



Governors' Report to Parents

Summer 2016

A View from the Chair – Karen Roche (Local Authority Governor)



The past year has gone so fast and it has been one in which I have been involved in making one of the most difficult decisions a governing body has had to make in my 25 years of experience as a governor. We know that our recommendation to close the nursery was painful to many of you and I meant what I said at the parents' consultation evening – that it was made by the governors with a heavy heart. I appreciated your feedback on the issue, both positive and negative, as it is very important to any governing body to be in touch with the parents. With our recommendation approved by the local authority, we are delighted that Mrs Joseph is staying with us and, although it is a loss to the school, we are very pleased for Miss Wilson when she accepted a significant promotion at The Acorn Nursery, on the site of Oaklands Schools.

You have all received information from Mr Strudley on the Key Stage 2 SAT results and have probably read in the media of the difficulty in comparing this year's results with previous years. I read the warning of the National Governors' Association newsletter, that '...the data is incomplete. It should not be used on its own to draw conclusions about a school's performance, or to make comparisons with other schools, and it provides no intelligence on the rate of improvement of teaching and learning. We only have attainment results now; schools are awaiting the progress results, which should be ready in September.' Whatever the information tells us about children's attainment, I am confident that Mr Strudley and his team could not have worked harder or 'smarter' with the pupils. I would like to reflect on the wonderful experiences that the children have at Wildmoor Heath and I am continuously reminded that this enrichment (residential trips to Rhos-y-gwaliau and Hooke Court, theatre visits to The Globe, The Lyceum and The Dominion theatres, playing rugby at Twickenham, visits to Woodmancote Nursing Home, Bucklebury Farm, etc, to name just a few) is not typically found in other primary schools.

We have two 'Governor Days' during the year. On one, we participate with the staff in the formation of the school's development plan for the next year and, on the second day, we observe the school at work. In June, we watched the children in their classes working on their IPC projects; interviewed the School Council; reviewed the procedures for children with special needs and conducted safeguarding and health and safety reviews. We have welcomed two new Governors to join us during the year. Ali Rolls (parent governor) and Chloe Mietle (community governor). There will be another vacancy early in the new school year and we hope you will give some consideration to becoming one of our governors. I wish you the very best for happy, safe holidays and look forward to working with you again next year.



Staffing Committee

Chair: Jason Cooper (Co-opted Governor).

The staffing committee has regularly met this year and maintained oversight of the Senior Management's staffing plans. Staffing for the forthcoming year is very strong and we look forward to monitoring the continued development of our teaching personnel.

We have supported Mr Strudley with his efforts to train teaching staff in the school. It is our hope that we can continue this in the future. We have also supported Mr Strudley's drive to retain and attract the highest quality staff to the school. Despite the obvious difficulties involved in the Nursery closure it is fantastic to continue to work with a hugely talented, committed group of staff. Unlike some schools, we are fully are fully staffed for September. We have staff in our school who are influential in improving many aspects of education, including Mr People's work as a leading literacy specialist. It is our hope that we can continue this in the future and we are delighted that Miss Leadbetter is about to begin a two-year programme to gain a qualification in co-ordinating Special Educational Needs.



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School Improvement Committee

Chair: Carole Blunden-Lee (Co-opted Governor)

We have continued to challenge the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team in our meetings. Presentations from the curriculum leaders have been given and all our questions answered. We have monitored curriculum initiatives; the IPC, Bug Reading Club, PiXL and ABACUS are now firmly embedded. The teaching assistants, whose input and role in the pupils' education is so important, talked to us about their role. They are a seamlessly integrated into the whole school life and it is testament of how well they are enjoying their role that 2 have decided to take it further and are starting teacher training this September, we wish them every success.

This year in our meetings we have enjoyed listening to the pupils' opinions. We have invited to each meeting pupils to talk about IPC, literacy and maths. The pupils are proud of their school, which incidentally has never looked better and there will be even more improvements will be happening over the summer which will be of benefit to their learning environment. The pupils' enthusiasm for IPC was evident on our recent Governors Day when we spent time in the classroom seeing the pupils working first hand.

There has been a 'big push' to raise the progress and enjoyment in writing. It is fantastic that one of our teachers is a leading practitioner for English for the Forest Learning Alliance. It is always great to be leading and putting WHS on the map. The pupils have also had their poetry included in a compilation of poems written by children in the South of England. The governors also last year held a writing competition for the whole school; the winners have had their entries bound in a book and each has received a copy. This year's theme was on 'What is best about our school.' The entries were excellent and some of the best will go on the website and they will be bound in books again. One of our main responsibilities on the SIC is to support and challenge the schools core values; Respect, Everyone, Achievement, Courage, Helpful and caring, Individuality, Never give up and Go for it. Our children are making this very easy for us; they live and breathe these values in everything they do here.



Finance and Buildings

Chair: Stewart Mackie (Co-opted Governor).

This committee ensures the financial stability of the school and maintains the physical infrastructure and safe environment. We support the budget submission process to the Local Authority (LA) in May as well as monitoring and approving expenditure to ensure the school provides the best education for its children within its allocated budget limits. The School continues to operate in an austere financial environment and the Committee met in May to review and recommend the budget to the Full Governing Body for submission to the LA. Budgets are tight again this year and we worked hard to ensure the core budget areas of Staffing and Professional Development are protected to ensure we have the very best Teaching team and supporting resources in place to focus on the highest possible standards of Teaching and Learning for our children. Despite the constraints on the budget, we were delighted to be able to support Mr Strudley to ensure the school environment is enhanced including the approval of funding for a new Library and IT suite, the refurbishment of Reception and Year 1 as well as equipment for the Adventure playground. None of this would have been possible without the support of the PTA which continues to work extremely hard to raise funds for the school and help protect the core school budget helping us to maintain and enhance the educational standards on our path to making the school Outstanding. In addition, Mr Strudley has been successful in gaining additional funds from charities and community groups, for example The Crowthorne Education Trust. We had to face very hard choices and decisions but our focus was always on the children and how best to manage the budgets to support the school and Mr Strudley to provide the absolute best holistic educational outcomes for the entire school.

Special mention needs to be made of both Mr Strudley and especially the School Business Manager, Liz Johnson who display tenacious rigour in their application of the resources and finances available ensuring every £1 spent within the school has a real impact which is reflected in the fact that we continue to attract staff members of the highest quality where other schools sometimes struggle. Times are tough financially, but the school remains on course for its longer term goal to become Outstanding.