

Chair's Blog November 2018 / Annual Governor Review

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Students and Crofty Trust members,

This time of year we look back on the work of the previous year and see what we have done as a governing board and the impact we have had.

Since November 2017 we have become part of the Crofty Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in a family of like-minded primary schools serving the Camborne-Redruth area.

This has changed the nature and responsibilities of the Governing board since much of the responsibility for the school lies with the Crofty MAT. We have reduced our numbers from 15 governors to a more effective team of ten and now operate as a committee of the Crofty MAT board to whom we report. This does not make us any less busy however as we have to spend much more time focussing on the work of the school and its impact in raising standards, promoting perseverance, resilience sensitivity and confidence and keeping children safe.

The current board members are:

Jim Seth – Chair
Deborah Reeve – Vice Chair
Enid Ghent (Whistle Blowing / SEND)
Karen Brokenshire (Data / pupil premium)
Vivienne Booth – staff governor
Ian Jones (Finance)
Rob Cooper- Parent Governor (safeguarding)
Alex Stainer -Parent Governor
Liz Shepherd
Rob Adams – Headteacher

There are no vacancies at the moment but we welcome enquiries from parents who are interested and would like to find out more for when a vacancy arises or just to be better informed. All began a new term of office when the school converted to being an academy in December 2017 and their terms of office can run until December 2021.

The core functions of the governing board are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils
- Monitoring the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent as well as checking on the state of the building, the need for facilities and health and safety concerns.
- All governors have a responsibility to understand the progress of the school through examining the data from test results, visits to the school and through meetings with relevant staff and groups of parents.

Each year we hold a series of focus groups to which parents are invited to participate. Several parents told us this year how much they had enjoyed the focus group discussions and how delighted they were with the school response to points raised.

Governor Visits

Our visits are accomplished in a number of ways:

- Informal visits where governors help out on school trips, watch special events or give some time in nursery. These visits help us to see the school in action and to monitor behaviour, relationships, health and safety and whether the building and facilities are working well for what they are required.
- Arranged walks with the headteacher or other senior leader on the school development plan or another specific aspect that requires attention such as girls' mastery in mathematics or boys' reading.
- Arranged informal walks with pairs or trios of governors especially to catch up on information missed at main meetings or to see what we have been told in meetings in action.
- Meetings. There are three meetings a term between 6 and 8 pm in which we do some official governor business such as agreeing policies and asking questions about attendance, safeguarding, standards, exclusions etc which the headteacher addresses in a report. The bulk of the meeting will focus on a bigger issue. This term for example the first meeting was about the school development plan, the second on the latest data, how to interpret it and what action needs to be taken and the third will be about visits, questions and talking to pupils.
- Other meetings with senior leaders are on particular areas of the curriculum, have an agreed basic set of questions as a starting point and a definite focus. The governors involved will be those who are available at that time and they are expected to write a report of their visit.

All reports are sent in to the academy trust and provide part of the bank of evidence that shows just how well the school is doing and to inform the external monitoring visits from the School Improvement officers in the MAT.

Governors look at the following areas:

- ✓ Curriculum - checking that it is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. We expect to see exciting, innovative ideas with evidence of children enjoying their learning.
- ✓ Outcomes: We have to look at data and test results and ask questions of the leadership about what they are going to do next in the light of those statistics.
- ✓ SEND: We have a special needs governor who meets with the school team to check the statutory aspects, check the progress of particular groups of children (not individuals) and to make sure the money for Pupil Premium is wisely spent.
- ✓ Safeguarding: The safeguarding governor will make sure that external checks have been done, check the actions as a result of checks and will help with training other governors in areas defined by government policy.
- ✓ Behaviour : Every time we go into the school for any reason when children are there we are monitoring behaviour. This includes the school grounds and journeys to and from school where governors are also collecting or dropping off children. We are constantly impressed by the high standards of behaviour and politeness in the school and the friendliness and enthusiasm of parents.

- ✓ Absence and attendance: we have to check this regularly and the government sets targets that we are supposed to meet. We have to look at ways of encouraging people not to have their children off school longer than is absolutely necessary e.g. term time holidays and visits. We do not want to hassle parents whose children are too ill to be in school!
- ✓ Enrichment activities: There are so many clubs and activities from sporting fixtures to forest school, from dance to gardening and from school camps to museum trips that provide an enriching environment to encourage children. Governors support where they can.
- ✓ Admissions: We set an admissions policy that has been adopted by the Multi-academy trust although we will look at this in the light of reported problems.
- ✓ School finances: the Crofty MAT is responsible for checking the finances which are a little healthier than some other schools. However, governors do discuss where money is spent and ask pertinent questions. We are aware that government austerity cuts have severely depleted school resources and we are very grateful to those who take time to raise money for special things such as the stage lighting.

Hearing from Parents / Carers

We are always delighted to hear from parents and carers especially if it is something praiseworthy that we can pass onto the school! A little positive praise goes a long way!

You can talk to us in the following ways:

- Take part in the focus groups when invited
- Send a letter / email via the office.
- Catch someone with an orange lanyard and have a chat

Complaints have a particular procedure that has to be followed. The document explaining this is on the website. The first course of action is nearly always the class teacher and then the headteacher- governors are rarely involved.