

Governors' report to Parents Summer Term 2017



Welcome to our second report to keep you up to date with the work the governors are doing and progress at the school. School governors have four main areas of responsibility and we have included a brief overview of the work we've been doing on each area over the last term. Particular areas of focus this term have been: performance (more about our fantastic results later!), planning for the next school year, and improving security of the school site.

This term we've welcomed two new governors to the team who both bring with them a wealth of skills and expertise. Chris Tindall is the facilities manager at St Mary's Academy in Menston and will take over from Paul Evans as the named governor for health and safety. Xialoei Wang, who is a research specialist and has worked in the higher education sector for over 10 years, has replaced Dr Duckworth as our local authority governor.

It has been a very busy term – and a very busy year! We are so proud of all the children and their achievements this year, and also of our fantastic staff who have helped them to do this. While results will obviously vary each year, we know how much work the staff put in to helping all children achieve their best and inspiring them to learn and we are very conscious of how lucky the school is to have such committed and talented teachers and teaching assistants. This is also attracting external recognition, with staff being asked to share their work with other local schools, universities and lead on teacher training programmes run by the Red Kite and Eden Teaching School alliances.

We wish everyone a happy and restful summer and look forward to starting another successful year in September.

Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction

We have finalised our five year strategy which sets out how we will deliver our vision for the school. It includes each of the school aims and the Burley Woodhead 'me' areas and will form the basis of our annual school improvement plans (SIP), which set out the more detailed actions required for each area.

Significant progress has been made against all the areas in this year's SIP. These include:

- Introducing a growth mindset approach to teaching and learning – this has been embraced by both children and staff; governor visits during the year have allowed us to see how this has encouraged greater resilience and motivated the children.
- Improving attainment in maths - the school has developed its own bespoke approach to delivering the maths curriculum, rather than buying an 'off the shelf' text book led package. This has allowed staff to tailor it to the particular needs of our school and incorporate a wide range of best practice approaches and initiatives. As a result, a much higher level of reasoning and problem-solving has been achieved, which has been evident in work scrutiny carried out throughout the year. Our books have also been held up as best practice examples on several recent training courses.
- Developing subject leadership roles for teachers - all teachers have taken on subject lead roles and worked to support the development and teaching of their allocated subject throughout school. Governors have received updates on all subjects, as well as presentations on science and computing.

- Developing pupil voice and leadership - a wide range of leadership opportunities have been offered to the children, including subject leaders and school council roles, as well as the take-over day. Pupils are making a strong contribution to the school through the school council, supported by Mrs Clegg. They have and led a number of new initiatives, including the development of a good manners guide which was shared with the whole school this term.

An important part of the school's vision is to help prepare the children for the rest of their lives and, thanks to the work put in by staff and many volunteer parents, we can broaden their education with off-site visits, sports events, music and drama etc. Those lucky enough to have seen the Year 6 play (ably supported by Year 5), will have seen our children stand up in front of parents and fellow pupils to sing a solo, or deliver lines to make an audience laugh, showing us what a good position they are in to face up to whatever the world throws at them.

Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils

As you will have hopefully seen in the letter that went out last week, the children have achieved fantastic results in all the statutory tests, with scores well above the national averages, and great achievements in all the year groups.

Schools are also required to show that children are progressing each year, and governors need to review this as well as attainment. We will be looking at the progress scores when they are published to make sure that all children are making progress against guidelines and that this is evidenced through teacher assessments.

As mentioned earlier, there has been excellent progress in maths across the whole school and also in science, where thanks to Mrs Whittaker's sterling work we hope to be awarded the silver Primary Science Quality Mark in the autumn. Governors have agreed that computing and French will be our areas for in-depth focus next year, and this was started with a very helpful presentation from Mr Deery at our last governor's meeting, outlining plans to improve computing and to ensure this is fully integrated into all subjects.

Staff have been working to develop a new approach for delivering the national curriculum next year, which will support our aim of providing a wide range of experiences and development opportunities and as broad a curriculum as possible. It takes a creative approach and brings together all the different subject topics under themes for each term. The aim is to provide a more connected and inspiring approach to learning, based on each class taking on different roles. So next year, be prepared to be nurturing budding explorers, amazing engineers and adventure scouts, to name just a few and see where their imaginations take them. Governors certainly felt very inspired (if not a little bit envious!), and we are looking forward to seeing the impact this has on our children's learning.

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

As we discussed in our previous update, the changes to school funding will have a significant impact on our budget and place our finances under severe pressure. While we expect to remain in balance for 2017/18, after this we are facing a deficit so need to do all we can to improve this position. We have a number of areas where we need to invest, such as internal building work taking place this summer and our IT infrastructure, so we need to find ways of making savings to make this possible. We are supporting the school to look at

possibilities for generating income, such as renting out the building for holiday activities and other events, and are extremely grateful to the PTA for all the work they are doing to raise funds for the school, and indeed to parents for supporting activities so generously.

Safeguarding

Our main priority continues to be progressing the application to close the public right of way through the school grounds. We have finally reached the top of the waiting list and the proposal is out to consultation until 11 August, so we would be very grateful if you could contribute your views on this important issue.

We understand that there are some concerns about people wanting to access the school grounds outside of school hours and whether this will be possible. The aim of applying to extinguish the right of way is so we can secure the site during school hours to ensure our children's safety. In terms of access at other times, we will be taking account of all the feedback from the consultation before any decision is made about this so please do send in any feedback you may have on this as well.

Other areas of work included:

- SEND review – governors receive regular updates on the support provided for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their progress to make sure we are providing a high quality and accessible education for all children. The latest report detailed how the SEND team has worked with children and their parents throughout the year, and the training and support provided to teachers to help them support these children effectively. This included the introduction of pupil passports, which are jointly written by each child and their teacher, and set out their needs and how these can be met, helping to ensure a consistent approach to their teaching.
- School trips – governors have continued to attend a wide variety of events and trips, including the Y5 residential trip, Y6 maths competition, all-school assemblies and presentations by the School Council. This gives us chance to see first-hand the wide range of opportunities offered to enhance children's learning and personal development (as well as join in with some of the fun!).
- Governor development – we have been testing a new approach to our meetings and committee structure during the year. Rather than carrying work out through committees, all areas of work have been dealt with through full governing body meetings which have been held monthly rather than bi-monthly. Overall, this is felt to have been a very positive approach, allowing governors to be more fully involved in all the different aspects of work, so we will be continuing this approach next year.
- Policy approval – governors are responsible for confirming that appropriate policies are in place and regularly reviewed. 4 policies were approved last term. All policies which are relevant to parents are available to view on the school website.

And finally.....

We'd just like to say three other important thank yous. Firstly to Mrs Siddall, who has worked tirelessly all year to provide the best possible education and a happy learning environment for our children. Secondly, a big thank you to you, our parents. We are very fortunate to have such an active and interested parent community, who support both their children and the school in so many ways. And finally a huge thank you is due to Mrs Parker, our fantastic Clerk to the Governors, without whose amazing efficiency and dedication we would be absolutely lost!