



Harwell Community Primary School

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Governors' newsletter 7: November 2018

Welcome to the Governors' Newsletter and a particular welcome to all those who joined the school community in September or later in the autumn term. I'm sure you've had a warm reception from staff, pupils and parents alike and hope you are settling well into the school.

For new parents/carers, this newsletter is issued twice a year by the governors of the school to keep you informed about their role, priorities and activities. If you want to find out more about who we are and the work we do, please stop me or any other governor in the playground, leave a message at the school reception, or look at the governor section of the school website. There will be vacancies on the Governing Body during this academic year and so if you are interested in becoming a Governor do speak to me or Mr. Gibson. Minutes from our meetings are available from the school office and are displayed on the board outside Mr Gibson's office. If there is anything you'd like covered in the next newsletter please do let us know.

We are pleased that The Barn after school club is up and running and that so many of you are finding it useful in providing high quality after school care for your children. Governors will continue to support this.

Best wishes,
Ann Parham
Chair of Governors.

New Governors

As mentioned above we are looking for new Governors to join our team this year. We are particularly looking for people with skills in HR or Finance but are also looking for people who are passionate about education for children at Harwell and who are willing to learn. Please contact me if you would like more information.

Annual Parent Survey – your views

We will shortly be launching our annual parent survey – so please look out for it. Your views are really important to us so please take a few moments to respond.

As last year we want to ask you what you'd like covered at a consultation and information event for parents/carers being arranged in the new year. This event, which will involve staff and governors, will be a chance for you to find out more about teaching and learning within the school. Please do suggest topics/subjects/aspects of school life you'd want included in the event – look out for the question in the parent survey. Details of the event will be included in the school newsletter and sent to parents nearer the time.

Headlines from last year

The 2017/18 results achieved by pupils and staff include some real areas for celebration and some areas where, although progress has been made, a continued focus is required. Mr Gibson, staff and pupils across the school all deserve credit for these results.

- Our reception results were good and reflected the national average - with 67% reaching a good level of development (against a national average of 72%).
- 70% of children reached the required standard in the year 1 phonics test, lower than the 79% school target (and against a national average of 83%) – so phonics continues to be an area of school focus this year. However we achieved a 100% pass rate for the year 2 retakes.
- Our end of Key Stage 1 (year 2) attainment was strong - with the percentage of pupils reaching the required level outperforming average levels nationally in reading, and maths.
- Our Key Stage 2 SATS results continue to be very strong – with 78% of our pupils reaching the required standard in Reading, Writing and Maths combined (against a national average of 64%). Indeed we either matched or outperformed national averages in all subjects:

Key Stage 2 SATS	% of pupils nationally achieving standard	% of pupils at Harwell achieving standard
Maths	76	91
Reading	75	96
Writing	78	78

Of course learning at Harwell Primary is about much more than SATs results. We want to help children develop a love of learning, along with the skills and ways of thinking to excel at whatever they choose to do in the future.

We are proud that last year the school provided plenty of opportunities for children to develop resilience, resourcefulness, a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others. Whether that be through residential visits, day trips, putting on plays and music performances, acting as school council members and play leaders or taking on other positions of responsibility. We remain committed to providing these kind of opportunities.

This year....

Governors recently agreed the school priorities – set out in the Raising Achievement Plan - and a series of monitoring visits they would undertake to check how the school is responding to those priorities. They are:

- To ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school and develop good teachers towards outstanding. This covers a focus on early reading (phonics), writing throughout the school and also on the provision of high quality PE.
- Raise Pupil Achievement in core areas for all significant groups. This involves ensuring all children are consistently challenged in class – especially to demonstrate their reading, writing and maths skills across all subjects within the curriculum.
- To further improve the Quality of Leadership and Management - increasing the capacity of middle and senior leaders to drive school improvement. As you know, we have appointed Mrs Shorter as Assistant Headteacher and Miss Reilly as Standards lead.
- Improve provision in Early Years to improve children's outcomes. This is about continuing to use data effectively to focus learning, and increasing the number of children achieving 'exceeding'.
- To further develop confident self-assured learners who recognise their personal needs and the needs of others. This is about helping pupils understand how to be healthy, promoting the behaviours needed for learning and building their resilience.

Each priority is supported by detailed plans. Governors continue to check progress through comparing our school data with national data, drawing in external experts, and by seeing for ourselves (talking to teachers/pupils).

Wider Governor Priorities

In addition to ensuring the above, governors also have a number of other priorities this year:

- Develop and embed strong governance and robust leadership throughout the school
- Quality of teaching and learning is good or outstanding at all times resulting in children making or exceeding expected progress

- Ensuring the whole community are active lifelong learners whilst maintaining a good work life balance
- Strengthen engagement between the school, parents and community
- Develop a broad, balanced, progressive curriculum
- Maintain strong financial management

Harwell School Governors

Nick Clarke	Resources Committee, Finance lead
John Dickens	Chair of the Resources Committee, Safeguarding lead
Bryn Gibson	Head teacher
Alison Goodall	Vice Chair of Governors, Educational Effectiveness Committee,
Tom Gowers	Resources Committee, Maths lead
Sue Greatbanks	Educational Effectiveness Committee, Inclusion (SEN & pupil premium) lead
Janice Markey	Chair of Educational Effectiveness Committee
Danielle Reilly	Educational Effectiveness Committee, Staff governor
Aisha Nevers	Resources Committee
Ann Parham	Chair of Governors, Educational Effectiveness Committee
Rob Sadler	Resources Committee, Health and Safety lead, Whistleblowing governor
Richard Thompson	Resources Committee
Liz Waters	Educational Effectiveness Committee,
Jane Moreton	Clerk to the Governors