



Governor Newsletter

Autumn 2017

Ash, Cartwright & Kelsey School

Issue 1

2014

The governing board of Ash, Cartwright and Kelsey Church of England (Aided) Primary School would like to welcome you to this edition of their newsletter.

What do governors do?

School governors provide strategic leadership and accountability in schools. Governors appoint the Headteacher and Senior Leaders. It is governors who hold the main responsibility for finance in schools, and it is governors who work with the Headteacher to make the tough decisions about balancing resources.

Each individual governor is a member of the governing board, which is established in law as a corporate body. Individual governors may not act independently of the rest of the governing board; decisions are the joint responsibility of the governing board.

The role of the governing board is a strategic one, its key functions are to:

- set the aims and objectives for the school
- set the policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- set the targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making towards achievement of its aims and objectives
- be a source of challenge and support to the head teacher (a critical friend)

The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the implementation of the strategic framework established by the governing board.

Who are our governors?

At the most recent meeting held on 26th September, my role as Chair of Governors was passed onto the Vice Chair, Lisa Porreca, as set out in our Terms of Reference and Standing Orders*. This rolling programme, where the Vice Chair serves for a period of 3 years then carries out the Chair's role for a further 3 years, has been successful in our school since it was first introduced 8 years ago.

Did You Know that....

- ❖ Governing bodies are one of the largest volunteer forces in the country and have an important part to play in raising school standards.
- ❖ There are approximately 300,000 school governors in the UK.

*Terms of Reference and Standing Orders are the rules and procedures that the Governing Board adhere to.

Lisa has been a great support to me over the past three years as the Vice Chair and I am confident that she will continue to develop governance and build upon the improvements already made.

I am delighted to announce that Ian Belsey and Nick Hassall have now been elected to serve as joint Vice Chairs. Nick is an experienced governor who took part in the recent recruitment of our new Head Teacher and Ian has shown himself to be committed to improving standards across the school.

More up to date information about individual governors can be found on the new school's website when it is launched.

What has our Governing Board achieved?

Since the Ofsted inspection in May 2015, when we commissioned a Review of Governance, the governing board have been working hard to improve and streamline their working practices:

- A review of governor visits took place and a new policy was implemented. Rigorous and robust visits are now carried out and monitored against the School Improvement Plan
- Attendance to staff training days were introduced where school improvement is highlighted and the new School Values were discussed
- A strong focus on training to challenge and support the Head Teacher in meetings, on visits and throughout the academic year
- A skills audit is now carried out annually by all governors to pinpoint training and highlight recruitment needs
- Governors were allocated special responsibilities, for example, Pupil Premium Champion, Data Specialist, website compliance, SIAMs (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) and attendance.
- A National Leader of Governance is linked to the governing board to assist and provide information as and when required
- Visits to other governing board meetings to observe good/outstanding schools
- Attendance at parent council meetings
- Governor presence at pupil progress meetings
- A data specialist was appointed to "deep dive" areas of concern with the data
- Minutes of governor meetings, personal profiles and photos are now available on the school's website to raise the profile of the governing board
- An Interim Head Teacher was appointed whilst a permanent Head Teacher was recruited
- All governors are now required to carry out at least two training courses per academic year which has been written into the governors Code of Conduct.

All the above has enabled the governing board to become effective in their role. This has been recognised by both the National Leader of Governance in the latest Review of Governance in March (available on the website) and the Ofsted Inspectors in June 2017.

The School's Website

Last year's objective for the governing board was to look at improving the website.

A working party was set up and a questionnaire sent to parents to ask for their views on what they required from the school's website. This information was collated and a local Marketing Agency specialising in website design was commissioned to build a new website.

Members of the parent council have reviewed the test site for us to ensure that it is user friendly and have suggested ways to improve.

We are experiencing a few teething problems going live at the moment but are hopeful that the new site will be up and running shortly.

Governor Vacancy

Regrettably, Will Pemberton stepped down from his role as Foundation governor recently. As a Vice Principle of a secondary school, Will brought a vast amount of educational expertise to the governing board which will be missed but we will be looking for this area of knowledge when we recruit.

Which brings me to the fact that a vacancy has arisen. Due to a slight change in roles on the governing board, we will shortly be advertising for new parent governor. This is an excellent opportunity for a parent to get involved in the strategic leadership of the school. We are specifically looking for someone who has some sort of educational background and/or Safeguarding experience. More details will be sent home shortly. Please be aware that in order to carry out this voluntary role you will be asked to visit the school at least three times a year during school times and attend the full governing board meetings in the evenings, six times a year.

What Next?

Governors are keen to raise the profile of the school. After all, the more children who attend Ash Cartwright & Kelsey Primary School, the more funds the school receives from the local authority. A new website was the first step in achieving this and Kirsty Ash in the office is the Press Officer so we hope to see some lovely photos in the local newspapers soon.

Governors are in the process of setting up a working party to see how best to showcase the school. Any parent that has any PR and/or marketing experience and has some time to spare would be welcome to take part. Please leave your details with Karen Bailey in the office.

At the end of each academic year prizes are given out to pupils in Year 6 at their Leaving Ceremony in St Nicholas Church. In July, governors were delighted to donate the money to purchase the gift vouchers that accompanied the awards and we hope to do something similar again this year.

Education and Governance will continue to evolve and this is a particularly exciting time for our school as we continue to see the impact of Donna Battersea's hard work embed across the school. Fiona Crascall and the new staff bring a wealth of innovative and exciting ideas to widen the curriculum and raise standards across the school. Our existing staff have worked tirelessly over the past year to bring about the much needed change and have embraced the new initiatives that have been presented to them.

On a Personal Note

Whilst I am no longer the serving Chair, I have found the opportunity to work with the school an honour and a privilege. The past three years have been, at times, challenging but it has given me a confidence, understanding and an appreciation for all who work within Education. I will remain on the governing board so that the experiences I have encountered can be shared and I look forward to fulfilling my duties for the remainder of my term of office.

Nicky Loveless
Foundation Governor

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

Nelson Mandela