**Governors Annual report to parents & carers, July 2025**

**Welcome from the Chair of Governors, Mrs Ruth Trattles**

Having had a long association with School, predominantly due to my role as Deputy Headteacher at Abbey Green Nursery School, I am delighted to continue the support of Nursery Schools through my role as Chair of Governors. The School continues to play a valuable role in meeting all children’s needs and delivering high quality, inclusive early years education. We work hard to ensure the best outcomes for children and families and maintain a motivating and inspiring indoor and outdoor environment. This report provides an overview of how the Governing Body has been actively involved in the development and progress made by the school over the past year. I hope you find the information useful.

**The Governing Body**

**Ruth Trattles**

* Chair of Governors
* Named Governor for Child Protection and Looked After Children
* Headteacher Performance Management Committee

**Michelle Litvinov**

* Vice Chair of Governors
* Local Authority Governor
* Named Governor for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
* Named Governor for Attachment and Trauma

**Bev George**

* Named Governor for Health & Safety (including Digital standards)
* Headteacher Performance Management Committee

**Kelly Ahmed**

* Named Governor for Well-being
* Headteacher Performance Management Committee

**Parent Governors**

**Ruth Phillips**

**Ruth Bowmaker**

**Staff Governors**

**Jayne Taylor**Headteacher & SENDCo

**Ruth Ball**Teacher

**Caroline Clough**                                Associated staff governor

**Clerk to Governors**Wendi Thompson

**The Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has general responsibility for the conduct of the nursery school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement and extended services. Our role as governors is wide ranging and requires various skills to carry out our work effectively. The job is voluntary, most governors work full time and bring their skills learnt in the workplace to carry out their role effectively. We welcome enquiries from all members of the community who would be interested in serving on the Governing Board. Our core functions include ensuring that the school has a clear vision and strategic direction, ensure resources are well managed and hold leaders to account for the quality of education. Holding the head teacher to account for the school’s educational performance is a key role.

**Discharge of Functions**

The functions of the Governing Body, as specified in the Articles of Government for the school broadly fall into the following categories:

* Staffing, organisation and finance
* Monitoring and evaluating educational accountability
* Premises, health & safety
* Support and challenge for the Headteacher

Information from the Governor meetings and the Headteacher’s Reports assist the Governing Board in the Headteacher’s Performance Management process, where the Headteacher is held to account for the School’s progress. The Governors continue to set challenging targets for the Headteacher, guided by an external advisor, that have a focus of continuous improvement throughout the School.

The highest quality teaching practice and continuous professional development has been successfully implemented this academic year. The School has continued to achieve accreditations, namely Attachment & Trauma Sensitive Settings Award, IQM Centre of Excellence and the Healthy Minds Chartermark.

A further key role for Governors is ensuring financial resources are well spent. Budgets have been closely monitored and scrutinised to ensure spending is aligned to school development priorities in order that the curriculum can be taught effectively. Governors have an in-depth working knowledge of the school’s budget and income streams and seek opportunities to challenge best value through their finance meetings and full Governing Board meetings.

The governors have reviewed policies to ensure they are relevant, are compliant and fit for purpose. At our meetings the headteacher has provided a comprehensive report on the progress made in all areas of school life in order that we can be assured that the policies are being put into practice and are effective. Governors are keen to embed a culture of wellbeing for every member of the school community and therefore we have a named Governor who works cohesively with SLT to ensure that the mental health and wellbeing of both children and adults in school is a high priority. Inclusive practice is at the heart of Hirst Wood Nursery School, and our Governor for SEND is intrinsically involved in our specialist provision, particularly supporting parents and carers with her knowledge.

**Hirst Wood Nursery School staff**

Jayne Taylor                                                   Headteacher & SENDCo

Sam Renwick                                                  Assistant Headteacher

**Maple                                                               Nursery 1 & 2**         
Ruth Ball                                                         Teacher

Angie Nash                                                     Early Years Practitioner

Ruth Peacock                                                  Early Years Practitioner

Sarah Taylor                                                    Early Years Practitioner & Sunshine Club Co-ordinator

Claire Hinchliffe Early Years Practitioner

Rosie Doonan Teaching Assistant

Sarah Richardson Teaching Assistant

**Chestnut                                                         Nursery 3**

Rebecca Simpson Teacher

Vanessa Keighley Early Years Practitioner

Liam Glen Teaching Assistant

Claire Fagan Teaching Assistant

**Woodlands                                                     (Specialist Provision)**

Rosy Vincenzi                                                 Teacher for SEND (Tues to Thurs)

Kath Zuchlinski                                               Early Years Practitioner

Melanie Mathers                                            Early Years Practitioner

Grace Fortuna Teaching Assistant

Jayne Bennett Teaching Assistant

Karen Dutton                                                   Teaching Assistant

Sarah Price Teaching Assistant

Gemma Holt Teaching Assistant

Caroline Clough                                               Administration Assistant

**Catering team**

Alessandra Oddy                                             Cook

Laura Szymanski Kitchen assistant

Amanda Hardaker                                          Lunchtime Supervisor

Neelam Bi Lunchtime Supervisor

Hinna Butt Lunchtime Supervisor

Alisha Briscoe Lunchtime Supervisor

**Premises**

Geoff Ball Repairs & Maintenance Manager

*“The sense of community in the school is palpable. Adults treat children with compassion and care. Each child is known and their needs understood by staff. Leaders focus intently on building positive relationships between staff and children. These relationships create an environment of emotional and physical safety for children. This sense of team and partnership extends to relationships with parents.”*

Governors recognise the efforts and good work of all staff in contributing to the success of the School; thank you to all children, parents and the community we serve in making the School the special place that it is.

Sam Renwick, who has been an outstanding Assistant Headteacher, gave notice that she had decided to retire at the end of the academic year. A rigorous recruitment process took place, and the governing board were delighted to appoint Mrs Jenny Sholi as a new Deputy Headteacher with effect from September 2025.

On behalf of the whole Governing Body, I want to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to Sam for her exceptional commitment and dedication during her time as Assistant Headteacher. Her contributions have been invaluable and we are grateful for her support in achieving accolades such as Attachment and Trauma Sensitive Settings Award and the Healthy Minds Chartermark. Sam has been an inspirational teacher to work with, her patience, knowledge and implementation of a high-quality play based early years education is something that the whole Hirst Wood team have benefitted from and will continue have a long-term impact on future children. We wish to officially thank Sam for all that she has done for Hirst Wood, we will miss her very much and hope that she enjoys a long and happy retirement.

**Staff development**

We are all learners, and all staff are encouraged to participate in relevant training courses to develop and update their knowledge and skills and enhance children’s learning. During the past year teaching teams and Governors have attended extensive in house and external courses to develop their expertise in some of the following professional areas:

* Child Protection and Safeguarding (annual updates)
* Attachment & Trauma Sensitive Settings Award
* Inclusion Quality Mark, Centre of Excellence annual review
* Healthy Minds Chartermark
* Food Hygiene Level 2
* Paediatric First Aid training
* Governor awareness training in safeguarding responsibilities
* Attachment Lead Training
* SEND for Governors
* Safer Recruitment

I’m sure that you will agree that for a small staff team, this is a huge investment in continuous professional development.

**Safeguarding children**

Our first concern is for your child’s safety and welfare and the school fully recognises its contribution to protecting and supporting children within school.

The school will therefore:

* Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
* Continue to monitor its effectiveness in safeguarding children, ensuring that everyone knows that safeguarding is a collegiate responsibility
* Ensure that children know they can talk to any adult if they are worried or in difficulty.
* Have a written Child Protection Policy (reviewed annually), which outlines the school’s position and the actions it will take to safeguard the welfare of all children.
* All staff are employed through rigorous safer recruitment processes

Safeguarding is at the heart of all governor monitoring and is an embedded culture. Governors monitored and reviewed safeguarding policies and procedures. Training has ensured that all governors understand their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding has taken part in the completion of the Section S175/157 Safeguarding Audit. Governor training equips governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the policies and practices in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach.

**Curriculum**

The Governors and staff at Hirst Wood place great importance on enabling children to acquire the essential skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge to ensure they achieve their individual potential and are well prepared for school. Through planning and providing structured, first-hand play experiences, all children are able

to become motivated, independent, thinking, caring members of society.

It is important to note that as a local authority-maintained nursery school we are Ofsted inspected under a Section 8 or Section 5 School Inspection, which is the same as a Primary School, not as a childcare provider. We have the same criteria to meet including children’s attendance, punctuality, teaching and learning, children’s achievement, behaviour, leadership and management and we work hard to ensure very high standards throughout our nursery school.

**Equal Opportunities**

At Hirst Wood Nursery School, the learning environment has been created to meet the needs of all children and enable learning and development. The cultural needs of all families connected with the school and the multi-cultural nature of our society are reflected in daily routines and planned activities. We welcome visitors into school to enrich and support children’s learning, including many community events.

**Special Educational Needs**

The Governors and staff at Hirst Wood Nursery School believe in the uniqueness of all individuals, irrespective of physical or intellectual abilities. We are committed to admitting any child into school when the individual needs of the child can be safely met and the appropriate staffing level is available to support the child

We are delighted to have been awarded a continued Inclusion Quality Mark “Centre of Excellence” again this year which is in well-deserved recognition of our inclusive practice. We have been revisited twice, and a link to our updated report has been circulated, but here’s a link should you like to re-read the comprehensive conclusion of our status. <https://www.hirstwoodnscc.co.uk/website/iqm_inclusive_school_award/651988>



We are also thrilled to announce that our work on health and well-being has been officially recognised through the award of Healthy Minds Chartermark. The scheme is a collaboration between Bradford Council and the Bradford District Health and Care Partnership and an opportunity for schools to develop their support around wellbeing and mental health needs, and to demonstrate their outstanding practice.

**Links with the community**

We have hosted some amazing events that children and families have enjoyed. These include Stay and Play sessions for each cohort of new starters, Woodlands Wednesdays, Getting to Know You sessions, Nursery at Night, Christmas & Eid parties, themed weeks every half term, visits to Hirst Wood, leavers picnics, Ian’s mobile farm visit, Hirst Wood Heritage Garden Party and of course, the amazing Graduation Ceremony.

The half termly themed weeks also mean that you are provided with a help at home ideas sheet and a resource to support further knowledge and understanding e.g. toothbrush & toothpaste, magnifying glass, science experiment to try. Please take the time to complete our Parents’ Summer 2025 survey. Your views are important to us so that our School is the best that it can be, and it is also everything that you want and need it to be.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3RHRRKB>

**Extended services**

At Hirst Wood we are able to offer extended provision. Children can attend from 07.45 a.m. to 5.45 p.m. Funded places for children aged two to five are available. We aim to be as flexible as possible so are pleased to offer additional paid for places for half and full day sessions, plus before and after School sessions.

**Conclusion**

We extend thanks to all parents for choosing to be part of Hirst Wood Nursery School, we hope that you will agree that it is indeed, a special place for children and families. If your child is transferring to Primary school this year we hope that they settle quickly and continue their learning journey, having benefited from their time at Hirst Wood.

The governors would like to congratulate all the children, parents and staff for making Hirst Wood Nursery School a happy, healthy place where children make excellent progress with a positive disposition for learning and see themselves as a valuable, successful part of the School. As IQM stated, Hirst Wood truly is a place of possibilities.

Many thanks from all the Governing Body at Hirst Wood Nursery School

Ruth Trattles, Chair of Governors