

GOVERNING BODY UPDATE from Peter Izard, July 2014



Dear Parents / Carers

The end of another busy year.....

2013/14 has been a huge year at Southway; we have seen unprecedented levels of change and improvement at the School. Following our Ofsted inspection a year ago we have been undertaking many plans moving forward to achieve our objectives. Our Headteacher, Mr Newbold, has been in place for less than a year and it is clear that all aspects of school life have improved under his leadership whether in the classroom, the children's results, the outdoor environment, and links with parents or staff morale. As Governors we are delighted with the progress this year, the efforts and commitment of all staff at the school and we remain ambitious and committed to see that this progress continues.

1. 2014 SATS results

As you will have read in the newsletter we have received our SATS results for the outgoing Year 6 children. Firstly credit to the children, they applied themselves incredibly hard in these tests and behaved incredibly through the SATS week.

In terms of results we're delighted to be able to report an overall improvement in attainment (the grade levels that our children leave Southway with). In recent years we have seen a fall in attainment levels and we set Mr Newbold and the leadership team the goal of improving it this year.

- Reading & Writing attainment results have both improved this year with Reading results at the highest ever since records began at Southway.
- In Maths we entered a few of our children for the Level 6 test and we are delighted to report that we achieved Level 6 scores from 83% of those who entered. Never in our history have our children achieved Level 6 in Maths...
- Overall, in Maths results we saw a small reduction in Level 4s since last year, however that was against a high baseline and changes in the testing regime will have had some impact this year.

We don't yet know the National averages for attainment this year but we're expecting our performance to be at or above these. This will represent a significant milestone in addressing our Ofsted report.

Progress levels, which traditionally for Southway have been a challenge, showed significant improvement in Reading this year as well as progress improvement in Maths. Writing progress was in line with our 2013 results.

With attainment levels back on track our focus is now on continuing to drive progress levels forward, the termly parent tracker is a key element in helping you understand of your child's progress.

2. Ofsted updates

As you know it has been just over a year since Ofsted rated Southway as a 'Requires Improvement' school. As part of their monitoring we have had various visits throughout the course of the year from Her Majesty's Inspectors and the Local Authority.

The improvement in the school has been noted at each visit, our School Improvement Advisor from the Local Authority has stated that she sees the school operating at a Good level across each of the 4 key headings that Ofsted measure and that we are continuing to improve; this is a positive guide for us to build upon.

This is all positive feedback but rest assured that Governors and the Leadership team believe there is still more to do so we are not going to be complacent; you should expect to see continued improvement across the school in the year ahead. As part of the standard Ofsted follow up we expect to have another full Ofsted visit during the course of the next school year. We will be working very hard to ensure that we are ready for this and that the improvements delivered by the school are clear to see.

3. More investments in the school

There was significant investment in the school over the last year and we hope that you can see the improvement in the learning environment, whether the new entrance / reception, the new classroom furniture as well as the HSA supported changes in our outdoor environment.

Over the next year we have further improvements planned. The next phase of our reception build will see further improvement in security. Additionally there are other plans in the classrooms as well as some further improvements in special learning areas. More of this to come as plans progress next year. There will also be investment into teaching in the classroom as each Year group will have access to an additional TA (Teacher Assistant) resource next year – this will put additional support teaching into each and every class next year.

Rest assured the Governors and Leadership team are managing finances to optimal levels to deliver the most effective teaching and a positive learning environment.

5. Thank you, Goodbye & Welcome

The end of another school year usually brings some leavers from the School. Firstly a big goodbye to our Year 6 children, you have been a credit to the school and we wish you well as you progress to your senior schools. Please don't forget us at Southway you are always welcome back to tell us how you are progressing.

In terms of staff, you will be aware of several leavers this summer but we wanted to say goodbye and good luck to each and every one of you;

- Mrs Sims, SENCO and Senior Leader
- Mrs Carter, Y6 teacher and Maths subject leader
- Mrs Bower, Y5 teacher and English subject leader
- Mrs Noble, Learning Mentor
- Mrs Coley, TA
- Mrs Karen Van der Willigen, TA
- Mrs Hoare, Admin assistant

We also welcome some new members of the team from September, more details on these at the end of next term. For those staff who are moving onto pastures new or retiring we wish you well and thank you for all of your support and efforts to Southway over the years

And finally...

Southway has shown significant improvement over the last year and we have high expectations for the year ahead. We hope that you all have a wonderful summer break and enjoy time together as families and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

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.



Peter Izard, Chair of Governors, Southway, July 2014