



Great Gaddesden C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Telephone 01442 255734

Email head@greatgaddesden.herts.sch.uk
admin@greatgaddesden.herts.sch.uk

Website www.greatgaddesden.herts.sch.uk

Church Meadow
Great Gaddesden
Hemel Hempstead
Herts
HP13BT

Dear Parents and Carers

Governors' Newsletter July 2017

A Governor is often described as a 'critical friend'; someone who supports all aspects of School life, but who also asks difficult questions to make sure that the School keeps on improving. At Great Gaddesden School the Governing Body is very pro-active and works closely with Mrs Comer and the whole staff. We have an annual off-site meeting where governors and staff get together to reflect on the academic year and to discuss future priorities for the school. This year our meeting included a music workshop in recognition of the whole school focus on Creativity. A photo is attached – the accompanying recording is not!

Governors meet regularly to look at the academic attainment and progress of children across the school, to support Subject Leaders, to update policies, to agree budgets, to attend training, to review changes in Government policy and to meet with advisers from the LEA. This is the 'nuts and bolts' of being a critical friend.

However, at Great Gaddesden School, the Governors try to do more than this. Looking back on the Academic Year 2016/17 there have been some notable highlights.

In February 2017 we had our **SIAMS** inspection which rated us overall as **Good**; but also judged that the school is **Outstanding** at meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character. This follows on from our **Good Ofsted** in March 2016. School Inspections always include a meeting with Governors, where we are challenged robustly on our role. The Inspections are a chance for us to showcase the tremendous work that staff and pupils do every day in school, and I am delighted that we have received official recognition for this.

The Governors are also responsible for **maintaining and developing the school buildings**. In Summer 2016 we extended both the Year 1/2 and 5/6 classrooms, transforming the space for teaching and learning. In Summer 2017 we will extend the Year 3/4 classroom. These projects are only possible due to capital funding from the Diocese of St Albans, which we have to bid for on an annual basis. The Governors prepare the bids for funding, and then manage the tendering and project management of the building projects. On a more mundane (but essential) level, we installed a new boiler in Autumn 2016 and have carried out numerous small repairs and improvements to the school site. Our Premises Governor Andrzej Gaudyn works incredibly hard to maintain and improve the School and its grounds.

This academic year has also seen the preparation of an **IT Strategy for the School**. In recent years we have invested in iPads, Smartboards in the classrooms, a new server, online parents' evening

booking and staff IT training. A new website is being developed which will go live in the Autumn Term. The IT provision in the School has been transformed over the last five years, and Clare Rudd, Mike Tonge and Carli Wall have been instrumental in this transformation.

All Governors visit the school regularly; running after-school clubs, reading with children, working with subject leaders, accompanying school trips and attending school events. In this academic year, meeting with groups of pupils to ask about their experience of school, and listening to their suggestions about how we can improve, has been a priority for Governors. These '**Pupil Voice**' meetings have been very informative for Governors, and hopefully a positive experience for the pupils.

A key responsibility for the Governing Body is the appointment of the Headteacher, and the **recruitment process for appointing a new Headteacher for January 2018** is ongoing. We receive help and advice both from Hertfordshire LEA and the Diocese of St Albans, and are committed to finding the right person to lead our very special school community. Further updates will be given in the Autumn Term.

Finally I would like to thank you for the wonderful support that you give to the school, whether attending FOGGS events, reading with your child at home or simply supporting the school every day. We really couldn't do it without you and your fantastic children.

Wishing you all a relaxing summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Alison Wilkinson
Chair of Governors

AWilkinson@greatgaddesden.herts.sch.uk



Staff and Governors being creative at our annual joint meeting