



Excellence
at Whittle



Whittle Governors' Newsletter

Spring Term 2018

Welcome from the Chair of Governors

Eileen Leech



Chair of the Local Governing Board

It has been another busy term at Whittle Academy! I am sure you will all join with me in hoping that the extremes of weather we have experienced this Winter are now over and that we can look forward to a warmer Spring.

One of the most important roles of Governing Bodies is to appoint the Headteacher of the school they support. As you will know after a two-day interview procedure, Pam Carpenter was successful in her application for the post and is now the substantive Headteacher of Whittle Academy after a term in the post in an acting capacity. We wish her well with this important step in her career.

The Local Governing Board has formally met twice this term. At our first meeting in January, we were pleased to welcome Beccy Dowler who shared with us the school's policy on the teaching and children's learning in the Early Years – we left the meeting quite sure that your children are in safe hands! At our second meeting of the term this week, Mrs Docking updated the Governing Board on our responsibilities for Safeguarding – again we are confident that the procedures in place to keep your children safe are both rigorous and meet statutory requirements. This is an important aspect of our work with the school and is a high priority both at a local and national level.

I was also fortunate to join in a review, earlier this term, of the school's performance with Paul Weston, an external consultant and the outcome was very positive. Obviously, there were action points and these have provided both the school and governors with a clear way forward for further improvement.

I come to school when I can to meet with Ms Carpenter and other members of staff to ensure that I keep up to date with both the issues facing the school and to celebrate successes.

I look forward to having the opportunity to meet with parents/carers whenever it is possible. I can also be contacted at any time through the school office should you wish to discuss the work and responsibilities of the Local Governing Board with me.

My best wishes for a happy Easter break.

Eileen Leech

Earlier this year I met with Mrs Docking for a termly safeguarding check-up. We reviewed policies and procedures, the recording of incidents and checked staff are up to date with their training. Once again, I was impressed with the systems in place and confident that the policies are put into practice on a daily basis to support and safeguard the children.

Lucy Minett



**Our next
Local Governing Board
Meetings will be held on:**

**Wednesday
9th May @ 6:00pm**

**Wednesday
4th July @ 6:00pm**

**Governor Training
Monday
14th May @ 6:00pm**

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This term I have continued my pursuit of understanding school data and how it is used. I met with Ms Carpenter who took the time to explain Provision Mapping to me. It is very difficult to explain the complexity of this in such a short space, but it is essentially how school identifies which children need help to achieve the best that they possibly can. She showed me the vast amounts of work undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants that go into planning interventions that make sure that this happens. Trust me when I say that the level of detail that goes into this is huge. I have no doubt that with this level of effort from our staff, that all of our children are given the best possible opportunity to achieve their best and enjoy it too!



Richard Pearson

Stef Goodwin



I have enjoyed yet another exciting term at Whittle Academy, with various visits to school aside from our regular Governor meetings to explore many different aspects. I was lucky enough to spend the morning with our Reception children, it was a lovely half day seeing the children in raptures about "the naughty subtraction snake"! I have also visited the school for my regular health and safety meeting which allows us to focus on all the areas that impact the school, pupils and staff. Finally, I would like to wish you all a happy Easter and an enjoyable holiday.



Pontso Moorosi

This term has been yet further evidence of the hard work that goes on at Whittle Academy. One of the important roles of governors is to help the school in the effective leadership and management of the school. So I had an opportunity to visit the school and attended a leadership meeting as part of our monitoring role. To observe first-hand the strategic planning that goes behind all the hard work teachers do, in order to raise standards of teaching and learning, was heartening. The Head and phase leaders do an excellent job providing the leadership that supports the teaching and learning. With the phase leaders' knowledge of the children and their needs at their fingertips, it was not difficult to see how such support happens so smoothly.

I was pleased to meet with Pam Carpenter this term to discuss the plans already in motion to relaunch the Thrive initiative within Whittle. Thrive was relaunched at Whittle in September 2017 with all staff being given ideas on how to practically use the tool and how to create the right learning environment for the children.

The need for additional qualified Thrive staff has already been highlighted. Pam is a very passionate licensed Thrive Practitioner with experience of implementing Thrive from scratch within another school in the Trust and is currently undertaking additional training to become a Thrive Trainer. Catherine Caunter is undertaking training to become a licensed Thrive Practitioner. Beccy Dowler is completing a course to become a Thrive Leader with the intention to incorporate her love of animal therapy and active outdoor learning within the Thrive model.

Walking around the school I have seen numerous Thrive displays which are on display in classrooms and in the corridors. The displays use the film 'Inside Out' to help children to express their feelings and to help them to recognise other people's feelings/expressions. A plan is in place to ensure that Thrive is successfully implemented within Whittle and I have a follow up visit planned for next term to see how it is progressing. Further information about the Thrive Approach in schools, can be found by visiting www.thriveapproach.com



Gemma Graham



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