



**West Horndon
Primary School**

Governors' News



Issue 6 - Autumn Term 2014

Welcome to our sixth Newsletter.

There has been a great deal of change to the school premises since last we wrote to you. The old staff-room has now become the children's kitchen where they enjoy getting to grips with cooking **and** tidying up after they have finished. I wonder if any of this has encouraged them to keep their bedrooms tidy at home! Have you sampled any of their gastronomic delights or left them to prepare the tea?

The staffroom is now located up stairs in half of what used to be the computer suite. The other half being the new library. Much of the work for this was completed by Mr Norman, our Site Manager; he did a really good job and the Governors thank him for all his efforts.

Obviously the main change has been the school kitchen and provision of hot meals for any children who wish to enjoy them. I joined the children and Mrs Bolton one Wednesday, which happened to be roast gammon with all the trimmings. It was a really enjoyable meal and lovely to be with the children in an informal setting.

On behalf of all of the Governors, I would like to wish all pupils, staff and your families a very merry Christmas and a wonderful new year! See you all in January!



Jenny McGeachie

You will see many Governors at the school gate as well as at important school functions such as The Nativity. If you have any comments or questions for us, please do stop and talk to us! Alternatively, please write to us, leaving your letter (addressed to the Chair of Governors) at the school office.



Current Governors

The current members of the Governing Body are:

Jenny McGeachie (Chair)	Authority Governor
Ethel Sanders (Vice-chair)	Community Governor
Kim Harding	Community Governor
Kathryn Gorsuch	Community Governor
Saffron Lowrie	Parent Governor
Mathew Church	Parent Governor
Maria Mosquera	Parent Governor
Gill Neep	Staff Governor
Theresa Walker	Staff Governor
Matt O’Grady	Head
Eileen Thorne	Deputy Head - Observer

Committee Membership

Finance, Premises and Personnel (FPP)

Kim Harding – Chair
 Gill Neep
 Ethel Sanders
 Maria Mosquera
 Matt O’Grady (HT)

Curriculum and Achievement (C and A)

Ethel Sanders – Chair
 Kim Harding
 Saffron Lowrie
 Gill Neep
 Theresa Walker
 Kathryn Gorsuch
 Mathew Church
 Maria Mosquera
 Jenny McGeachie
 Matt O’Grady (HT)



Recent Monitoring Visits

Two Governors joined Mr. O'Grady and the staff at the first staff training day of the year in September. The New School Curriculum was discussed and each teacher indicated the areas their class would cover. Governors were given a tour of the new building work.



One Governor visited the school during the visit of the Italian teachers. The Governor joined Oak Class with their lesson and chatted to the Italian Headteacher about differences between how children are taught in Italy and the United Kingdom.

One Governor visited the school regarding drafting the new E-safety Policy. Interviews were conducted with members of the Pupil Parliament from years 1 to 6 on their experiences of Internet usage and perceptions of online safety. The School's E-safety Policy is being updated in line with current requirements.



Two Governors met with Mr. O'Grady and the Clerk to the Governing Body. Their focus was to find ways to make the Governing Body stronger and more strategic.

One of the current hot topics in education is whether schools should convert to Academies. We are aware that local schools have moved towards Academy status and we regularly discuss whether it would be in the best interests of West Horndon Primary to convert to an Academy. We have organised a training session in March to find out more about Academies and their benefits. At present we think that the School should stay as it is, but we will keep this decision under review – rest assured that no final decision would be taken without consulting parents first.



Curriculum and Achievement Committee

This term the Curriculum and Achievement Committee reviewed school admissions, noting that the school was now full.

The committee noted that feedback from the recent survey of parents was positive with 100% of responses stating that they would recommend the school on Parent View.

Children's use of social media was discussed. This is in the School Improvement Plan. The school does not condone underage use of social media, but informs children how they can keep safe online. The school uses a child-friendly video to highlight the dangers.

Governors received an update on the implementation of the new National Curriculum. Expectations have been raised with children at an earlier stage of Key Stage 2 meeting curriculum content that was previously encountered at a later stage in Key Stage 2. Children in Year 2 and Year 6 continue to use the former curriculum and will be assessed on this. Other year groups using the new curriculum will be assessed using a new method, the details of which are yet to be confirmed by the Government.

The committee also reviewed the attendance figures and a new target of 96.5% for 2014/2015 was agreed.

Finance, Premise and Personnel Committee

The Finance, Premises and Personnel Committee continues to devote its attention to ensuring that school resources are used in the most efficient and effective manner.

The cost of building consultancy services are presently being studied with the aim of securing a more responsive service at a more competitive price.

All building work has been completed and the new kitchen is being used to provide meals 'in house' for as many children who want them. As we previously reported all KS1 children can have a free school meal if they choose. Many of the KS2 children are also choosing to have a hot meal.

This has been built into the School budget plan.

News Flash

I have just returned from the Nativity which went very well. The children and staff are to be congratulated on its success and also the recent success of the choir in their competition. Well done everyone! Jenny McGeachie

