

Tranmere Park Primary School

Resources Subcommittee Annual Report 2019/20



At the start of the year two new members of the Governing Body joined the Resources subcommittee. Peter Lewis (appointed September 2019) and James Davies (appointed 2019) joined Kirsten Finley (Head) and Clare Wright (reelected parent Governor June 2020 / Resources Chair) replacing Stacey Fletcher and Mark Lewis who both left during the summer term 2019. Both Peter and James have finance and business backgrounds so bring a wide range of skills to complement existing member skills. Mark Howorth (School Business Manager) was also elected an associate member of the Governing Body (February 2020) and also attends these subcommittee meetings.

As ever, the resources subcommittee have been charged by the full governing body with overseeing the effective use of all of the school's resources to the best of their abilities. This includes everything from money coming into school from the local authority to the impact of teaching and support staff employed by the school on the budget, as well as all buildings, land, materials within the school. It is our job to make sure everything and everyone in school makes a positive contribution to your child's education with value for money being an underlying principle.

Specific areas covered by the resources committee in the last 12 months have included:

1. Agreeing the school budgets for the coming financial year and recommending their adoption to the full governing body.
2. Reviewing school's performance against the agreed budget and challenging any significant variances to ensure the financial viability of the school is maintained.
3. Undertaking health and safety reviews of the school premises and making recommendations for improvements.
4. Reviewing the policies and procedures relevant to the school's resources and ensuring they are fit for purpose.
5. Considering the impact of staff changes within the school (such as Noctua secondments and staff leaving) against the approved budget.
6. Considering the impact of the bulge cohort moving out of school and how best to arrange classes within the school to accommodate them with available staff and funds.
7. Monitoring the progress of building works / improvements within school.
8. Initiatives undertaken this school year include outdoor classroom, seating in EYFS Fort area, Roof inspections, external paintwork with the exception of the high-level hall areas and priority tree work in line with the tree survey.
9. Setting rents for commercial and community groups using school space (this in turn generates additional income for use within school).
10. Agreeing dinner money and milk charges, exploring if there are more efficient ways of providing these services.
11. Completion of the School Financial Value Statement (This looks at how effective the school is in terms of financial management and provide evidence to Leeds City Council).
12. Challenged value for money of service provisions such as service and goods contracts, providing secondments to Noctua, wrap around care and holiday club.
13. Reviewing the school premises development plan and deciding on priorities forthcoming 12 months.

If governors feel that the school is not operating as efficiently as it could it is imperative that challenge is made and the situation resolved, especially in the environment of reduced government funding the financial health of the school can deteriorate quickly.

This year was particularly challenging due to a number of reasons. On-going budget restraints, staff absences and the global pandemic have had a big impact on school and may continue to have for the foreseeable future. However, the excellent work done through Noctua and generous donations from the PTA prior to the pandemic have helped contribute to the much-needed other income received by the school.

2019/20 school year is a tale of two halves. Like every other aspect of life, the impact of COVID-19 has been felt in all areas of our lives. School were able to complete many of the items of the school development plan prior to COVID-19, but due to budget constraints and forecast in-year deficit some capital works items were already reprogrammed into 2020/21.

During a time of unprecedented uncertainty, which was worrying and distressing for many, School have continued to provide support and assistance to staff, pupils and their families. Following Government guidelines and taking into account building constraints, school was able to provide places for the children of critical workers during the COVID-19 crisis. Staff also provided spaces for critical worker children over the Easter and Spring holidays. At the start of June, we were also able open the doors to any reception and year 1 children who wanted to return, creating new bubbles in line with Government Guidance. Due to the size and nature of the building we were unable to provide sufficient spaces for the year 6 children to return at the same time but by bringing the start of the summer holidays forward for the year 1 children, Year 6 bubbles were formed in the last week of term for those wanting to return.

COVID-19 has also impacted the predicted income for school. The planned Easter holiday club which usually brings much needed funds to school was not able to go ahead. Likewise, the impact of the summer holiday club not going ahead this summer will affect next years income. PTA events were also forced to cancel and looking forward the nature of events may be very different resulting in less income next year.

The immediate priority is to ensure we continue to provide a safe and secure environment for our teachers, staff, pupils and their families. We need to ensure that school operates to its optimum capacity, maximising pupil numbers in line with Government guidance and continue to create long term, diverse income streams to support additional functions.

It has been a challenging year for the resources committee and everyone in school but it is tremendous to see school continue to provide the support and reassurance to our staff and pupils in such unprecedented times.

With the uncertainty still surrounding the current pandemic we expect 2020/21 will be just as challenging, but we look forward to rising to the challenges next year may bring.

July 2020