.

All this, along with additional information that we have on both the school website and noticeboard, meant that in February, we were awarded our bronze accreditation from Modeshift STARs - a national schools' awards scheme. We are very hopeful that with the support of all our families here at William Ransom we will be able to reach our silver accreditation by the end of 2023. Keep safe and keep active!

Victoria Wheat

Governor Training

We are extremely fortunate at William Ransom School to have a strong, knowledgeable and diverse range of Governors across the Governing Body. Alongside their own expertise that each Governor brings, the Training Governor assesses the training needs, identifies any gaps and encourages Governors to attend training courses and report back to the full Governing Body on what they have learnt.

At the start of this academic year, we launched a new HfL Education training development pathway which mapped out a number of routes for Governors to follow to reach the following levels as a Governor: Emerging, Effective, Experienced and Expert. This enabled Governors to focus on a pathway and complete training that would enable them to complete that path. Newer members to the Governing Body would concentrate on the Emerging pathway which would include training such as, Introduction to Governance, Governor Visits and Safeguarding. Whilst some of the longer-serving members concentrated on the Experienced and Expert pathways which would include training modules such as Health and Safety, Pupil Premium, Ofsted and Safer Recruitment. These paths would be completed by utilising the many resources that our Governing Body have access to, including Modern Governor and The Key. "A well trained and knowledgeable Governing Body is an effective Body" and this is certainly what we strive to achieve every academic year.

Nina Achal

Learning Beyond the Classroom



It has been a very busy year, not only within the classroom, but outside of it too. There has been a broad range of events bringing the children's learning to life and adding enrichment and fun into the curriculum. These trips and visits have ranged from the arts and science, to RE and sport. There are so many events to list here but it's worth highlighting a few trips that stand out.

One of the first trips was back in October with Key Stage 1's visit to the Multisport Festival at Whitehill School, where the children took part in 5 activities as part of the Herts Schools' Sports Partnership. This partnership was also utilised by Year 3 in May with a session from a professional athletics coach in learning about running, relay and the long jump.

A slightly more esoteric sport that was played this year was Year 5 and 6's Quidditch day in March! A growing sport in popularity, with the children sorted into one of the 4 famous houses of Hogwarts, all allocated by the Sorting Hat. There followed a day of fun, agility and teamwork exercises that made up the 'Quidditch Games'!

Finally, on the sporting front, is perhaps the crowning achievement of the year with the Year 6 boys, (after a tense penalty shootout) winning the Wix Centenary Shield at county level. Our Goalkeeper even taking the winning sudden death penalty with a (unbeknownst to him at the time) broken wrist! A truly great effort from the staff and team. The entire school are proud of the football team's achievements.



Also, as part of history, Year 4 had an Anglo Saxon Day with History off the Page coming into school. The children could choose between weaving, candle making and jewellery making. Pottery skills were used to sculpt gargoyles and a pendant mould. Classes were then taken outside to learn battle cries and defence. In the afternoon, Year 4 became archaeologists using tools to excavate and record artefacts and the winning pendant mould was even turned into a pewter pendant!

In more modern history, Year 1 have been learning about the Pioneers of Flight. To support the subject a trip to the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden occurred in April. As part of the guide-led tour, the children tried on various flying helmets through the ages and learnt the 1934 MacRobertson Air Race from London to Australia and even rode on a vintage bus!

From Flying and into Space. Year 5 had a trip to Airbus and the STEM Discovery Centre in Stevenage via the train in May. Activities included looking at phases of the moon and talks on the development and of the Exomars European Mars Rover including a visit to the sand-filled 'Mars Yard' which helped test the Rover for driving over the surface of Mars and the rigours that it will endure. In a related science subject, Year 3 had a Circus Science Workshop in school with demonstrations on how friction, push, pull and twisting forces, that the children had been learning about, play a part in many circus skills, such as plate spinning, juggling and even riding a unicycle!



Kevin Briggs

Governor meetings and Visits



The Governing Body of William Ransom Primary School has a crucial statutory responsibility to establish and monitor school policies, evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum, and be accountable for the school's performance. During a school inspection, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) expects Governors to be aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which they will assess.

The full Governing Body consists of teaching staff, parents, co-opted individuals, and a Local Authority Governor. They meet six times a year to discuss strategic aspects of the school's operation. Additionally, there are four sub-committees: Personnel, Finance, Premises, and Learning & Teaching. These sub-committees collectively hold approximately 15 meetings per year.

One of the most effective ways for Governors to become acquainted with their school is to visit during regular school hours and observe its daily operations. By engaging with staff and students, as well as exploring classrooms, Governors can gain a comprehensive understanding of the school environment. We strongly believe that well-executed school and classroom visits significantly contribute to Governors' comprehension of the school, its staff, and its students.

The Governing Body also attends various other events, including information evenings for new Reception parents. These events foster interaction between parents and Governors, enhancing collaboration and transparency.

Governors find these visits highly informative and invaluable, enabling them to make significant contributions to the school's overall strategic management. This includes prioritising the school plan, fulfilling Safeguarding responsibilities, addressing challenges, and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.

Apart from school visits, we participate in various events too, such as new Reception evenings and coffee & chat parent voice sessions. These occasions allow us to meet and engage with new parents, providing them with an informal understanding of the role of School Governors. Additionally, one of our School Governors recently accompanied Year 1 students on a trip to the Shuttleworth Collection, focusing on the Pioneers of Flight. During this excursion, they observed children participating in multiple activities at various hangars, trying on historical helmets and headgear, engaging in a geography exercise about a 1930s air race to Australia, and learning about aircraft camouflage. So, we also have fun while fulfilling our responsibilities!



Being a School Governor is a rewarding experience, and we strongly encourage parents to consider joining the Governing Body whenever an opportunity arises.

Dave Massey

...from the Head

My years at William Ransom have been like one long musical, theatrical show.

It started with an overture, where I learned the art of teaching. I honed my craft and I learned from those around me. I took part in full chorus numbers each year with my Year 6 classes, I took them on residential and enjoyed the full range of activities as a class teacher. But I also had my own side stories running along as I worked for the maths and literacy teams in Hertfordshire as a Leading Teacher, and I made computer programmes for the BBC and I became involved with Disney. I also had a big solo number when I won The Teacher of the Year Award.



I came back after the interval as Headteacher where I performed a soliloquy. The role of a Headteacher can be lonely at times! There was a dark period in the second act as we navigated our way through Covid and then we headed to the finale. A triumphant final chorus with celebrating national events like the Platinum Jubilee and the Coronation. And after the last chorus of the Circle of Life it is time to bring down the final curtain!

It is the end of an era, but it is simply a time for a change and change is a good thing!

This has been another wonderfully challenging year. We finally have a complete school – 420 pupils, so we are using every inch of space to its maximum capacity! Every day there are new challenges for us to face and in most cases the pupils rise to these challenges and meet them head on. The teaching staff have organised some wonderful school visits to places like



The Roald Dahl museum, Herrings Farm, Airbus, Shuttleworth and Mountfitchet Castle. Trips like these embellish and embroider the curriculum and bring learning to life!

We have met the demands imposed upon us by the government and we have gone from strength to strength. The SPA have organised some wonderful events raising a huge amount of money which we can use to enhance the facilities enjoyed by all the children.

We haven't stopped and even now, that I am doing things 'for the last time', we are not slowing down. We are in the middle of Lion King rehearsals, getting ready for the musical extravaganza for the end of term, we are preparing for sports days, writing reports and drawing up plans for next year. Life in a school never stops; it really is The Circle of Life, and what do I think about next year? Hakuna Matata!

Mary Driver

The William Ransom Primary School

Roll of Honour 2023

Arjan Achal	Ben Fennemore
Aasif Ahmed	Emily Godfrey
Poppy Amos	Ruhi Goswami
Mahmoud Antar	William Hackett
Hannah Bailey	Phoebe Hemming
Faridah-Iman Bajulaiye	Artem Hladun
Theodore Barrett	Lucas Hodgins
Sargun Boparai	Max Horobin
Tilly Bullmore	Bethel Imasuru
William Busolini	Rishan Kalra
Samuel Clarke	Max Kearney
Abhay Davit	Amyran Khattran
Ciara Eck	Lily Knight
Ava Ewan	Luca Kostarz
Henry Feeney	Jonah Langdon



The William Ransom Primary School

Roll of Honour 2023

Toby Mace

Jimmy Marshall

Sienna Massie

Nathan Middleton

Layla Newton

Jack Norton

Kesiah Ochiabuto

Udonna Odimgbe

Henry Odong

Bruno Orecchia

Ruben Parhar

Seren Parry

Deeya Patara

Sahil Peer

Lucy Phillips

Joshua Potts

Maahi Punni

Salman Rawther

Fareeda Sabri

Aashi Shah

Olivia Siverns

Mishka Sodhi

Nini Teng

Oscar Tyler

Shevon Warnakulasuriya

Jack Watson

Andrea Webber

Sophia Webber

Adam Willis

Helena Wilson

