



Woodland Grange Primary NEWSLETTER May 2017

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Mrs Beverley Barnes steps down as Chair of Governors

We would like to express our huge gratitude to Mrs Barnes who has been Chair of Governors for over 25 years at Woodland Grange. She helped the previous Headteacher open the school and has seen us through three Ofsted Inspections and times of great change. Mrs Barnes has struck the perfect balance between challenge and support of the school. She remains, for the time being as a Governor at the school but her current poor health prevents her from being the regular presence in school that we have benefitted from over many years. In recognition of her amazing contribution to school life and the local community we intend to name our new classroom block 'The Barnes Building' and look forward to her coming in for the official opening ceremony.

Election Update—School Opening Arrangements

As stated in our recent emails to you:

On **Thursday 8th June 2017, only the Pre-School will be open** and school will be shut to all other children on this day as the school hall will be needed for elections. This is most frustrating for us but we cannot maintain security of the site on this day (other than for the pre-school) if we remain open.

New Building

Work will soon commence on a new building to the rear of the school. It will be a cedar clad building on one level, to include toilets, cloakroom area and a small meeting/withdrawal room.

We have decided that Year 6 will be in the current Year 4 block as this will give 3 classroom spaces for the two Year 6 classes to make use of, meaning the children can work in even smaller groups as and when appropriate. There will be new furniture for the Year 6 pupils.

New Appointments

We have appointed three new teachers (Mr Healey, Miss Benjamin and Miss Bowe) to KS 2 for next year but existing staff will be working in Year 6. Staffing arrangements will be confirmed in due course. We have also recruited additional Teaching Assistants. Mrs Greig returns from maternity leave on June 5th and will be working alongside a variety of classes until the new academic year starts.

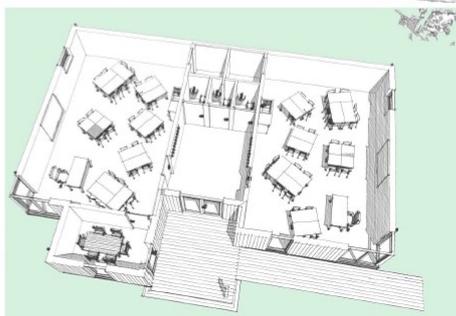
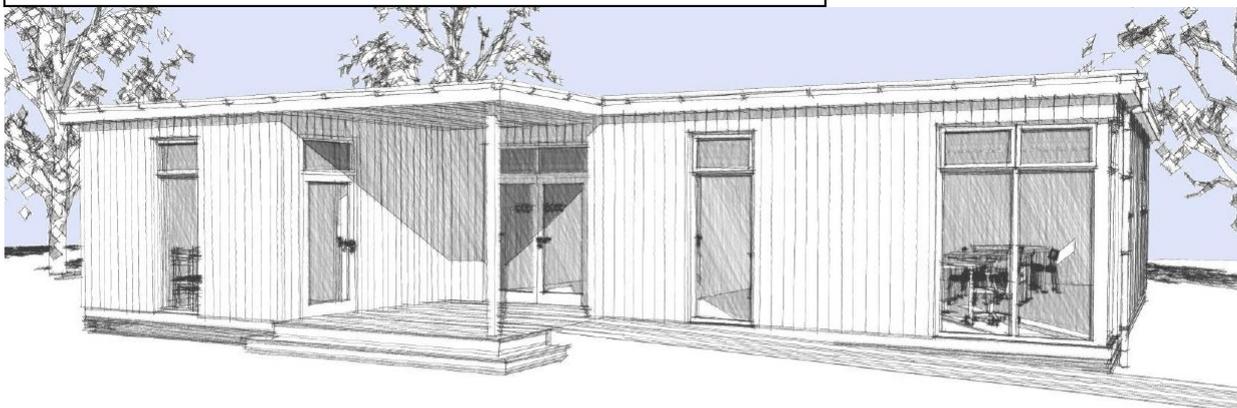
Introducing Your New Chair of Governors, Mo Chatra



I've been a Parent Governor at Woodland Grange for the past seven years and I'm now really looking forward to stepping up to the role of Chair. I've got big shoes to fill, following in the footsteps of Mrs Beverley Barnes, but I'm relishing the opportunity to support Mr. Hayles and his leadership team in the months and years ahead.

I'm a chartered accountant by background though I currently work as a Project Director at the Department for Education. I hope my finance and DfE experience can serve the Governing Body well as we look to ensure we manage the age range change as well as a potential Academy conversion in the next twelve months.

Thank you for your support of our **fundraising** efforts this year. The last event, Comic Relief, raised £513. Thank you for also supporting our Mothers' Day gift initiative as it also raised useful funds for the FoWG.



Remember **Sports Days** are at 9.30am on the following days:
Pre-School and Foundation Stage - Monday 12th June
Year 1 and 2 - Tuesday 13th June
Years 3 to 5 - Wednesday 14th June

Pre-School Free Hours

We are not planning to offer 30 hours free childcare at the moment as this would significantly reduce the number of places that we would be able to offer. Our mission has always been to offer the greatest number of places we can to children who are likely to move up into our Foundation Stage as well as to other children in the local community. We will keep you informed if this policy is to change.

As a result of the FoWG's excellent fundraising this year we have been able to fund all of our **Food For Life** work. This has included most children doing a lot more cooking and food preparation in school. This is developing their understanding of food, where it comes from and how to prepare and cook healthy options. We are really focussing on savoury items and will save the cake and sweet treat baking to you at home. All equipment and ingredient costs are funded by the FoWG fundraising. **THANK YOU FoWG!** We hope to build some farm visits into the curriculum next year.

Multi-Academy Trust Consultation

The consultation period has now ended and we will be reporting back very soon on the feedback received. In the meantime we continue to explore the way in which a MAT could operate across the schools involved. I would again like to emphasise if the MAT were to go ahead that parental choice of school after ours is entirely unchanged and you will still have Beauchamp, Gartree, Manor or other schools to choose between.

All things Sporting

Well done to the Girls in Year 4 and 5 who came 2nd in their football and to the Tag Rugby team who also came 2nd.

Coming up soon we have: the Saffron Lane Athletic competition on June 14th for children in Years 4 & 5; two tennis tournaments (Years 3, 4 & 5); a cyclocross competition and a Tri-Golf competition that 40 children will take part in.

We thank Mr Smith for organising so much extra sport this year.

We are aiming for an additional year group to be able to do swimming next year (in addition to Year 2).

Additional Booster Groups

Just as in the same way as we give additional tutoring to the majority of pupils who receive Pupil Premium (what used to be known as Free School Meals entitlement) we occasionally have the resource to provide other groups of child with additional before or after school sessions to boost their progress and attainment. Sometimes parents become concerned that there is a problem with their child's work ethic or achievement if they are invited to take part in such a group. Please do not see it in this way, it is a FREE boost given by teachers or teaching assistants that can only be of benefit to your child, it is not suggested out of concern for his/her current progress. If we have a concern about progress or attainment we will of course let you know and not wait until a parents' evening or end of year report. If someone offered my own child additional academic support I would snap it up!

Unsung Heroes

I would like to give a special thank you to Mrs Clitheroe who used to be a teacher in the school a few years back. Despite being retired, she comes in every week for a whole day to help children in KS1 with their reading. Thank you Mrs C for your unwavering support of school, we really appreciate it.

I also thank all parents who give up their time to come and read in school and support swimming and the trips we go on - you make such a difference to school and your contribution is greatly valued.

A plea regarding WhatsApp and Social Media

I think the use of WhatsApp for parent groups can be incredibly useful and is largely for the good but I must request that parents refrain from naming other children in messages between parents and generally on social media. Very often we automatically assume what we read in print must be true or an accurate reflection of a situation but this is not always the case as the context can be missing or something has been misunderstood or it just isn't the case. I would hate to think because of a single or limited number of incidents that a child's name was tarnished and bandied around between parents. All children do daft things from time to time and we always deal with any matters that are of concern. It reminds me of an incident a couple of years back when a parent came to see me about something they had read on WhatsApp; parents were discussing the 'fact' that the Foundation Stage staff put on the TV every afternoon after lunch until the end of the school day for the children! We don't even have a TV for them to watch and certainly would never dream of doing so yet several people believed it because they had read about it and responded as to how shocked and disappointed they were. If you ever have a concern, please come and see us; we will always listen.



Community Yoga class open to parents and the public **TUESDAY 6.30pm to 7.30pm** every week, including in the holidays, in the school hall.

All levels, including beginners are welcome.

Please bring your own yoga mat (preferably a good quality non-slip mat) and a bottle of water. The class cost is £6. Please arrive 5-10 minutes early so the class can start on time. If you would like to attend the class you can book a place by email: lauriemaeyoga@gmail.com or call/text: [07715673525](tel:07715673525) OR just turn up.



Hopefully you have spotted our new sign. We are asking that parents do not park or drive beyond the zebra crossing stripes and this new sign. This is to ensure the safety of our pupils before, during and after school. This includes parents dropping off children very early for pre-school sessions and pre/after care when the main school gate may be open.