

Governors' newsletter

End of academic year July 2015



Dear parents & carers,

I wanted to update you on recent changes to our Governing Body and give you an end of year summary of our work for this last academic year. Following a skills audit last year, we followed guidance from the Department of Education, and along with all school governing bodies, we have now agreed our new constitution (shown below) with effect from 19 March. We have reduced the total number from 17 to 12 and believe we now have the optimal number to carry out our work efficiently and effectively.

Constitution of Wrotham Road Governing Body		
Parent Governors	3	Parent Governors are elected by the parents/carers of pupils at school
Co-opted governors	6	Co-opted Governors with appropriate skills/knowledge are appointed by the Governing Body.
Local Authority Governors	1	Local Authority Governors are appointed in partnership with KCC.
Staff Governors	2	Staff Governors are elected by the school staff; however the Headteacher is automatically a Staff Governor.
Total	12	

In addition to reconstituting, we have recruited some new members to the Governing Body and were very pleased to welcome **Gurneet Bains** and **Adam Chenard** as new Co-opted Governors and **Lucy Hornby** as a new Parent Governor. All governors have term of office of 4 years and our current membership and their terms of office are set out below:

Name	Category	Term of Office	
Sarah Green	Headteacher		
Amarjit Kalsi	Parent	07/02/12	06/02/16
Lucy Hornby	Parent	19/03/15	18/03/19
vacancy	Parent		
Ann Walker	LA	3/12/12	02/12/16
Liz Feather	Staff	20/01/12	19/01/16
Chris Barnes	Co-opted	19/03/15	18/03/19
Gurneet Bains	Co-opted	19/03/15	18/03/19
Howard Feather	Co-opted	19/03/15	18/03/19
Mark Whitehouse	Co-opted	19/03/15	18/03/19
Adam Chenard	Co-opted	19/03/15	18/03/19
Vacancy	Co-opted		

As you can see, we still have vacancies for a Parent Governor and a Co-opted Governor, and we hope to be filling these positions soon.

We will be running an election for an additional parent governor in September, so do watch out for information regarding this.

You will also notice that all of our Co-opted Governors have the same term of office date, this is because the category of "Co-opted" is a new category under the new guidelines. Those of our Co-opted Governors who were previously Governors in a different category became "Co-opted" under the new model.

The Governing Body works with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership team to set the strategic direction of the school and make sure the school is meeting its targets within the School Improvement Plan and to ensure that every child has the best opportunity to meet their potential.

This year we have worked with 4 committees- **Resources, Teaching & Learning, Pay & Personnel and Policy Review**, to fulfil our core functions as set out by the Department of Education, these are:

- *Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;*
- *Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;*
- *Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.*

The Teaching & Learning Committee holds Mrs Green & Senior Leadership team to account for the progress of all the pupils and for the quality of teaching & learning through the school. The teachers assess the pupils' progress every 6 weeks and Mrs Green and Mr Bennett provide the Governors with reports showing a breakdown of all the data across the year groups, classes and for particular groups such as those pupils receiving Pupil Premium (PP) funding and pupils with English as an additional Language (EAL). The Committee analyses the data and monitors the work to improve the teaching & learning in the school by making monitoring visits and linking with key co-ordinators. Over the last couple of years the school has developed its own in-house pupil progress tracking system and since the DfE changed the assessment process this year so that "levels" are no longer used, the school's system was able to adapt readily and seamlessly to tracking against the "developing; meeting; exceeding" model that you will have seen in your child's progress reports. The Local Authority has been very positive about how effective the School progress tracking system is and this year's data shows excellent results and improvements on previous years. We will publish the results in the autumn term once the results have been validated.

The Resources Committee oversees the management of the budget & the Health Safety of the school with Mrs Green & the School Business Manager (Mrs Tillet), and holds them to account for the use of the funding. Last financial year (2014/15) we had a total income of £1,944,070 with £126,700 of that being Pupil Premium (PP) funding which is used to ensure those pupils who are eligible for the funding have extra support for their learning. In the financial year 14/15 the school received an extra £1320 for each eligible pupil.

One of the criteria used to allocate the PP funds is if a pupil is eligible to receive free-school meals then the school receives extra PP funding for that child. We appreciate that now that all Key Stage 1 pupils receive free school meals if they wish to have them, there is no need for eligible families to apply for them as such. However, the school will not receive the extra funding for which your child is entitled unless you make an application.

You will find further information about the use of the Pupil Premium funding and how to apply for free school meals on the school website in the "about us" section.

This year we have continued to invest in the enrichment of the school indoor and outdoor learning environments for the children. The new "values" murals around the school were developed with the children and we hope you will agree that they have had a great impact in reinforcing the school values. We have also invested in a new school minibus which is invaluable in broadening the extra-curricular opportunities for the children. We have continued to invest in the IT infrastructure through the school to ensure that all pupils have access to the latest e-learning opportunities. With the changes in the national Primary Curriculum, we have invested in many new resources and have continued to enrich the children's learning with the cross-curricular International Primary Curriculum.

The Pay & Personnel Committee works with Mrs Green to ensure robust performance management procedures in the school and to ensure that all recruitment & selection processes comply with the necessary safeguarding guidance and best practice.

All staff have pay-related performance management targets and all teachers (including the Headteacher) and support staff have targets linked to the pupils' progress. All pay decisions are linked to the successful performance management targets and all staff training is linked to their targets and the overall School Improvement Plan.

The Governors agree the school staffing plan & structure on an annual basis to ensure that it matches the school's needs and is financially sustainable.

The Policy Review Committee works with Mrs Green and the Senior Leadership team to co-ordinate the review of all the statutory policies and procedures in line with the latest guidance from the Department of Education & KCC. In addition, the school develops its own policies to ensure that “in-house” procedures are followed consistently by all staff for the benefit and well-being of the pupils.

Governor training & development:

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that we access necessary ongoing training in order that we can fulfil our individual & collective roles effectively. During this past year our training programme has included the following:

- Reconstitution update
- Effective Governor Visits
- Embedding Finance in the School Improvement Plan
- New Governors' induction
- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- What governors should know about school data
- In-house data training
- Challenge & Impact
- Ofsted & the new curriculum
- Safer recruitment
- Governing Body self-review

We also attend local and county briefing sessions to ensure we receive the latest guidance on current or developing issues. In addition we have group membership of the National Governors Association, other Governance resource sites and on-line training sites to help strengthen and widen our collective knowledge

As ever, we are very grateful to Mrs Green and all the staff for all their hard work and ongoing commitment to the children and families of Wrotham Road School. They are tireless in striving to ensure that every child has the best opportunity to fulfil their potential whilst at the school.

We are also very grateful to all the parents and carers of pupils. Your support of, and involvement in, the school is vital in ensuring that it retains the caring, family ethos that it has. Particular thanks go to those parents whose children are leaving us to go to secondary school. We hope they all have very happy memories of their time at Wrotham Road and we wish them well in everything that they do in the future.

We will continue to keep you updated with regular newsletters and postings on the website in the new academic year

Please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office if you have any queries, comments or suggestions.

*Ann Walker
Chair of Governors*