



Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery Annual Statement of Effectiveness – Academic Year 2025/26

1. Introduction to the School and Governing Board

Robert Sandilands School is a one form entry all-through primary school and nursery with a catchment area in the north of Newbury. At the end of the 2025/26 academic year, we had 226 pupils on the school roll.

The school has a very strong commitment to developing the unique qualities of each child and has a wide-ranging after-school enrichment programme. Pegasus Club offers those joining the Club before and after school care and opportunities for play and learning as well as hot meals and snacks.

Those children for whom pupil premium funds are received by the school have additional interventions as detailed on the pupil premium spend report on the school's website.

2. Governance structure

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all governing bodies, the three core strategic functions of the Governing Board are to: 1) ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction; 2) hold the Head Teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; 3) overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent.

In 2025/26 the Full Governing Board met in person on seven occasions.

Minutes of the Governing Board meetings are added to the school website periodically throughout the year. The Instrument of Government can be viewed on the school website under the heading "The Governing Board". In 2025/26 the Chair of the Governing Board was Ian Nichol, and the Vice Chair was Janet Rimmer.

The Governing Board has delegated some functions to two Committees - the Finance Committee which meets once each long term and the Pay Committee which meets in the autumn term. The Committees have terms of reference and a membership agreed by the Governing Board annually. Full details of Governing Board and Committee memberships are available on the school website here <http://bit.ly/2Kwq7vN>.

Individual governors take on responsibilities for key areas of the school and report to the Governing Board on issues and progress in those areas. Governors also meet or speak to teachers through school visits and in the context of the responsibilities they have taken on to understand and monitor the implementation of the curriculum and outcomes related to it. In 2025/26 governors taking lead roles were as follows:

	Key Areas of Responsibility	Curriculum Area Lead
Ian Nichol	Chair of Governing Board / Health and Safety, Premises Governor	EYFS
Janet Rimmer	Vice-Chair of Governing Board / Development, SEND, Teaching and Learning Governor	English, Music
Paul Archer	Chair of Finance, Sports Premium Governor	Maths, PE
Katy Patten	Equality, More Able, Pupil Premium, Oracy Governor	History, Geography and RE
Mary Wearn	Safeguarding, PSHE/RSE	PSHE / RSE and Art and Design
Daniel Scoon		Science and DT
Sue Nicholson	Digital Safety	Computing

3. Attendance at meetings

Listed below are the attendance details for each Full Governing Board and Finance Committee meeting in 2025/26.

Y = attended

N = did not attend

N/A = not applicable

Attendance at Full Governing Board (FGB) Meetings 2025/26								
Name	Sept 24th	Dec 4th	Jan 22nd	Feb 26th	Mar 12th	Apr 28th	July 9th	Total Attended
Paul Archer	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	4/7
Libby Bucknell	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7/7
Eve Burke	Y	Y	Y	NA	Y	Y	Y	6/6
Ian Nichol	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7/7
Sue Nicholson	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	5/7
Katy Patten	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7/7
Janet Rimmer	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	5/7
Daniel Scoon	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6/7
Mary Wearn	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7/7

Name	20th Oct (additional meeting)	13th Nov	Feb 12th	2nd Mar (additional meeting)	Apr 23rd	11th Jun	Total attended
Paul Archer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	4/4
Libby Bucknell	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	4/4

Ian Nichol	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	4/4
Daniel Scoon	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	3/6

Assessment of effectiveness and impact.

Board Capability and Management

During the academic year the Board had a full complement of Governors with a wide range of knowledge and qualifications. Board meetings are well attended The Board is supported and advised by a Clerk.

During the course of the year Governors attended a range of training courses in order to maintain or enhance their skills and knowledge. Information on this training is attached as **Appendix A**

Safeguarding

The Board takes very seriously its duties and obligations to ensure the safeguarding of pupils at the School. We ensure that all training is up to date. We have nominated a safeguarding lead Governor who meets regularly with the school leadership to review safeguarding arrangements, and the outcome of the governor's work is reported to each Governing Board meeting and considered. The termly Headteacher's Report also provides an opportunity to review and, if necessary, challenge safeguarding issues. Similarly, we have a governor who reviews the education arrangements for SEND pupils and reports on this to the Board at every other meeting.

The School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SDP) is the key strategic document for the school setting out its aims and objectives and its key plans and priorities for development and improvement over a period of three years. The SDP is drafted based on evidence from a number of key source documents. These include the latest OFSTED report (having particular regard to the areas identified for improvement), data (internal data and the results of Key Stage and other testing for attainment and progress) and the School's Self Evaluation document which is reviewed an update at the start of each academic year. In addition, the SDP is informed by local and national policy developments and educational context and by parent and pupil voice. The Governing Board formally reviewed, revised, and rolled forward the SDP at the start the 2025/26 academic year and reviewed the progress of the SDP each term, considering corrective actions and modifications in the light of operating experience. The large majority of the objectives and actions in the SDP had been achieved by the end of the year and in the few cases where this is not the case the reasons have been clear and corrections to the SDP made, or the action carried forward to the next year.

Nursery Provision

During the year the Governors explored the need for expanded Nursery provision and produced a detailed business plan. The outcome was that Governors agreed to expand our current successful nursery provision to 32.5 hours over 5 days a week from September 2026. This has proved very popular with parents with bookings more than matching our expectations.

Pay it Forward

Recognising the challenges that some parents face in providing for all the 'extras' that children will experience during their time at the School, Governors have introduced a 'Pay it Forward' scheme. Pay It Forward has become a worldwide known movement that promotes the undertaking of random acts of kindness. For us at RS that can take many forms; for example: a general donation which we can decide how to use, in the best way to support our children or a donation to help us take our children on school trips which carry extra costs that some families cannot afford to pay. Pay it Forward is only for people who feel they are able to make a donation; it is not compulsory.

Friends of Robert Sandilands

We have been very grateful to the Friends of Robert Sandilands for their support over the year. They work closely with the School's leadership. We are very appreciative, in particular, for their support for funding annual events like the pantomime visits, supporting costs for Christmas Parties, stamps for letters to Father Christmas, as well as funds to support each class with whatever their needs might be e.g. wet play games. They also support school trip travel costs as needed and fundraise for larger projects e.g. purchase of trim trail items or EYFS resources.

Pupil Progress and Attainment

The Board receive a termly detailed written Head Teacher's report covering all areas of the school's management and performance and Governors spend much effort reviewing these reports, questioning and challenging the School leadership where appropriate. Governors have high expectations about the progress and attainment of pupils at Robert Sandilands and over the year received regular reports on pupil progress and attainment for the nursery and both Key Stages and considered and challenged the data where appropriate to ensure they felt confident of the School's performance. Where areas for improvement are identified, the School takes improvement measures, and these are monitored by FGB. The Governors and the school have particularly been focussing on progress and attainment of all pupils now in Year 5 and 6, some of the children most affected by the Covid restrictions.

The School has a well-developed plan for the use of Pupil Premium funding to support the learning and development needs of disadvantaged pupils and to support other groups of children who would benefit from additional investment in their education. Information about this is published on the school website. Progress in implementing the plan is reviewed by the lead governor with the school's leadership and reported to the Governing Board.

In January 2026 we were pleased to receive a letter from the then Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson, congratulating the School Leadership and Teachers "on the excellent outcomes the disadvantaged pupils at Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery achieved at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Your school's performance places it among the very best nationally, and this is a significant achievement.

She said "This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together. Thank you for everything you do to give children the best possible opportunities to succeed."

Since that letter our Headteacher and colleagues have been working with the Local Authority and other schools to support the development of good practice for disadvantaged pupils in West Berkshire.

We have received provisional results for the outcome of the KS2 SATs test taken in the summer of 2026. Once again, the cohort's results show that the pupils at the School are performing better than those nationally and in West Berkshire in Reading, Writing, Grammar/Punctuation/Spelling and Science.

Curriculum

The School works hard to plan and deliver a child-centred, broad, and balanced curriculum. During the year the Governors have focused on understanding how effectively this curriculum is taught and whether there are ways in which the Board can support and enhance its delivery. The Board appointed lead governors for each of the key curriculum areas. They meet with the school lead professionals for that curriculum area, visit the school to see how the curriculum is delivered and report back to the Board. This year the Governors devoted a full Board meeting to focus on the new OFSED inspection framework and the learning that offers for the School.

School Site and Premises

Our health and safety and premises lead Governor regularly visited the site with the School Business Manager and the Headteacher to review premises and health and safety issues, reporting the outcome to the Governing Board and Finance Committee. We maintain an asset management plan which is reviewed regularly.

Schools are provided with very limited funds to invest in maintaining and improving the school buildings, land and equipment. In the last academic year, we invested in a new carpet for Manticore and a new combi over for the school kitchen to replace an irreparable one. Our Caretaker has also undertaken many minor improvements to the buildings and grounds and carried on with our programme of painting classrooms and other areas.

Value for Money

The Finance Committee has been effective in working with the Headteacher to ensure that despite the financial challenges we face the school has achieved a robust budget situation with a reasonable level of reserves held for the financial year 2026/27. The committee carefully scrutinised the budget and its management over the course of the year and undertakes every year an annual benchmarking exercises comparing our school to similar schools to inform decision making. Our effectiveness is reviewed through the annual completion of a Schools Financial Value Statement assessment process which is scrutinised by the local authority. Despite the challenging external financial environment, we have been able to set a budget that reflects the School's aspirations for resourcing teaching and learning in the financial year 2026/27. However, we recognise that the next two years will be very difficult financial unless there is to be a step change in the financial support provided to schools.

Academic Year 2026/27

Our ambition is that Robert Sandilands should continue to be recognised as a School that provides an outstanding educational, social and emotional education for our pupils. We intend to build on the work of the Board last year and the investments that have been made to aim to realise that ambition.

Training Completed Academic Year 2025-26

Paul Archer

Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training

24 Sep 2025

Libby Bucknell

DSL Refresher Course

31 Mar 2026

Manual Handling

5 Jan 2026

Working at Height

5 Jan 2026

Fire Awareness

5 Jan 2026

Asbestos Training

5 Jan 2026

First Aid Training

3 Sep 2025

Universal Safeguarding e-learning

2 Sep 2025

Prevent e-learning

2 Sep 2025

Eve Burke

Manual Handling

5 Jan 2026

Working at Height

5 Jan 2026

Fire Awareness

5 Jan 2026

Asbestos Training

5 Jan 2026

First Aid Training

3 Sep 2025

Universal Safeguarding Online Training

2 Sep 2025

Tia Liu

Manual Handling

5 Jan 2026

Working at Height

5 Jan 2026

Fire Awareness

5 Jan 2026

Asbestos Training

5 Jan 2026

First Aid Training

3 Sep 2025

Universal Safeguarding Online Training

2 Sep 2025

Ian Nichol

Leadership Forum

26 Feb 2026

Universal Safeguarding Children Online Training Course

25 Aug 2025

Sue Nicholson

Universal Safeguarding Online Training	17 Sep 2025
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Katy Patten

Universal Safeguarding Online Training	11 Sep 2025
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Janet Rimmer

Universal Safeguarding Online Training	16 Sep 2025
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Daniel Scoon

Universal Safeguarding Online Training	17 Feb 2025
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Mary Wearn

Safeguarding Network Meeting	30 March 2026
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KCSIE 2026 Update webinar	26 Feb 2026
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Universal Safeguarding Online Training	3 Sep 2026
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