



Governor Newsletter Spring Term 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you will find this Governor Newsletters helpful. We aim to produce this newsletter termly, although due to several changes to the governing body there was not one last term. Our previous newsletters can be found on the school website. As you are aware we have been looking to make changes to the structure of the governing body to ensure we can effectively support the school in providing the best possible education for the children currently on roll at the school as well as sustaining the school for the future.

One of the key roles has been moving to a four class structure, with the pre-school becoming a nursery and operating as one class with the reception children. This change has been really positive for the children, during the recent audit of the school by the local authority they described the Early Years (EY) as “exemplary”. During our earning walks we too have noticed the progress in the EY children. We will be able to sustain this class structure next year too.

The number of children on roll at the school seems to increase weekly, with many new families joining us this year. All year groups, apart from year 6 and reception are oversubscribed, which is fantastic for the future of the school.

You may have seen the advert in the Heron, as we have a vacancy on our Governing Body for a Co-opted Governor. A Co-Opted Governor is a person appointed by the governing body and who, in the opinion of the governing body, has the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. Mrs Ford has carried out this role for the past few years, however as the governing body is now smaller, we are only allowed two staff members on it. We have had some interest from the community and will let you know the outcomes following our next meeting.

Each of the governors has a specific role on the governing body, below is a table of who our governors are and their area of responsibility. A governor term of office is usually four years, apart from the headteacher, more detail about each of governors term of office can be found on the school website.

Cllr Fred Yeulett	LA Governor	Chair of Governors/Finance
Mrs Maria Higgins	Ex-Officio	
Mr James Hughes	Co-Opted	Standards and outcomes for children
Mr Andrew Murray	Co-Opted	Safeguarding
Dr Natalie Paine	Parent	Vulnerable Groups (SEND, Pupil Premium and Looked After Children)
Mr Simon Freeland	Parent	Health and Safety
Miss Yvonne Chenery	Staff	EYFS and Attendance
Vacancy	Co-Opted	Curriculum/Resources

As Chair of Governors I was fortunate enough to attend the Hawker Class Story Café this term and go on a learning walk, to see the developments in maths across the school. Dr Paine has been in and looked at the progress of children with special educational needs. Mr Murray has been in and looked at the school's safeguarding procedures. Mr Hughes has attended Emerald Class Café.

Attending the Story Café's has given Governors a chance to speak directly with parents, and listen to their views. We will try to ensure that over the year we attend the Story Café for each class. This term you have raised some of the following issues, we have spoken with school leaders about these and their answers are included.

- 1) ***The teaching of times tables and spelling with a perceived lack of challenge.*** The school has a duty to ensure that all children know their times tables off by heart by the end of year 4 to meet the government requirements. The school is following a new programme, which the children are really enjoying called 'Times Tables Rock Stars' each child is working on their own level based on their test results. The school has been complimented by the Local Authority on the improvements in spelling, they are using the 'Cued-Spelling' strategy to teach spellings and all parents were invited to a workshop, run by the local authority to learn more about this.
- 2) ***Phonics not working for all children.*** As you will be aware the school must follow the statutory requirement to teach phonics. The school staff work hard to promote a love of reading and reading comprehension through sharing books, guided reading, Take 10, events like World Book Day, Story Café's. You may remember Marilyn Brocklehurst coming into school to speak to parents about creating a love of reading. We have also spent thousands of pounds on beautiful new reading books to create a love of reading.
- 3) ***Concerns raised about joined up writing.*** The children are required to join their writing to meet the curriculum requirements. The school has been praised by the local authority for the improvements in the presentation of children's work. There is a lot of research that that joined handwriting from a young age also improves children's spelling.
- 4) ***More guidance should be given to parents in order that they could help with homework parents felt they didn't relate well with current teaching methods particularly in maths as they differed from their own learning experiences.*** The school held a workshop for maths last term, another is planned for this term, these sessions are designed to support you to help your child. Class teachers are always available to help. You get a termly Link-Up, parents evening, Take 10 and there is information on the website and Starz+.
- 5) ***Parents would like more use of after-school clubs.*** We financially support a club before school. We used to provide an after school club, but it was not supported widely enough to be financially viable for Premier Sports to run it. There are sports competitions and Film Club for the children after school.

We value the continued support of all our parents and with the School we encourage direct, open and honest communication with parents. If you have a suggestions for things we include in this newsletter do let us know via Chair@townley.cambs.sch.uk.

If as a parent you wish to discuss any school related matters, please contact the School directly via office@townley.cambs.sch.uk. If you wish to discuss the Governing Body you can contact us through the school office.

Website

The school website has a wealth of useful information and the governors pages are being developed. You should also be able to find copies of the minutes of meetings that have been approved this term on the governor pages.