



## Emersons Green Primary School - Governors' Newsletter July 2018

### Governor Newsletter

Welcome to this Governing Body newsletter as we near the end of the school year.

Hopefully you will find it useful and feel that you have sufficient information about the school and how it is managed. We find it a tricky balance getting the right level of visibility of governors and our role amongst parents. Meetings with parents were suggested last year but there wasn't much call for them during the current school year. We are therefore looking at different ways to engage with parents without disrupting the communication between Headteacher, staff and parents. We plan to still issue a newsletter 2 or 3 times a year summarising the key topics and perhaps supporting this with governors present at parents' evenings, available to talk around those topics or maybe hold an annual meeting to review the year. If you have any views on what works best for you, please let us know at [egpsgovernors@gmail.com](mailto:egpsgovernors@gmail.com).

#### **A CHALLENGING YEAR**

This current school year brought with it more challenges than I have ever seen the School face during my time as a parent or governor before. It is a credit to all staff, the children and the leadership team that despite such challenges and considerable additional requirements on their time that the school has continued to perform well. This was encapsulated within the recent very positive OFSTED report. This was only possible with the dedication and commitment of a very professional team and the positive and enthusiastic approach that you and your children have brought.

### **What are the main challenges now?**

#### **FUNDING**

Budgets are tighter and the recent changes for the National Funding Formula still leave South Gloucestershire as one of the least funded authorities per pupil in the country. This led to the School undertaking restructuring last year which we know has put additional pressure on staff as the changes bedded in. Their "can do" attitude has very much overcome any issues faced and we are now in an annual surplus allowing us to reduce the deficit from last year at a steady rate over the next 2 years.

## **CONTINUALLY IMPROVING STANDARDS**

Most governors either have or have had children attend this wonderful school. We love the school - its creativity, its energy, its inclusivity and its values. The Head and his staff care deeply about how children grow and learn. They are a great team and do their utmost to deal with the challenges all Schools face. Last year we achieved some very positive SATS results and also in early years. Each year of course has a different cohort of children and results will vary. The school therefore works to continually challenge ourselves and you would hopefully have seen that the School Development Plan priorities have been reinforced by the recent OFSTED report. Further details on these were provided in the 8<sup>th</sup> June school newsletter. It was pleasing to know that the Governors and the senior leadership had identified the key areas to continue improving and action already in hand to do so. This is a continual process that as governors we challenge the Head regularly on.

## **ACADEMISATION (or not)**

There is a lot of information about academisation in the news and very differing views as to whether it is positive for schools or not. As a Governing Body, we would not recommend the school to academise unless we were absolutely certain it would be in the best interests of the children at our school. But in the current environment, we have to understand the risks of not academising especially if other local schools decide to do so. Whilst there are worries, there are also benefits in academising for staff, children and communities especially if schools come together with others having similar values. That is essentially why NEXUS schools are exploring the feasibility of academising and forming as a Multi Academy Trust together. We are also looking into other options but at the moment are only gathering information. We would hold detailed sessions with staff and parents before proceeding – or indeed to explain why we would choose not to academise if that was the decision. We keep an open mind to ensure the outcome we feel is best for the School is ultimately recommended. Any academisation would not take place before the 2019/20 school year at the earliest.

## **PTFA**

The school is a community and one that plays a positive role in the wider local community. Members of the PTFA work hard behind the scenes to fund raise but exceptionally hard in running the many events during that year that we all enjoy whilst also raising much welcome funds for the School. I'd like to publicly thank all members of the PTFA for their dedication and hard work, in particular the joint chairs, Jess Chubb and Sarah Usher, as it can be a difficult role at times.

## **Goodbye to Year 6**

As we entered the summer, our attention quickly turned to the children who were going to be undergoing SAT tests. As governors we have followed their progress (anonymised) as one of our roles is to ensure standards are maintained/excelled in that each child progresses as much as they possibly can. This means providing the best possible education for every child. Of course all children are different but we know that the staff and children have all been working hard to reach the very challenging national age-related targets. The national tests give one very narrow measure of how the children are doing in certain subjects, but they can never tell the whole story. It is the school's performance that is under review, not the children's, so hopefully with the breakfast club the children enjoyed the week and did not worry unnecessarily.

## **Who are the Governors?**

We have a capable and committed Governing Body with a range of skills and Governors are developing into their specific roles. You can see who we are on the school website and we are in the process of getting our photos on the entrance board. Mike Beard is the chair with Bonnie Morgan vice chair. Governors all give their time voluntarily and for some, this has attracted considerable additional time this year.

## ***Contacting Us***

Much of your contact with the school will be with your child's class teacher, other members of staff or the Headteacher who are responsible for the day to day management of the school. We value your ideas and opinions, so please feel free to contact the school directly or submit via a **RICK form** detailing any comments you would like the school and governors to see be that *Recognition* for somebody, *Ideas* you have, *Concerns* you would like to be considered or any *Knowledge* you feel would be useful to share with the school.

Surveys are also a good way of gaining parental views and we thank parents and carers for participating in the OFSTED survey. Results were very positive which was recognised by the inspection team. The results are still available at the link below.

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results/survey/result-print/20503/current>.

If you have any questions or comments about the work carried out by the Governing Body, you may contact us by e-mail to [egpsgovernors@gmail.com](mailto:egpsgovernors@gmail.com) or you can write to the Chair of the Governing Body via the school office.