



GOVERNORS NEWSLETTER

July 2016

From the Chair

Welcome to the Governor newsletter of Grange C of E Primary School. I hope that you will enjoy reading the articles that some of our governors have written. Through the newsletter we very much hope to communicate more about who we are and what we do as well as keeping in touch with you about the work of the governing body. You will already be aware that there is information about us on the school website and the minutes of our meetings are available once they have been approved by the relevant committee. If there is anything else that you would like us to include in future editions of this newsletter please do e.mail me at chair@grange.cumbria.sch.uk I am also happy to be contacted on that e.mail address for any governor related issues but please do be aware that I also work full time and cannot always respond immediately.

You will remember that I became Chair of Governors towards the end of last year after the sad death of Mr Robin Webster, our previous chair. I was proud to have taken on the role of Chair given the positive comments that had been made about the governing body in our last Ofsted inspection report and, as a group of volunteers, many of whom have full time jobs, we have worked hard to try and maintain the high standards set by Mr Webster.

As a governing body we have just completed our handbook which outlines all of our duties and responsibilities to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of good governance ensuring that Mrs Summers and the school have a clearly defined vision, are performing for the educational performance of the school and are effectively managing the financial resources of the school (Roles, Procedures and Allowances England, Regulations 2013). I am confident in our ability to deliver this monitoring and confident in Mrs Summers ability to be an effective head teacher with excellent leadership skills. I was very proud to be at a social event recently where a member of the public, who had been a parent of children at Dent School (where Mrs Summers had previously been Headteacher) was very complimentary about Mrs Summers and further commented that we are 'lucky to have her'. I hope that, like me, you share the sentiment of that comment. With that, as a governing body, to support Mrs Summers we have recently had to make a difficult decision about the future class structure / staffing arrangement of school and I would like to take this opportunity of reminding you that this was not an easy decision to make but we are confident that it the right decision to make for the long term interest of all of our learners. It goes without saying that we all share the sense of pride and achievement in the very good SATS results that have been published this last week, well done all, staff, parents and most importantly the children.

As we approach the end of another academic year, in itself a scary thought, I turn my thoughts to the next challenges that we may face over the coming year. We don't know what those challenges will be and these will be very much dictated by the developing social and economic situation in which we find ourselves. I very much hope that you will continue to support the governing body and the work that we have to do to ensure that the needs of all of our learners and staff are represented. We will keep you informed of any of these issues through our newsletter and the school website as they emerge.

At a personal level I take great satisfaction in representing the school community as Chair of Governors and thank you for your support. I hope that you and your children have a very happy and restful summer holiday and I too am keeping my fingers crossed that we will have a return of the sunshine.

Dave

Dr D Wheatcroft - Chair of Governors

Who Are We?

Staff Governors - Phillipa Summers, Paula Whinfield

Foundation Governors - The Revd Canon Nick Ash (Ex Officio), Christine Harrison, Judith Mitchell

Local Authority Governors - David Wheatcroft

Parent Governors - Sheryl Illingworth, Ann Walmsley, Kelly Walsh

Working Together

Governors have attended training events organised by our local cluster throughout the year, to make sure we keep up to date on what we need to do in our roles.

School Library

Our Library was officially opened in March by the Bishop of Carlisle. Pupils, staff and guests had a wonderful morning.



The children were very keen to borrow from our new range of books.



Special thanks go to Fiona Herrema for her incredible work on our Library.

Parent Governors



by Sheryl Illingworth

At the recent meeting on class restructures, it became clear that the role of the Parent Governor wasn't very clear to parents.

A governing body tries to have members with a wide range of skills. Governors are elected by parents of children attending the school to bring a parent's perspective to any discussions we might have. We attend Full Governing Body meetings, sit on the Committees and have other specific roles such as Safeguarding. We also do a number of voluntary roles in school.

We try to make ourselves available to parents, listen to other parents' opinions and take account of them as we contribute to governors' decisions. When it comes to voting or decision making, we vote for the outcome we as individuals believe is best for the school. That may not always reflect how the majority of parents would vote and even each parent governor may have a different opinion.

Please feel free to talk to us on the playground or you can contact us through the school office.

Sheryl, Kelly & Ann

Here are some updates from our Governors

Nicky Melling

I have been a Staff (Non-teaching) governor for the previous 5 years, and am a member of the Community, Environment and Welfare sub committee. My role is to participate in the full governing body meetings, to undertake the Wellbeing and safeguarding surveys for Key stage 1 and to distribute the safeguarding surveys for key stage 2. I am always available in School as a member of the non-teaching staff, to answer any questions to parents or carers and play an active role in the school community.

Nick Ash

Over the year I have shared taking the Tuesday Collective Worship with the Methodist Minister, The Revd Jo Rand. I have also visited a couple of classes in school and I have hosted a couple of year groups at St Paul's church. We have welcomed the whole school at the end of each term for a celebration at St Paul's church. I am a member of the Governing Body's Teaching and Learning committee and have reported termly to them on Science, and annually on Collective Worship, R.E and Rights Respecting Charters. It is a privilege to be associated with the school in this way and I particularly enjoy working with the children.

GOVERNORS WHO WORK IN SCHOOL AS PART OF THE ST PAUL'S YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

by **Christine Harrison**

There are 3 governors on the Young People's Group in St Paul's: Nick, Christine and Judith. They are always joined by Mrs Summers, and sometimes other governors. Together with other church members they run a termly after school club. This is just one of the ways that different governors contribute to the vision and the everyday life of the school. The last SIAMs Inspection said, 'Exceptionally strong and purposeful links with the parish church and other local Christian communities contribute significantly to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual development.'

At our June event, the children made beautiful commemorative plates which were on display during the Festival in church to celebrate the Queen's birthday and paraded in church at the Civic Service. They were wonderful and we hope they will be kept as reminders of this special time.

In January, the group had made candles for the Candlemas service in St Paul's when 80 adults and children attended the 'Cake and Candles' Service the Sunday after.



The Palm Sunday after school event was also popular, the children making palm leaves and puppet faces to use in the 'Cake and Crosses' Service the following Sunday as they paraded in church and acted out the Easter Story. The Service was attended by 100 adults and children.

Our next after school event will be 'Cake and Creation', with links to the Harvest.

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

A Day in the life of the 'English' Governor

by **Judith Mitchell**

Keeping in touch with the children and the curriculum is vital as part of the role of a governor and also being aware of the curriculum initiatives and activities in the school. To help me in this, I assist with reading in Class 2 each week and spend 1 ½ hours working with the children which is very rewarding.

I also visit the school each term to discuss 'English' initiatives that are happening in the school with Mrs Whinfield (SLE) as part of governor monitoring; this week my planned termly visit focus is on phonics. It's a busy morning as I visit all the classes in the school from Nursery to Year 6 looking at the reading environment, the reading comprehension books (RIC) selected from a wide ability range of children and then talking to a small group of children from each class. We discuss:-

- Type of books the children are reading at home and at school
- How often they read to a parent/ carer at home
- Reading habits at home
- Use of the new school library

I then speak to each teacher about the progression and attainment of the children and reading initiatives that are happening eg Premier League Reading Stars in Year 6. It's a really enjoyable morning and it's great to see the different classrooms and talk to the children, rather than look at data and test results!

It's now time to write a visit report and then present it at the next Teaching and Learning Committee, followed by the Governing Body. All good knowledge and preparation for a visit from you know who!

And Finally...

Fiona Herrema and Rory Mitchell have both recently left our Governing Body. Over the last few years, both have worked incredibly hard in their roles, and the FGB would like to thank them for their contribution to our school.