Governors' Annual Report

Summerhill School

Academic Year
2024/2025

Introduction

Welcome to the Summerhill Governing Board's Annual Report for the 2024/2025 academic year. The aim of this report is to inform you about the work of the Governing Board and its achievements over the last academic year. If, after reading this report you wish to find out more detailed information on individual areas of school life, policy and achievements, you can find this on the school website.

Governors have been active in school, monitoring the School Improvement Plan, undertaking school finance spot checks, meeting Heads of Departments, attending Success Evening, Open Evening and Open Day for prospective Year 7's.

Essential information

Headteacher :	Mr Tim Harris
Chair of Governors :	Mrs Carol Fletcher
Website:	summerhill.dudley.sch.uk
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What is a governing board?

The governing board exists to make sure that the school runs effectively. It is a strategic role and the governing board performance manages the headteacher, who runs the school on a day-to-day basis. The core functions of the governing board are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

Membership of the governing board 2025/2026

Name	Office ends	Committees/additional responsibilities
Parent Governors		
Mrs Verity Bullock	25.11.2027	Member of CSSW Committee
Mrs Natasha Jones	25.11.2027	Member of CSSW Committee
Staff Governor		
Mr Chris Innes	15.09.2028	Member of CSSW Committee
Local Authority Governor		
Cllr Pete Lowe	06.07.2026	Member of CSSW Committee

Co-opted Governors		
Mrs Carol Fletcher	11.02.2029	Chair of Governors Pupil Premium Governor Member of CSSW Committee and F&S Committee
Mrs Sue Watson	26.04.2028	Co-Vice Chair of Governors Joint SEND Governor Sex and Relationships Governor Looked After Children Governor Member of CSSW Committee and F&S Committee
Mrs Cath Ludwig	16.10.2029	Co-Vice Chair of Governors Chair of CSSW Committee
Mrs Claire Williams	06.12.2027	Joint SEND Governor Joint Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor Joint Mental Health and Well-Being Governor Member of CSSW Committee
Mr Ian Shepherd	11.02.2029	Chair of F&S Committee Member of CSSW Committee
Mrs Michelle Hammond	25.10.2027	Joint SEND Governor Joint Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor Joint Mental Health and Well-Being Governor Member of CSSW Committee
Vacancy		
Vacancy		
Vacancy		
Vacancy		
Headteacher		
Mr Tim Harris	Ex-Officio	
Clerk to the Governing Board		
Mrs Nikki Hubbard	31.03.2026	

The full governing board is scheduled to meet three times this academic year. The governing board reviewed its committee structure in the Summer Term and continues to consist of two committees to consider different aspects of the School in detail and five other committees to carry out statutory functions. These committees are listed below. The CSSW Committee consists of all Board members so that every Governor can have the opportunity to be involved in the very important aspects covered by the Committee.

- Finance and Staffing (F&S)
- Curriculum, Standards and Student Welfare (CSSW)
- Pay
- Performance Management
- Pupil Discipline
- Staff Discipline
- Appeals

Our vision for the school

The governing board is responsible for setting the school's vision (what the school will look like in three to five years' time) and strategy (what it will do to get to that point). Our vision was reviewed through conversations with pupils, parents, and staff during the 2021 Headteacher recruitment process and centres on our core value of Success Through Caring focusing on Courage, Ambition, Respect and Effort. We believe this will continue to drive up standards and provide a safe and happy environment for all students.

The best education for all pupils

The governing board is responsible for holding the headteacher to account for the education of students and the management of staff.

Curriculum

As a school we follow the National Curriculum. The curriculum is broad and balanced giving students the opportunity to learn about a full range of subjects at KS3. As students move into Year 9, they are able to specialise slightly whilst still maintaining a wide core of academic subjects. In September 2024, the Year 9 curriculum was slightly tweaked so that all students will now follow courses in Computing and Religious Studies as discrete subjects on their timetable. As students move into Years 10 and 11 they opt for four subjects in addition to English, Maths, Science and then the spectrum of options allow students to follow a highly academic route, e.g. taking three separate sciences as well as two languages or a route with high quality vocational qualifications.

The school meets statutory requirements for Physical Education, Religious Education and Sex and Relationships Education. A special feature of Summerhill's curriculum is the inclusion of Global Learning lessons for all year groups. These provide citizenship, health, careers and other topics relevant for successful adult life with a high profile.

Outcomes

A presentation evening was held in November 2025 to celebrate the successes of the Year 11 class of 2025. Well done to all of those students and we wish them much success going forward.

Outcomes for 2025 are the strongest results Summerhill have achieved. Attainment at Summerhill is very high, with an Attainment 8 of 51.6. 78% of students attained Grade 4 or above in both English and Maths. 61% gained Grade 5 or above in both English and Maths and 17.8% gained Grades 9 – 7 in both English and Maths.

Progress at Summerhill is +0.4 (projected due to no KS2 results) Progress 8 is expected to return in 2026-27 when key stage 2 data is available again.

Pupil Premium (PP) – From the review of Progress data, Summerhill PP students made, on average, half a GCSE grade more progress than PP students nationally.

Current Year 11 data, based on our last data collection which was in November 2025:
Grade 4 or above in both English and Maths: 80%
Grade 5 or above in both English and Maths: 61.1%
Grades 9 – 7 in both English and Maths: 17.4%

Key Stage 3 (based on our last data collection which was in July 2025) – Progress is good, with 81% of all students working at Secure or Higher in their key competencies. This is approximately equivalent of 81% of students being on track to achieve mostly GCSE Grade 5 or higher by the end of Year 11.

SEND

Anna Mohamed is the School's SENCo. A restructure of the Learning Support Assistants in 2025 was undertaken to ensure that there is progression for those staff who wish to progress in the role. This also ensures the best provision for our students. Joint governors for SEND were appointed again this year. Governors are keen to have a greater understanding in this area of the school and will continue to schedule termly meetings as we move through the year. The School continues to have a significate number of SEND students compared to the Dudley and National statistics, which requires greater support in school by Learning Support Assistants. Helping those students to achieve progress levels in line with their peers is an ongoing priority. It continues to be challenging to manage the growing demand for SEND support with the resources available to school. This is likely to increase as the Local Authority have indicated that a greater proportion of students with high needs will need to be accommodated in mainstream schools in the future. Summerhill now has 50+ EHCP students.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Two Governors with responsibility for Mental Health and Well-Being within the school have been appointed for this very important area of work. The school has a Designated Mental Health Lead and two Deputy Designated Mental Health Leads. Mental Health lessons are conducted both in the Global and Reflection Time sessions. Reeva is a designated area which provides support for any students who have barriers to school or any mental health needs. In Reeva are DMHL, Family Liaison Officer and School Councillor. This area provides a safe and secure area for our students who require further support. Summerhill are partners with a mental health charity, Tough Enough to Care. The Headteacher is an ambassador for TETC, and they provide staff training, student mental health ambassador training and provide support for individual students and staff. Summerhill are in the process of becoming a Trauma Informed School. After 18 months of work and accreditation all staff are now Trauma Informed trained. This award will be one of first presented to any school nationally.

Safeguarding

The Governors with responsibility for Safeguarding continue to visit the school to meet with staff responsible for Safeguarding within the School and their reports are received by the Full Board at their termly meeting. Governors are satisfied that the arrangements in place are effective and students in our school are safe. The School ensures that all staff are well trained and kept fully up to date in all matters relating to safeguarding. Governors are also provided with and instructed to undertake the online Safeguarding training issued by the National College. All Governors are DBS Enhanced checked.

House System

Every student, governor and member of staff is part of the house system. Students take great pride in representing their house. Competitions can be individual, small group or including every member of the house. These are used to increase fun, enjoyment, promote teamwork and drive up key standards for the school. Each House is led by a Head of House supported by a non-teaching House Officer. A very successful rewards evening was held at The Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill in July which celebrated a range of student successes.

Behaviour

Suspensions continue to be significantly below national average, 18 for 2024/25 (16 in 2023-24, 21 in 2022-2023, 35 in 2021-2022, 143 in 2020-2021). The school now has a culture of restorative practice and Governors are very encouraged by the difference this is making to the behaviour of our students and the reduction in exclusions.

The school's behaviour and relationships policy has recently been reviewed and approved by Governors. A key strand is the introduction of improved clarity for students, staff and parents with an increased focus on the use of rewards, e.g. Immediate Lesson Rewards, Positive Points, Subject Point, House Star, Department Postcard, Senior Leadership Postcard, Headteacher Phone Call, Feel Good Friday Call.

The introduction of Reeva and two Deputy Mental Health Leads (to support DMHL), has enabled students to be supported with mental health where required. As well as the day-to-day support and education that students receive around good mental health, this allows school to support students who require more intervention.

Absence and attendance

Attendance continues with an upward trend and figures are very strong when compared to national averages, but we still have high expectations for this to improve further. Whilst the proportion of students who regularly miss school is reducing, the school has well-co-ordinated procedures in place for checking attendance and following up any absences. On average Summerhill attendance is 2.5% above National Average.

Enrichment activities

In addition to normal lessons, there are a range of ways in which students can gain different learning experiences. Combined Cadet Force, Duke of Edinburgh Award and the EtonX project are three of the key co-curricular courses. A rewards week was held in July 2025, enabling students in Y7-Y10 to opt for a wide range of learning experiences outside the classroom. Having had a successful year of trips and visits both abroad and in the UK, a range of school trips to other countries are planned for 2025-2026 (Iceland, France/Belgium, Borneo, USA). The co-curricular programme provides a wide range of opportunities for young people, particularly in the areas of Performing Arts and Sport. House competitions and challenges have further enriched the life of Summerhill students, particularly providing opportunities for students to lead. The Junior Leadership Team are an integral part of the additional opportunities for students, with regular meetings and events to be ambassadors for the school. Head students call Congress every three weeks to capture student voice and feed this back to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

Admissions

The school's current admissions arrangement adheres to the DfE guidance. The admission authority is the Local Authority (LA).

For the year 2024/2025 there were 586 applications for admission to year seven, of which 280 were first choice. 210 offers were made. All places offered via the LA were accepted.

The school's admissions policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Local Authority and full details, are available on the school website https://www.summerhill.dudley.sch.uk

School finances

The governing board is responsible for overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent.

In common with other schools both locally and nationally, financial budgets are proving to be extremely tight. Governors monitor the expenditure on a regular basis to ensure that the school is providing value for money. A large proportion of the budget goes on Staffing (80%) which is the ideal percentage. The remainder of the budget goes across the other budget headings to run the school.

Ofsted

The last Ofsted inspection of the school took place during May 2024. All areas of the inspection found the school to be 'Good'. Governors were very pleased with the feedback by HMI Inspector and the report reads very positively for the school.

Extracts from the report:

- 'Community and togetherness are at the heart of this wonderful school'
- 'Summerhill School has the children at the forefront of everything they do'.
- 'Summerhill School is a family' – Parent View
- 'Pupils are safe and demonstrate excellent behaviour'
- 'The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development'
- 'The school has successfully embedded high expectations around pupils' learning and behaviour'
- 'In all year groups, positive relationships between staff, pupils, parents and carers help pupils to be confident and happy'

The report can be accessed via the school website or by clicking https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/23/103854