



Governors' Newsletter 2016



Message from the Chair (Mike Waldron)

Firstly, let me take this opportunity to welcome any new families to our school. If you have not heard of school governors before, or if you have heard of the role but have little idea of what we do, then I am sure you will find this briefing useful.

Who are the governors?

Governors are a group of local people who have real responsibility in the running of the school. All schools (and academies) are required to have governors by law - many key decisions cannot be made without the approval of the governing body. The role is voluntary but it carries a significant amount of responsibility. It is therefore essential that any potential governor has the right skills and sufficient time to dedicate to the role.

Our governing body is currently made up of 12 governors (2 staff governors, 2 parent governors, 1 Local Authority governor and 7 co-opted governors). We also have a clerk who takes minutes at all meetings.

What is the role of governors?

The governors have a key role in the leadership of the school. Governors are focused on strategy and policy - we delegate the 'day to day' implementation of this to the school's Senior Leaders. Governors have three main roles in the leadership of the school:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Organisation of the Governing Body

Governors meet as a full governing body five times a year. These meetings take place in the evening and usually last around two hours. Minutes of all meetings are taken by our clerk so that there is a clear record of decisions, discussions, questions or future actions.

In addition to the full governing body, the governors also work as two committees:

Committee	Responsible for ...
1. Resources Committee	Finance, Personnel, Premises, Health & Safety, Safeguarding
2. Leadership & Management Committee	Achievement & Standards, Teaching & Learning, Learning Environment, Curriculum & Enrichment, Families & Community, Learning Attitudes & Culture, Behaviour, Inclusion & Equalities

Committees meet four times a year, usually during the school day, for around one hour. Committees focus more closely on specific pieces of work which they are responsible for and then share the outcomes with the full governing body. Again, our clerk takes minutes of these meetings which are then shared with all governors.

Other Work Undertaken by Governors

There are many ways in which governors are involved in the life of the school. Here are just a few examples:

- At least one governor is part of every appointment panel for school staff
- Governors are required to meet Ofsted as part of a school's inspection
- Each governor links with one of the school's Subject Leaders to explore achievement and developments in a particular subject
- Governors complete 'health and safety' site inspections alongside school staff
- Governors attend training to support them in conducting their role effectively

Strategic Vision for the School

The governors are committed to ensuring that all decisions taken are in keeping with the Values and Aims of the school. These set the tone and vision for Cherry Garden and we believe that by articulating them clearly for staff, children and families we ensure they are always at the forefront of our minds.

School Values

The school's Values are well known by children who discuss them regularly in class and assemblies. They are displayed in pride of place in our hall, grace the header of every newsletter and are visible on our website and prospectus.



School Aims

Our aims set out our broad aspirations for every child attending our school. These are published on our website and in our prospectus; they are also on display in the school lobby.

We aim for every child attending Cherry Garden to:

- ✓ **G**ain the confidence, skills and attitudes to succeed
- ✓ **A**chieve high standards in their learning
- ✓ **R**espect themselves and others
- ✓ **D**o the right thing and make good choices
- ✓ **E**xpect the best from life
- ✓ **N**ever stop learning

Achievements in 2015/16

Throughout the year, the governing body monitors the school's achievements by meeting with key staff, visiting the school and receiving reports from the headteacher and School Improvement Advisor (SIA). We are pleased to offer the following as a summary of some of the key achievements last year:

- The school's Eco-School Green Flag status was renewed, reflecting the strong environmental work embedded across the curriculum
- Funding was found for multiple sets of reading books meaning older classes can study full texts
- Writing opportunities were strengthened as a result of classes studying whole novels
- The teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling was developed (one of our Ofsted actions)
- Teachers were trained to plan for and teach 'mastery' approaches in mathematics
- The number of sporting clubs and competitive fixtures increased
- A new catering provider (Aspens) was found, improving the quality and selection of school meals
- The school was awarded 2nd place in this year's Bitton in Bloom competition

OFSTED

The school was last inspected in February 2015 (five years and four months after our last inspection). We were judged as a **good** school with **good** judgements in all categories. A full copy of the inspection report is available on the school website. *We were particularly pleased the inspectors recognised:*

'In recent years, all pupils in all year groups have made good, and sometimes rapid, progress in reading, writing and mathematics.'

'The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is **outstanding**.'

'Staff, pupils and parents are very happy with the school, including the changes that have happened.'

'Pupils take pride in their work and in their school.'

'Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.'

'Pupils make good progress because teachers use questioning well to help them develop their understanding.'

'Children flourish during their year in Reception class.'

Outcomes for 2016

Please note that outcomes for KS1 and KS2 cannot be compared to previous years as a new, tougher set of assessments were introduced for the first time.

Early Years Achievement (*21 children in the cohort so each child is worth 4.8%*)

- ✓ 76% of Reception pupils achieved a good level of development compared with 66% nationally in 2015.

Year 1 Phonics Achievement (*27 children in the cohort so each child is worth 3.7%*)

- ✓ 78% of Year 1 pupils met the phonics screening check threshold compared with 77% nationally in 2015.

KS1 Achievement (Year 2: *20 children in the cohort so each child is worth 5%*)

- ✓ 70% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **reading** compared with 74% nationally. 25% met the higher standard compared with 23.5% nationally.
- ✓ 55% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **writing** compared with 66% nationally. 10% met the higher standard compared with 13.3% nationally.
- ✓ 55% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **mathematics** compared with 73% nationally. 10% met the higher standard compared with 17.8% nationally.

KS2 Results (Year 6: *28 children in the cohort so each child is worth 3.6%*)

- ✓ 54% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **reading** compared with 66% nationally. 18% met the higher standard compared with 19% nationally.
- ✓ 61% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **writing** compared with 70% nationally.
- ✓ 61% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **spelling, grammar & punctuation** compared with 72% nationally. 14% met the higher standard compared with 23% nationally.
- ✓ 61% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in **mathematics** compared with 70% nationally. 7% met the higher standard compared with 17% nationally.

The School Development Plan

Each year, governors agree a development plan with senior leaders which sets out the key priorities for the school in the coming year. This year's plan has been written under the four areas listed below. For each area we have defined two 'overarching aims' against which to measure the impact of our actions.

Outcomes for pupils

- All pupils make excellent progress in relation to their starting point
- Attainment is rising 'year on year' as a result of the above

Teaching, learning & assessment

- Focused and inspiring teaching is inclusive, challenging and tailored to individuals
- A tidy, modern & stimulating learning environment promotes high standards

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- Behaviour is excellent in all aspects of school life and enables pupils to keep themselves safe
- A strong learning culture promotes positive learning attitudes and ambition on behalf of pupils

Leadership and management

- All leaders are able to articulate their vision and demonstrate their impact on standards
- A robust and inspiring curriculum is tailored to the needs and interests of pupils

What Does This Mean For Your child?

At a class level, each action may look different depending on what year group your child is in. Not all actions relate to every year group and some actions are more focused on the professional development of staff (in order to impact positively on the experiences of children). We hope the following examples provide you with a better understanding of how our planning relates to the classroom and your child.

Example 1

The school is introducing an approach for teaching number and calculation skills in mathematics known as 'Big Maths'. All teachers and teaching assistants have been trained in this approach by an external consultant. Support materials for teaching, learning and assessment have also been purchased.

Example 2

The school wants to continue to improve the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling (one of our OFSTED next steps). It has funded the purchase of new materials (The No Nonsense Approach) to support teachers. Training will also be provided to ensure the materials are used effectively at a class level.

Example 3

The school wants to ensure children's work is marked in a way which is purposeful for them and focused on key priorities such as spelling, grammar and punctuation. Our marking policy and procedures have been re-written to reflect this and we will monitor the impact of these changes over the course of the year.

Example 4

The school wants to ensure its assessment systems are accurate and secure. It has joined up with several local schools to moderate pupils' work. These sessions will be facilitated by an experienced consultant who will also help teachers consider ways to further strengthen outcomes.

We hope you have found this newsletter useful. If you are interested in finding out more about the role of governors, there is additional information on the school website.

We hope to see you at a school event in the near future!