

Governing Body Newsletter



Our retrospective look at Academic Year 2018-2019

DEAR PARENTS AND CARERS

Welcome to the Governing Body's annual newsletter, in which we look back at what the governors did last year to seek the best possible education for all children at our wonderful school, and in which we applaud the children's achievements and the school's successes.

WHAT DO GOVERNORS DO?

- 1) Governors ensure the school is held to account by receiving, exploring, and where necessary querying the Head's reports, and report to our stakeholders;
- 2) Governors are 'critical friends' of the school and monitor progress, evaluate outcomes for everyone, and build working relationships with stakeholders;
- 3) Governors provide a strategic view for the school by ensuring money is best spent, setting targets, and determining how the school will improve and checking that it happens.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

During 2018-19 we welcomed on board **Gary Peatling** as our new professional Clerk, and **Charlotte Christian**, mum to Harry and a member of the Ladybirds Preschool Committee. Charlotte joined us as a Parent Governor, as elected by parents/carers at the school. It has been a real pleasure to work with both of them this year and we all look forward to another positive year as a team.

Are you interested in volunteering to help your school? We currently don't have Governor vacancies but the PTFA needs additional Committee Members. Their fundraising and social events are invaluable to the school, helping with the running and maintenance of the pool, replenishing laptops, and so much more. If you too would like to make a real difference to your children's primary school experience, please contact the PTFA.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In September 2018 Mr Shawley wrote to you and the children about our SDP, which is a plan made every year by the teachers, Head Teacher, and Governing Body to focus on areas needing most improvement. In 2018-19 our priorities were:

- 1) Developing teaching and learning in a supportive environment consistently across the school;
- 2) Ensuring Maths skills are applied across the Curriculum, and that both girls and children in receipt of Pupil Premium make the same progress as everyone else.
- 3) Making sure there is high quality delivery of PSHE, leading to enhanced emotional intelligence in the children, and linking in to our school's Christian values.
- 4) Continuing with previous year's priority of embedding an investigative approach in Science, with the skills being used across the Curriculum.

...AND MONITORING THE SDP

It wasn't enough just to have a plan – governors also visited the school to find out how the improvement actually took place! We objectively and critically looked at anonymized workbooks and data, displays, planning, and the learning environments, and we spoke with Mr Shawley, teachers, and children. On all our visits we found that the success criteria were being met at the relevant milestones and that there was proof of improvement in all four areas.

On SDP monitoring visits we also asked children about safeguarding. They confidently and clearly told us that they know how the school looks after their safety, what to do in emergencies, what to do if they suffer or witness unkind or dangerous behaviour, and who they can approach for help.

OFSTED INSPECTION

We had our Ofsted inspection in October and we were very happy to be told that, thanks to the staff's hard work and dedication, the school remains a **GOOD** school for the children and that the areas for improvement raised at the previous inspection had been well addressed. A copy of the Inspector's report is on the school website and is a wonderful description of the positive aspects of our school. We won't pretend that we weren't relieved to get the inspection done for another four years but the very next day staff and governors started working again to address areas for improvement and to make sure the school continues to be a safe, happy place for the children to receive a good quality of education.

SATs AND PHONICS SCREENING

All the children and staff worked extremely hard preparing for the Year 1 Phonics Screening, and for the Year 2 and Year 6 SATs. The results : KS2 Reading 64%, Maths 91%, Writing 100%, SPAG 91%. KS1 Reading 63.6%, Writing 59.1% and Maths 72.7%. 100% of Y1 children passed the phonics test. Well done!

But it is not all about results! Governors also checked that as much as possible was done to ensure there was minimum stress or worry for the children. The delivery style of the Phonics Screening and KS1 SATs means that it is quite easy to make the tests fun and discrete for the younger children. Staff shared with governors how they were delivered and governors dropped in during tests weeks, when we were delighted to see the children were their usual happy selves! The KS2 tests are more formal and not as easy for the adults to disguise as a fun activity so, as well as dropping in every day during SATs week to observe, governors also spent some time chatting with some year 6 children afterwards. They were very honest with us and told us that whilst they did worry a little, they felt ready by the time the SATs came around. They understood why these statutory tests had to be taken and loved the treats on test days and the end of SATs rewards! Governors were satisfied that the children's welfare and comfort had been a priority, and that preparation was thorough.

REPORTING AND CHALLENGING

Governors also visited the school every term of the year to check on safeguarding, health & safety, finance, the use of Sports Premium funding, the progress of children with special educational needs, the progress of children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, the progress of Looked After children, and the progress of children with English as an Additional Language. Findings were reported to the full Governing Body to help governors obtain a full picture of how the children's education and safety are being addressed. Whenever there were areas of concern, we challenged the school on the reasons, explored how improvements could be made, and then followed up on progress at later meetings.

GOVERNOR IMPROVEMENT

Governors regularly take a variety of training courses to ensure knowledge is comprehensive and up to date. We use a specialized online training facility where possible, and at other times attend governor training and networking events throughout the county. We carry out Skills Audits to check that the team has all the skills needed to be fully effective. In 2018-19 we also tried something new – we invited Governing Bodies from schools in the Spalding area to join us for in-house training. It was successful and we hope to continue with this approach in the new academic year. It has also led to local meet-ups in which we share experience and ideas with other governors in our local area, learning from each other's successes to help our schools.

THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read about what your Governing Body did for your school during last year. We look forward to another constructive and happy year in school.

Kind regards,
Miren, Bryn, Victoria, Richard, Joy, Charlotte, Alice, and James