



Celebrating Diversity,
Learning Together

COLSTON'S PRIMARY SCHOOL SCHOOL GOVERNORS NEWSLETTER

TERM 6 JULY 2017

From the chair...

And so ... another year of governing is complete. The final full governing body meeting 2016/17 was held on Monday 10th July. The round up of the year's school business from the governors' perspective is heartening. The school's budget is balanced, the SATs results are good, the school is almost full, recruitment and retention of staff is good, lots of exciting school projects on all fronts, and the school 'data' shows an improving picture for most areas of pupil outcomes all round. Well done to our hard working, dedicated school staff for delivering another successful year overall for children at Colston's Primary School.

Governors are pleased to have unveiled the re-worked, newly approved school vision statement, the backdrop to all we do at Colston's, further to input from the whole school community. This project around identity, vision and values has led naturally onto the school name consultation which has launched successfully. The school name survey is available on the school website, open until 21st October, with a final decision due in November. Visit the school's governor webpages for further information on this.

We are looking forward to a celebratory year 2017/18 as we reach the school's 70th birthday. Alex Bell's final Headteacher's Report to governors exclaimed "*It will be an exciting year and one we are all looking forward to already!*". Hear Hear! Before the year is out though, governors are looking forward to a lovely last duty - presenting the award winning Mrs Randall with flowers at her special retirement assembly ...

And then, it's a final wish to all for fantastic happy summer holidays!
On behalf of the governing body,

Kate Swainson Price
Chair of Governors



News round up.

Money, money, money ...

Education funding has been a hot topic this year. Government cuts abound in preparation for the proposed new school funding formula. Colston's Primary has been affected like all schools. However, due to the school's strong leadership, co-operative ethos and supportive attitude, the school community has pulled together to combat these financial challenges finishing the year with a (small) surplus. This has been down to:

Strategic advice and recommendations from the governing body in the form of Bronwen Wright and Emma Gledhill

The extraordinary hard work of Kate Patience, Acting Business Manager who leads school budget management

The judicious planning and management by Alex Bell and the SLT of staff restructuring

The support of co-operative working groups who are doing volunteer work including professionals within the school community who are generously 'donating' their skills and expertise

The generous contribution from the PTAF towards items that would not traditionally be within their remit

Because of this well led team approach and the generosity (time and money) of our school community, the school's accounts are looking much healthier than they might have. Thanks for all community contributions small and large.

Staff at school are under more pressure but remain conscientious, supportive and committed. It is clear every care is taken to put the children's needs first, as demonstrated by this year's improving outcomes in spite of increasing pressures. This dedication is hugely appreciated.

The change and flux in government makes it difficult to predict what financial arrangements are in store for schools going forward. Governors watch with interest. School's SLT have a continuing plan for the status quo. One move has been a restructure to enable more internal fundraising activity. The continued support of the school community will help too - we need to keep drawing on that core co-operative value, solidarity!

Multi Academy Trust (MAT) news

Steve Purdie is governor lead for the MAT sub-committee. This group has been meeting regularly over the year, researching and assessing Colston's position in relation MAT developments locally and nationally. We continue to watch fluctuating government activity with interest. More recently we have been in MAT conversations with some of our NW24 teaching and learning partnership schools which has been helpful.

NW24 Teaching and Learning Partnership

Governors have agreed to re-subscribe to this fantastic cluster of local schools which shares good practice on all levels governors, headteachers and senior leadership teams (SLTs), school business managers, staff and pupils. Kate Swainson Price has been on the steering group as a governor rep this year. NW24 governors meet in terms 2, 4 and 6. Alex Bell has participated in regular headteacher collaborative reviews with partner schools, Colston's staff attended the NW24 INSET day, where a significant number also led sessions, and pupils from Colston's Primary took part in the NW24 Super School's Conference contributing ideas to the NW24 enrichment programme which will be rolled out over 2017/18. There is an active NW24 SEND group looking at ways to manage local pupil provision in this area in the light of significant government funding cuts.

Governors agree the NW24 Teaching and Learning Partnership has been of great benefit this year and will continue to be going into 2017/18.

Governor Spotlight



Kate Patience is the school's Acting School Business Manager and a non-voting attendee on the governing body. Kate has been in position now for one year, having been in role as Assistant Business Manager 2015/16. Taking the seat as primary budget manager just as the education cuts started to hit was a challenging moment. But Kate has led the management of this crucial aspect of the school's operations with extraordinary diligence and hard work; and has more than balanced the budget so that we are in a stronger position than we thought we might be going into 2017/18. Kate has also been involved in a successful, innovatory NW24 joint catering procurement project this year. More news on that in September. Governors are delighted that Kate has accepted to continue in post for another year and look forward to the continuing to work together building on this good work. Kate reports

"it has been an extremely busy year and a steep learning curve, but learning is what schools are all about! I am fortunate to work with such a committed team and look forward to the year ahead."

A word about school attendance

It has come to governors attention that attendance at Colston's is slightly below the Bristol/National primary average. Please ensure you are familiar with the school's attendance policy, which does not allow holidays in term time. While governors are reluctant to recommend school introduce a penalty system, it is something under consideration in view of current attendance trends. The attendance policy is in place to support the best outcomes for the children as per the school's school vision and duty.

Governor Personnel

Welcome to Sally Reardon, parent governor, Niklas Serning, co-opted governor and Emma Gledhill, co-opted governor. We have one community governor vacancy and two staff vacancies for September.



The Schools
Co-operative Society

Something to think about over the summer?
Please visit our governor webpages for further information,
and contact governors@colstonsprimaryschool.co.uk
with expressions of interest.