

Chair of Governors Impact Statement
Suhashini Sinha
2024/25 and 2025/26

As Chair of Governors and as a parent, I am delighted to be part of the Windmill Hill Primary School community. All the staff work tirelessly to create a school environment that is welcoming, safe, warm and friendly, and that pupils are eager to attend every day. Over the last year, I have made a number of visits to observe daily school life. Every time I arrive, I see happy children from Reception through to Year 6, enjoying all aspects of life at school. I always observe exceptional standards, both in teaching and behaviour. It is obvious how much the children take pride in being part of the school community.

The last two years at school has seen change and transformation in many areas. During this time, the staff have come together under Paula Newman's steadfast leadership, to steer the school through turbulent waters with confidence.

The school was visited by Ofsted in 2024, after a long gap of over 10 years. The last decade has seen some major shifts in Runcorn's political and societal landscape, including the way in which Ofsted themselves assess and inspect primary schools. The staff and pupils worked really hard to show the school at its very best, and through their dedicated efforts, achieved an 'Outstanding for behaviour and attitudes', and 'Good in all other areas'. Everyone- staff, pupils, parents and carers- should be rightly proud of this result. Ofsted inspections are always very thorough and examine every aspect of the school in detail so it is extremely rewarding that the school was recognised for its high standards and exceptional pupil behaviour.

As governors, we are called on to scrutinise the schools financial management. We must ensure that the school budget balances and sometimes, this means making difficult financial decisions to ensure longer term stability for the school. During 2025, financial factors affecting primary schools across Halton, including Windmill Hill, the governors supported a staff restructure. This process sadly resulted in some of our longstanding staff leaving the Windmill Hill family. The governors recognise the dedication and hard work that these staff members have put into the school over the years, and we thank them, wishing them well for the future.

Coming out of the other side of the restructure, it is pleasing to see that the school now finds itself in a secure financial position once more, and able to look to the future. The 2025/2026 year has also seen wholesale change to the way classes are managed, with the introduction of mixed year groups and larger class sizes. The birth rate in Halton has fallen steadily over the last 5 years, and our school needs to be able to respond to changing numbers of pupil intakes year on year, to be able to maintain the high standards we are recognised for. The governors supported the decision to introduce mixed classes, knowing that it comes with challenges, but thinking about the school's future sustainability.

Our school pupils have shown remarkable resilience and maturity in the face of these changes. It is obvious that pupils regard Windmill Hill Primary school as their 'safe space', and this is reinforced by the robust safeguarding procedures that staff and governors must follow. Safeguarding is at the heart of all the work the governors do; this includes scrutinising health and safety and the well-being of children and staff. All governors have received up-to-date comprehensive training to ensure confidence to cope with any issues that should arise.

It has been and continues to be a privilege to serve as your Chair of Governors.
I wish all children, parents, carers and staff all the very best for the next academic year.