



Shepherd Primary School Governor Newsletter

Newsletter 2, December 2018

Welcome to the second Governor Newsletter! We would like to update you on what the Governing Body has been doing this term.

School Improvement Priority – Attendance

One of our key School Improvement Priorities for this year is to improve attendance. This is an area of concern as our attendance figures are currently below our expected level of 97%. Department for Education studies have shown that the higher the percentage of school sessions missed, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6).



Simply put, the more a pupil is absent from school, the lower their chances of meeting the expected standard of attainment. This is why attendance is such an important priority and is a significant barrier to us moving from “Good” to “Outstanding” in our Ofsted rating.



Padmini Naicker has been appointed as the attendance link governor and will meet termly with the school to discuss the impact of our Attendance Action Plan. We try to support our families as much as possible. The Attendance Team are available to discuss any concerns you have over your child's attendance, and to make suggestions on how to improve attendance and punctuality. We work with an Attendance Improvement Officer from Hertfordshire and have the support of our Family Worker, Debbie Wingfield. Please speak to Mrs Foad or Mrs Freuchen if you have any concerns.

Year-on-year we are seeing an improvement in attendance, but there is still much work to do, and this cannot be done without your support. Even an occasional day of absence “here and there” can soon add up and have a real impact on your child's overall attendance. Attendance certificates are awarded to pupils with excellent or improved attendance.

New Governors

We are delighted to announce that we have filled our two governor vacancies. Dave Foster has been appointed as our new Parent Governor and Tim Duck has been appointed as our Co-opted governor.



Dave is father to Holly (Year 2) and James (Year 1) and feels compelled to get involved as a governor to help maintain the school's excellent standards. His experience running a small business (including payroll and bookkeeping), as well as his degree in maths, should prove useful to the school in budgetary and statistical matters. He is a long-standing member of the Musicians Union Music Writers committee, so understands the procedures and rigours of being on a committee.



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Tim is a BAFTA winning Television Producer / Director with over 16 years experience working within the media industry and making factual and educational TV shows for children and young people. Throughout that time, he has worked with young people in schools around the world both as contributors in the shows he made and in delivering training as to how to make their own films. He would like to be more involved in the educational sector as he feels he can bring his professional expertise as well as the knowledge he has gained observing schools that 'get it right' and those that don't quite hit the mark.

We would like to extend our thanks to both Dave and Tim for volunteering to join our Governing Body. Your depth of experience will be of great benefit to the team and we look forward to working with you both in future.

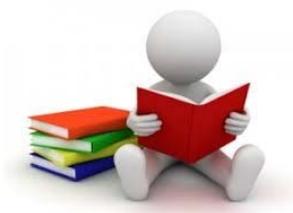
Class Visits

As governors we visit the school twice a year to see lessons in process and gain a deeper understanding of how our school priorities are delivered. These are always extremely informative and enjoyable sessions. We visited in October and focussed on how the school is trying to improve progress in reading, improve the attainment of boys in Early Years and improve staff and pupil wellbeing as well as looking at the provision for our more disadvantaged pupils



to ensure they have the best possible outcomes. We were all impressed with the attitude of our pupils; they are well behaved, engaged with the lessons, and have positive attitudes to their learning. A wide variety of reading materials are provided in Early Years both inside the classroom and outside in the Quad to encourage reading at every opportunity! We observed high levels of additional support and interventions for those pupils who need a little extra help. All visits were extremely positive, and we'd like to extend our thanks to the staff and pupils for welcoming us into their classrooms.

Curriculum Review



We have also met with staff this term to discuss the curriculum and learn about any new developments in the provision offered by the school. We heard about the successful reading fluency project which was undertaken by a group of Year 6 pupils last year. The pupils who participated in this project all achieved accelerated progress and the project will be run again this year.



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The curriculum change from French to Spanish in Key Stage 2 has been very well received and pupils are enjoying learning a new language. You may have noticed the new Spanish Vocabulary signs which are displayed around the school and pupils thoroughly enjoyed the recent Spanish Day.



The school is now in the second year of a 2-year science partnership scheme ENTHUSE. We heard how the staff are working with other local schools focusing on new ways to learn science such as pupil led enquiry, we look forward to seeing this new approach in action during class visits.

Maths fluency has been introduced this year with daily fluency practice taking place across the school, children are finding the practise of foundation addition, subtraction, division and multiplication very helpful.



Pupil Admission Numbers

You will no doubt be aware that we have had to make the difficult decision to apply to HCC for permission to reduce our Pupil Admission Numbers from 60 back down to 30. This is not a decision that the Governing Body have taken lightly, and we analysed all available data before reaching our conclusion. The school receives funding from the Local Authority on a "per pupil" basis and unfortunately it is not financially viable in the long term for us to continue to open two forms of entry if there is insufficient demand to fill these classes. As a Governing Body it is our responsibility to ensure the financial plans of the school support the best outcomes for our current pupils as well as the pupils of tomorrow. Of course, this is an area we will continue to review and if there is increased demand in future years, we have the capacity to open additional classes.

Merry Christmas



We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you have a relaxing Christmas break and look forward to seeing you all in 2019!

Sarah McAllister
Vice-Chair of Governors

Oliver Parvin
Chair of Governors