

Governor News February 2018

Governors go back to school

At the beginning of the Autumn Term the Governors attended a Back to School Day. This gave us the opportunity to meet all the staff and to walk around the school looking at classroom environments and displays. We had quite a heavy agenda which started with attendance at Collective Worship and then went on to include looking at the Strategic School Development Plan, Governor Mark, School Data, the implications of Academy Status and the new Data Protection Regulations. We met the head boy and girl and were given a presentation about Heart Smart and how it dovetails into the curriculum. It made for a very interesting day and was well attended by Governors who gave very positive feedback. The Governor Skills Audit was completed not long after this training day. We have a good spread of skills across the Governing Body but, as we currently need a new Foundation Governor and a new Parent Governor it would be useful to recruit someone with financial expertise. Perhaps this is a good opportunity to thank Mrs Catherine Bickerton, Parent Governor, whose term of office finished in November, and Mr Peter Adams, Foundation Governor, whose term of office finished in mid-January. On behalf of the school I would like to express our thanks for their comradeship and their contribution towards the school, particularly in their role as Governors.

Sub-Committee Updates

The Governing Body have several sub-committee dealing with specific areas of school management. These meet once a term and have specific agendas. The **Strategic Leadership Team** consists of the Chairs of all these sub-committees and they determine the agendas for the meetings. All Committees, at their first meeting, review their Terms of Reference.

The **Environment Committee** have a special remit to look at the impact of the new LED lights within school, and to look at the emergency light boxes which need to be replaced. They also consider the safety of the play equipment and monitor the fire risk assessments and ensure that the Health and Safety Policy and other related policies are up to date.

The **Workforce and Community Committee's** remit is to look at publicity and ways to promote the school, but also monitors the new Nursery hours and the importance of the Mums and Tots group. Other areas which this committee has responsibility for are Heart Smart, Anti bullying, E safety in school and its impact, SIAMS (School Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools), the Rights of the Child. They check and ensure that the school website is up to date. They have responsibility for checking several policies including Use of Twitter, Admissions, Children in Care, Healthy living and First Aid.

The **Teaching, Standards, Curriculum committee** has a focus on critically reviewing the School's SEF (Self-Evaluation Form) with specific reference to Attainment across the curriculum, but particularly mathematics. They have been focussing on the revised monitoring schedule now in place and encouraged Governors to receive training in how to understand the new Assessing School Performance data. Familiarity with this will enable the Governors to be more effective in addressing issues of pupil attainment and progress across the school. This Committee is also looking at attainment in the Early Years and Foundation Stages. It reviews several policies including ICT, Homework, and PSHCE.

The **Finance Committee**, as you would expect, looks at aspects related to the statement of internal control, best value, spot checks, financial integrity, and unofficial school funds. This Committee monitors the budget and, with external advice, looks at the implications of any funding changes on the school and how it functions.

The **Pay and appraisal committee** has responsibility for the approval of the Pay and Appraisal Policy. The membership of each of these sub-committees is available for anyone to see on the school website under the section on Governors. There is also a register of Governor attendance at all these meetings and a list of current Governors and their terms of office.

Apart from the sub-committees the Governors have a Full Governing Body Meeting once a term.

Individual Governors also have areas of responsibility where they liaise with teaching and support staff, and in some cases the pupils. These include curriculum areas such as Mathematics, English, Phonics, Science, PE etc. Governors with such specific areas report back to the rest of the Governing Body on their meetings with subject leads.

Of course, talking to the children as well as parents and staff is very important. As Governors we try to do this by being in school, attending parents' evenings and school events and being involved with committees such as the Eco-committee, School Council and Ethos Group.

Feedback, comments and questions from parents and carers are always welcome, please contact the school office or email me 'chair@wittonwalk.cheshire.sch.uk'.

Schools are busy and vibrant places and you only need to look at the school calendar to realise how much goes on both within the school and on school trips and residential visits. We all know that attainment is important, and we want the children to achieve to the best of their ability but, as Governors, we also value the importance of children receiving a rich and exciting curriculum which also considers their well-being and their social and emotional development. I have always felt that happy children are happy learners. We all have our part to play in that, we within the school, and you as their parents and guardians. It is all about constructive and positive partnership so my thanks to everyone who contributes to this.

Graham Sheen
Chair of Governors