RHODES AVENUE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Governors' Annual Report to Parents

2025/2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

This academic year has seen the continued success of the school, most notably demonstrated by our Ofsted inspection in February 2026 where we achieved a Strong outcome in every single category. Further details are included later in this document but my favourite section of the report is this:

"The school places great importance on collaboration. This begins in the early years, where children play and learn happily alongside one another. This creates a harmonious school where pupils feel happy and develop a strong sense of belonging… Pupils know that if they feel sad or worried, staff will listen and help them. This means pupils feel cared for and safe."

To know that Rhodes Avenue is a place where children feel happy and safe is everything a governor or school leader could ask for. Of course, we did not need an Ofsted inspection to tell us this, but it is nice for it to be formally recognised!

This year also marks my last as Chair of Governors, having served on the board for nine years. It has been an immense pleasure and privilege to have been a part of the Rhodes Avenue school community and I look forward to cheering on from afar as the school continues its extraordinary work. My only disappointment is knowing that the financial situation continues to be of great concern, despite the immense efforts from all to reduce our deficit. Continuous underfunding and unprecedented rising costs have meant that the fight for financial stability is far from over – not just for us, but for all schools.

As ever, our thanks as a governing body go to all members of staff across the school—from teachers and TAs to the site team, admin staff, and cleaners—for their continued dedication and professionalism. And to our incredible pupils: thank you for your hard work, energy, kindness, and joy. You are what makes Rhodes Avenue truly special.

We wish you and your families a restful and joyful summer.

All best wishes,

Fiona Doyle

Chair of Governors on behalf of the Rhodes Avenue Primary School Governing Body

Key Functions of the Governing Body

School governors have a varied role helping the school run effectively. The governor role is strategic rather than operational; governors don't get involved with the day to day running of a school, instead supporting and challenging the school's leadership team to drive school improvement.

The governing body undertakes a wide range of monitoring activity, including:

- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Planning the strategic direction of the school including its values, aims and aspirations
- Inviting members of the senior leadership team and subject leads to governing body and committee meetings to report on key areas
- Monitoring visits within school to meet with subject leads and discuss aspects of the school development plan
- Pupil, staff and parent surveys

Overview of the Year

This year has seen Rhodes Avenue continue to develop its position as a highly respected school within the teaching community, with numerous links being forged between other institutions and our good practice shared and modelled for teaching staff beyond Rhodes Avenue.

Professional Collaboration

Our teaching staff have been actively involved in local learning networks, sharing best practice and reinforcing our commitment to innovation in curriculum design and delivery. Teaching staff from Early Years, D&T and Art have led sessions for external staff to share ideas and model success.

External Reviews

Our February 2026 Ofsted inspection report demonstrated many of the wonderful attributes of the school and was a reflection of the high standards and expectations set by all staff. Highlights included:

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly and make purposeful links across subjects. Therefore, pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Teaching approaches are adapted effectively so that pupils with SEND and those facing other barriers to learning achieve highly. Pupils who require support to catch up receive swift targeted support. – Curriculum and Teaching

The early years is a hive of joyous learning and play. Nurturing relationships between staff and children create a warm and trusting environment where children feel safe to explore and take risks in their learning. Staff care deeply about them and know their needs and interests well. – Early Years

Leaders and staff swiftly and accurately identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or pupils facing other barriers to learning early on in their school careers. Highly effective teaching approaches significantly reduce any barriers to learning. Pastoral support for

pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs is a strength of the school. Staff demonstrate high levels of care and a deep understanding of pupils' individual needs because leaders provide regular targeted training. – Inclusion

Leaders and governors do not stand still. They continually refine the curriculum and teaching approaches to drive school improvement. A clear rationale underpins leaders' decisions at all levels, supported by relevant research. – Leadership and Governance

Behaviour is excellent across the school. A culture of high expectations and well-embedded routines ensures that pupils learn in calm, purposeful classrooms where learning is not interrupted. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who face other barriers to learning, collaborate well during learning and social times. – Attendance and Behaviour

A key strength of the school's work is the way leaders embed pupils' character development into all aspects of school life. Leadership opportunities enable pupils to understand the positive impact they can have on their school and wider community. – Personal Development and Wellbeing

Academic Achievement

Due to issues technical issues with the new online marking platform and data transfer systems used by the exam contractor Pearson, there has been a delay in the release of the SATs results, which is disappointing and unacceptable given the pressures put on schools to ensure compliance from their end. In any case we are incredibly proud of our Year 6 cohort, who worked incredibly hard this year whilst also finding time to enjoy their final year of primary school and reflect on all of their tremendous achievements. We wish them all the best as they make the transition to secondary education and know that the firm foundations they have built at Rhodes Avenue will serve them well as they undertake the next part of their educational journeys.

Governance Overview

Governing Body Changes

Fiona Doyle is stepping down as Chair of Governors, having served on the board for nine years. Alex Morgan's term as a parent governor also ended this academic year and co-opted governor Reene Deeba stepped down due to new work commitments. We thank them for their service and commitment to the school. We also welcomed four new members:

- Rosie Freedman, elected as a Parent Governor
- Ahmed Bashir, elected as a Parent Governor, effective September 2026
- Kristine Stave, appointed as a Co-opted Governor
- Melissa Suen, appointed as a staff governor

September will see the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair to continue to successfully lead the governing body.

Key Priorities for 2025–2026 Revisited

- **Preparation for Ofsted**

The school were back in the Ofsted window as of September 2025 and so knew that a visit was potentially imminent. A new Ofsted Framework was launched in November 2025 which meant that all staff and governors undertook extensive training to understand the new expectations and get to

grips with the revised format. The school's hard work towards this priority proved fruitful with a very successful inspection outcome in February 2026.

- **Financial Sustainability**

Despite a significant reduction in the school's deficit, with projections showing the budget should have returned to balance by the end of the 2025–2026 financial year as a result of careful spending and strategic resourcing, we once again see a deficit budget in operation due to rising costs across every area of the school and continued underfunding by the government. The current deficit is now £146,000. This has meant that the school have had to once again take out a loan, this time of £240,000 in order to cover operating costs. Therefore, financial sustainability remains a priority and a concern for the governors.

We remain immensely grateful to staff for maintaining the quality of provision despite financial constraints.

- **Supporting the Leadership Team**

With the departure of Assistant Headteacher Emel Ali at Easter, the governors have been mindful of the workload facing the headship team in the final term of the school year prior to a new appointment being made. We are pleased to see that Kayleigh Meek has been appointed from September 2026 as Assistant Head with responsibility for behaviour and attitudes. The governors look forward to welcoming Kayleigh to the headship team and supporting her and the rest of the school leaders as they build upon their successes and work towards the new school priorities.

Governing Body Membership, July 2026

Chair of Governors:	Fiona Doyle chair@rhodesavenue.org.uk
Vice Chair	Lucy Freestone
Clerk to Governors:	Jasbir Aujla Jaujla1.309@lgflmail.org

Parent Governors	Lucy Freestone, Christy White, Rachel Ormsby, Rosie Freedman
Co-opted Governors	Fiona Doyle, Stephen Wan, Shanuk Mediwaka, Kevin Lukau, Kristine Stave
LA Governor	Simon Green
Staff Governors	Melissa Suen, Lou Colley
Headteacher	Maria Panayiotou-Agyrou
Associate Members	Cigdem Murat, Jo Tillson, Andrew Satwick, Jette Rayner

Governor Body Vacancies

The governing board currently has the following vacancies (as of July 2026):

- Co-opted Governor

Governor Attendance at Meetings

Governors have maintained all our statutory requirements for meetings of the governing body during this academic year (view Governor attendance). All minutes are available on the Governor's page of the Rhodes Avenue website.

Governor Monitoring Activity

All governor visits are recorded on Governor Hub. This allows all governors to read about which visits have taken place and what has been monitored or discussed. It is always a pleasure to visit the school and see all the wonderful learning opportunities the children have.

Governing Body Priorities for the Coming Year 2026-2027

- Inclusive SEND provision in an evolving national landscape
- Long term financial sustainability
- Confident, respectful partnerships across our school community

Governing Body Development

The governing body's priority is to ensure governors fulfil their strategic role to support and challenge the school's leadership team. At the beginning of this academic year, we held a review of all of our committees and changed membership and committee chair roles to ensure our governors continue to develop their skills and bring fresh perspectives to different committees they may not have sat on previously.

Our curriculum committee holds strategic oversight of the learning taking place in the school and the resources committee scrutinises school spending, seeking to find ways in which we can make savings and remain financially viable as an institution. Our EDI committee scrutinises school practice through the lens of equity and inclusion to ensure we are fulfilling our aims as a fully inclusive community. Our premises and health and safety committee is responsible for the strategic oversight of the building's maintenance and ensuring it is a safe workplace for staff and children. This year we also formed a communications working party to examine and revise the communications between school and home, with a focus on the wellbeing of the school's staff, their workload and work/life balance. From September, this will also become a committee.

Report from Lead Safeguarding Governor, Lucy Freestone

Safeguarding remains one of the governing board's highest priorities. Governors have continued to monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements throughout the year, providing oversight and challenge to ensure that every child remains safe and well supported. The Governing Board was pleased that Ofsted recognised this by reporting " Governors check… that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are enacted and that the equality duties are met. Ofsted also noted that the school has "established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility" and that "pupils are made safer and feel safe."

Report from EDI Committee Chair, Rachel Ormsby

This year, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has continued to champion the school's commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive and respectful environment where every child and member of staff feels a genuine sense of belonging. We monitored progress against the school's Equality Objectives, celebrating the many ways equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded throughout school life while identifying opportunities for continued development. We were particularly encouraged by pupil feedback, which consistently showed that children feel safe, valued, listened to and included, and by the growing confidence of staff following training in unconscious bias, gender bias, racial literacy, neurodiversity and trauma-informed practice. Governors recognise the positive impact this has had on both staff confidence and pupils' experiences, fostering more inclusive and empathetic approaches. We are especially proud to see children with SEND participating in leadership roles and extracurricular activities at rates comparable to their peers, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring opportunities are truly accessible to all.

The committee also celebrated the success of the Pupil Inclusion Champions, whose work has helped create a culture where difference is celebrated, neurodiversity is understood, and pupils increasingly view it as a strength. Alongside a diverse and representative curriculum, effective approaches to addressing identity-based behavioural incidents, and a strong focus on pupil voice, governors recognised growing resilience among pupils and praised the school's inclusive ethos. Another important milestone this year was the introduction of a Pupil Wellbeing Policy, strengthening the school's approach to supporting pupils' social, emotional and mental health. The committee looks forward to building on these achievements over the coming year, continuing to ensure that inclusion remains at the heart of every aspect of school life and that every member of our community is supported to flourish.

School Vision and Values

At Rhodes Avenue, we want our children to:

Know who they are

Respect others for who they are

Never stop learning

School Values:

*We will act with **cooperation** because we are a **community**.*

*We will use **creativity** to learn and grow.*

*We will show **consideration** as everyone is of equal value and importance.*

We continue to believe that these values are inherent in the fabric of Rhodes Avenue. They are a part of the school’s everyday language and we are delighted that our external reviews this year have shown that they are truly embedded as part of the Rhodes Avenue culture.