

Governor Newsletter to Parents

Hello and Welcome!!



Welcome to the new look governor's newsletter to parents. I am privileged to be the new Community and Parent Links Governor for our school and would like to introduce myself - my name is Alison Latham, I am a parent governor and I have two children in the school; Sam in year 6 and Max in year 4.

As governors, we have been working very hard over the past year, but often behind the scenes, this newsletter gives us the opportunity to explain a little bit about what we have been doing and to celebrate some of the amazing achievements that the school has made in moving forward since our last Ofsted!

What do governors do?

I'm sure you are aware that there have been some big changes to education in recent months and years, so we thought you might appreciate a brief summary of what we as governors actually do and how this affects our school.

Governors appoint the head teacher and deputy head teachers. We hold the main responsibility for finance in schools, and we work with the head teacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

We are currently split into two core committees; **Resources** and **Learning and Development**. The Learning and Development committee is then split further into defined roles;

Curriculum - Amy Thornton & Sarah Weeks

Community and Parent Links - Alison Latham

Safeguarding - Michelle Perryman and Petrina Tipping

SEND & Inclusion - Michelle Perryman and Oliver Helm

We also have a **literacy** working party and a **maths** working party so that we can support the school to improve in these key areas and we review all school policies and make updates when needed.

Ofsted and school improvement

As I'm sure you are aware, we had a visit from Ofsted in July 2015 and this highlighted some issues which required immediate action. Over the past year we have overseen an enhanced school improvement plan which fully addresses the issues raised by Ofsted and worked closely with Mr Gilronan and the Senior Leadership Team to bring about positive and constructive changes to the school.

Throughout the year not only have we have closely monitored the school and ensured progress on the improvement plan, there have also been a series of e-visits to externally monitor the schools improvement, we have been closely involved in these too. We have also supported a new staffing structure which has introduced two Assistant Head Teachers with curriculum responsibilities for English and maths and we were actively involved in the recruitment of four new members of staff including Anna Vine our new pastoral manager.

The **Learning and Development Committee** worked to closely monitor the new teaching and learning strategies introduced by the government to improve standards. We supported the introduction of a new writing scheme which centres on the themes of 'Imitate; Innovate; Invent'. We also supported talk for learning in mathematics and encouraged the consistent use of talk partners throughout the school (this encourages children to talk through, listen to others and clarify their ideas before committing their words to writing).

There is now a more structured marking and feedback policy and we are closely monitoring all children's progress and attainment which is providing more immediate use of targeted support and interventions to improve the children's progress and outcomes. We have seen a huge shift over the year in the quality of the children's work and attitudes to learning which clearly demonstrate the positive impact of these changes.

The **Resources Committee** worked hard to closely monitor and balance the school budget (not easy in these times of austerity) and to ensure staffing levels were maintained in a year of change. They oversaw the budget for the provision of school meals at our school, and for the continuation of mathematics (please do encourage your children to use this, it's a brilliant resource!).

Governor monitoring

The Chair of Governors and selected other governors were interviewed as part of Local Authority inspections and received and responded to feedback from these inspections. Individual governors attended external training sessions to bring back new knowledge to the school. In addition, each governor is allocated a year group, they will stay with these same children as they progress through the school. Over the year governors are visiting their year group to monitor the improvements first hand as well as monitoring the school as a whole.

Parent and Community Links

We are always looking to build links between the school, parents and the community. It is wonderful that we now have Anna Vine on board who is our new pastoral manager. You may have seen her at the school gate in the mornings. She is holding a series of coffee mornings in the D&T room at school on Wednesday mornings from 9am, we would love you to pop in and say hello.



Moving forward

We are now working to maintain the pace of improvement into 2016-17. We are confident that the school is moving in the right direction and that the changes made will have a positive impact on pupil outcomes. Should you wish contact a Governor or have any questions either ask one of us in the playground or alternatively please contact me via the school office email admin@ottery-primary.devon.sch.uk

**Thank you for reading
and a huge well done to all the staff and your children for working so hard!**