

GOVERNING BODY UPDATE from Peter Izard



October 2014

Dear Parents / Carers,

The start of another new academic year...

Now we are a few weeks into the start of the new academic year I wanted to welcome all the new parents and children to school. I hear that year 3 children have settled very quickly and are enjoying their new school environment.

I would also like to officially welcome our new staff members who have certainly hit the ground running very quickly and are making great progress in their new roles.

I would like to update parents and carers on some important developments within school that you're Governing Body have been undertaking.

1. West Sussex Local Authority Visit

As you will have read in the newsletter recently the school undertook a review, led by Local Authority advisers. In simple terms this was designed to review the performance of the school against its current targets

Members of the Governing Body were part of the process as the school was given a detailed and in depth examination.

The overall judgement made by the LA was that Southway was a **GOOD** school and this reflects all the efforts the staff, GB and pupils have been making over the last 12 months.

I would like to especially thank the pupils whom the advisers specifically commented on as being very well behaved, engaged, polite and showed a great admiration for their school.

This important visit allows us to develop further in preparation for our next official Ofsted inspection later in the year and develop still further the progress the school continues to make.

Where improvements were suggested we can also review these comments and ensure that we make the necessary changes.

2. HMI Inspection

On Friday the 24th October we have a formal HMI inspection with Alan Taylor Bennett. This allows us to update formally, to the inspector, the progress we continue to make as a school and provides an opportunity for the inspector to independently confirm this. I will ask Mr Newbold to share the results with you when they are available, which I hope will be another sign of the positive development being made at Southway.

3. School Improvements

I hope that many of you have seen the new improvement made to the school. I know personally speaking with the pupils the new lockers have been particularly well received. The new outdoor learning classroom is being fully utilised and the year 3 undercover area is bright and fun.

The transformation of the reception area also now means we have a secure but very welcome entrance to the school with new medical facilities ensuring the children's safety and well-being throughout the school.

Add to this the rolling programme of radiator renewals, painting and decorating, new desks and chairs for all classes, the school looks in its best shape for many years.

Rest assured the Governors and Leadership team are managing finances to optimal levels to deliver the most effective teaching and a positive learning environment, whilst still in an environment of very restrictive budgets.

4. Governing Body

We have made changes to the way your Governing Body operate. We now have commenced monthly meetings and will be undertaking more time in the school observing and assisting the school as it continues to show rapid improvement.

As Chair of Governors I also meet regularly with the Head Mr Newbold where we discuss a wide range of items.

Whilst we have no current parent governor role vacancies we are always seeking new members to join the GB team. If you have friends from the local community who you feel would like to join our friendly motivated and forward thinking team please ask them to contact me personally via the school office.

And finally...

Southway continues to show rapid and significant improvement over the last year and we have high expectations for the year ahead. The GB will continue to do all we can to assist in the school's development and make Southway one of the highest achieving schools in Burgess Hill.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the Governor team should you wish to discuss anything in this update or generally about the school, this can be done via the school office.

A big thank you for all of your support, as the school motto says, "*Learning and Achieving Together*" has never been so true.

Peter Izard,

Chair of Governors,

Southway School,

October 2014