



Valley Road School

Looking Back, Looking Forward- a word from the Governors

In the old days, the governing body had to hold a meeting to report back to parents about the year's work - there is no statutory duty to do so now, but we thought it worth sharing an overview of what we do, and the highlights of the last year- it might even tempt some of you to get involved!

As governors, our role is to help set the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction, hold the Headteacher to account for the school's educational performance, and oversee financial performance, making sure money is well spent. We aim to fulfil this role through our three committees- Leadership and Management, School, and Environment. We're volunteers from various backgrounds and we ask a lot of challenging, pertinent questions!

The Leadership and Management Committee oversees staffing, finance and monitors pupil performance.

Looking back, our new staff settled quickly into their roles - we congratulate Miss McGregor in Orchard Class for achieving "Qualified Teacher Status" after successfully completing her probationary year, and we said a sad but fond farewell and thank you to Mrs Walker on her retirement after years of service as teacher and TA at the school.

As in previous years, finances remain tight but with additional income from Cygnets rental, letting the school premises, our fantastic PTA, and careful financial planning, the school is able to maintain a level of staffing which aims to fulfil the needs of each and every child.

Pupils' achievement and progress continued to be closely monitored and measured throughout the year, as was the continued development of assessment in response to the changes introduced by central government.

In 16/17 governors will be continuing to monitor the evolving new systems of assessment, and we will be closely following the school's response to results of the first year of the new SATS.

The School Committee oversees the curriculum, teaching, provision for children with special needs and disabilities, communication with parents...among other things!

We have been kept up to date as the new curriculum (that's everything our children will be formally learning) has been implemented and delivered to Y2 and Y6; staff have tweaked it, matching it to the needs of the children in their classes, and it is now bedding in well throughout the school.

Through our Link Governors (individual governors who focus on a particular key stage, and meet with the relevant teachers during each term), we will continue to monitor the curriculum's development and delivery.

As last year, we've received reports from Mr Coulson regarding the termly observation and monitoring of teaching; observations have been shared with staff and between senior leaders, extending skills in both teaching and monitoring.

Our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) governor has overseen the implementation of a new system of provision for children with special needs and disabilities, regularly meeting with our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator), Mrs Gibson. These

termly meetings will continue to monitor the provision and success of support given to these children.

The Environment Committee oversees the maintenance (and building!) of buildings and grounds, and monitors Health and Safety, and Safeguarding and Behaviour Issues. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of Kerry Emanuel and her team (Will Burfitt, Rachel Moffatt, Steve Holland, and others in the past!), the “Happy Valley Room” at the top of the drive should soon be ready to become our extra learning space, music room and permanent base for the Breakfast and After school clubs. A grand opening ceremony to say thank you to our dedicated volunteers and many donors is being planned!

With our ground maintenance contractors, and the invaluable work of Mr Trimmings, our caretaker, the school environment is kept attractive and tidy; our standard of Health and Safety remains good.

As for the **Governing Body** - we have said goodbye and thank you to Kirstie McIntyre (Leadership and Management), Liz Sampson (Finance), James de Jode (Environment) and Rachel Moffatt (Leadership and Management and part of the new build team).

In their places, we have welcomed Dan Herbert as our new Finance governor, Will Burfitt who has been part of the new build team and now sits on the Environment committee, Laura Gater, a local secondary school teacher who joins the School committee, and Caroline Lock who will bring her experience in education to the role of Health and Safety and Safeguarding governor. Following an uncontested nomination, we welcome Tristan Haigh as our new Parent governor and part of the Leadership and Management team.

Many thanks to all our governors past and present who have given and give freely of their time and expertise.

Looking to the future, as governing body responsibilities and workload increase, and as people's time becomes more and more precious, we know we will need more governors. Vacancies are always advertised in the school newsletter.

If you would like to know more about us and what we do, look on the board outside the Y6 classroom or email the school office.

And finally.... With more and more emphasis on formal testing in education, the Governing Body works with the school to maintain the provision of a rounded education for all our children, an education which develops and extends key skills in English and Maths and offers opportunities to learn across a wide curriculum, while building confidence and resilience and fostering a life-long love of learning.

We extend grateful thanks to Mr Coulson and all the staff for their work and commitment, and to you, the school community, for your continued support and wonderful children!