

Governors' report – Autumn Term 2015

We have started to change the way we work with school. We are a smaller team of 7 governors who want to develop a better understanding of what works in school and how we can help that happen. We have made a start by having two meetings each term.

The first meeting allows us to do the formal business of keeping the school budget in balance and by making sure that the statutory procedures and policies are reviewed and refreshed to keep everyone up to date. We reviewed the school budget, Breakfast Club and how the remaining PPG money was to be allocated for the rest of the year. We also checked that School Fund was audited for accuracy and openness. This money is paid by parents when their child starts school. It is for extra items that help to give all pupils an equal share in school life, but are not covered by the school budget. You can check the exact amount collected on the website for yourself.

We also updated our Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Child Protection policies. We adopted a new policy on Teacher pay reforms, including the Head Teacher, and agreed codes of conduct for governors and for teachers. We looked carefully at the school's attendance record and set a new target for 2016-17, and an admission number for children starting in 2017-2018. We agreed that two governors and Lee Ferriday (Schools Attached Adviser) should be appointed to review the Head's Performance Management. In early December, that review meeting decided that the Head had met the targets that had been set for her to improve the school, and then set new targets for next year.

Our job is to ensure that high standards of teaching produce good learning experiences in a safe and stimulating environment. Our second meeting allows us more time in school to look at what is going on, and to ask what might be needed to make improvements. We can go into classes and talk to pupils and staff about their work. We can check up on Health and Safety issues and keep track of maintenance and repairs and plan spending on new equipment. This time, each of the governors had tasks to do; to ask a range of children about their progress in writing, reading and Maths, and to talk about their books with them; to talk to some Year 6 about their visit to TCAT through the new project 'Life ready, Work ready' which helps to prepare pupils for work: and to discuss their feelings with pupils about being safe at school.

In that meeting, we also were updated about the new assessments of children's progress in school. The Deputy Head explained how the school is trying to meet the challenge to assess progress without using the old levels. Not an easy job! The science Co-ordinator also explained the new system of assessment that will be used to ensure a good level of understanding about science by our pupils.

The school tries to encourage positive growth in pupils' physical and mental well-being at all times. An important new duty is to promote British values of democratic thought and equal treatment for everyone under the law. As governors, we have made a start in looking at how the school does this in different ways across the school. We have also been busy doing extra training which includes how to appraise the Head Teacher's work. Some have also done some work on the role of Governors in the Ofsted process and are involved in the Local Authority's review of the school.

Finally, thank all of you who answered our survey at Parents Evening. It was great to meet you and to have your views on how the school is doing. Enjoy the holiday!

