



Newsletter No.2

21ST MARCH 2016

A Spring update from the Governing Body

We hope in this newsletter to update you on changes that have occurred in the Governing Body over the past year and let you know what we have been doing throughout the year. We also want to let you know our plans for the 2015-16 academic year.

A reminder of who we are:

Governors are a group of volunteers who include parents, staff and members of our local community. Being a governor takes quite a lot of time but our close association with the school is incredibly rewarding, especially when we are closely involved with the implementation of important changes. Our main role is to promote ongoing improvements in standards throughout the school. We work with the Headteacher and staff to plan the school's long term direction and to evaluate the children's progress. We help to set the school's aims and values. Many of our responsibilities carry a statutory requirement. This means that we are obliged by law to do things such as agree the annual budget and to conform with appropriate training with respect to issues, such as, safeguarding. Our role is sometimes described as a 'critical friend'. This does not mean that we are there to criticise the Head or the school. Instead we try to ask useful questions to gain a greater understanding of the school and to foster an ethos of continual improvement.

How has the Governing Body changed?

Over the past year there has been one change to the Governing Body. Paul Hancock has resigned as Parent Governor as his boys have now moved on. Paul has done valuable work on the GB and we thank him for his contributions over his term of office.

We are pleased to welcome Gareth Williams as Paul's elected replacement as Parent Governor. Gareth has joined the Finance, Premises and Personnel Committee.

How do we operate?

A reminder of how we work:

The Governing Body divides into two main committees. The membership depends on the interests and skills of the individuals.

The Finance, Premises and Personnel Committee

This oversees the school's finances, looks after the premises and agrees staffing arrangements and salaries.

Members of this committee are: Ros Brocklehurst (Chair), Sharon Williams, Paul Adams, Gareth Williams, Paul Marshall and Stephanie Gait.

The committee discusses the school's finances and is instrumental in agreeing how its income is to be distributed throughout the year and how future income is to be deployed, especially with respect to the change to primary.

The Teaching and Learning Committee

The role of this committee is to contribute to providing a high standard of education for our children here at Sytchampton. They are particularly interested in standards achieved by the pupils, both with respect to progress of individual pupils and overall standards achieved, compared to similar schools nationally. The committee members question the Head in order to verify the results/data presented to the meeting. They complete monitoring visits in line with the school's development plan.

Members of this committee are: Pinky Jain (Chair), Sharon Williams, Stephanie Gait, Jen Cutler, Paul Steele, Bethan Houston, Claire Kneebone, Iris Fox and Ros Brocklehurst.



Responsibilities

Individual governors have particular responsibilities for different areas within the school, according to their special interests.

Some of these are:

Claire Kneebone; Safeguarding

Paul Steele; Science

Pinky Jain; Maths

Bethan Houston and Iris Fox; English

Paul Marshall; Health and Safety

Stephanie Gait; Special Educational Needs

Jen Cutler; Early Years

How often do we meet?

The full Governing Body meets once a term, as does the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Finance, Premises and Personnel Committee meets twice each term.

There are also occasional meetings of the Steering Committee and Salaries Committee.

What did we do last year?

For 2014-15 our particular aims included to focus on and improve results in boys' writing, mental maths and Early Years development.

With these aims in mind, individual governors visited the school throughout the year to monitor the progression towards the school's aims and then reported back to the GB. Governors, acting as a 'critical friend', questioned Mrs Williams to confirm the reported progress in these areas.

We worked on planning the introduction of Year 5 as the first step to becoming a primary school and we appointed Mr Purdie to teach the Y5 pupils - and Y6 next year. We are pleased to see that our Y5 pupils have settled in well, as has Mr Purdie!

Amongst other things, the FPP committee also oversaw the removal of the tree by the staff car park and the creation of some much needed visitor parking spaces. This project linked with improvements to the KS1 and WAC base with improved lighting, a new window and radiator covers.

Targets for 2014-15

Read/Writing/ Maths SATs KS1 combined score 17.2 pts (National 16.1pts)

Level 2 + 100% achieved (national 86%)

Early Years Good level of development 75% (Local Authority 65%)

Yr 1 Phonics 88% pass rate

We are pleased to confirm that the school's targets were been met for 2014-15 and we thank Mrs Williams and her staff for their work towards the attainment of these goals.

What are we doing for 2015-16?

We are continuing to strive to improve attainment for all pupils and will monitor their progress throughout the year. We have set a target of 85% to achieve age related expectations in KS 1—now that levels have been removed.

I am pleased to say that we now have a project underway to widen Cow Lane - the entrance to the car park - into a 2 track lane, increasing the safety of entrance and exit from the A449. Dr Mike Best, a Sytchampton resident whom many of you might know, has purchased Party Pleck, the house to the left of Cow Lane as you enter the car park and has allowed a strip of his land to be used for the widening of Cow Lane. The school's playing field adjacent to Cow Lane belongs to the Lloyds' Foundation and they have also granted permission for a strip of land to be used to complete the widening of the lane.

The project will be completed as soon as possible - you will be informed as it progresses. We give our thanks to Dr Best and Lloyds for enabling this much needed improvement to proceed.



Fuente: Banco de imágenes y sonidos del ITE
Ilustrador: Miguel Martínez Monasterio

Academies:

Our Governing Body is keen to be at the forefront of developments in education and as you may be aware it is the Government's aim to convert all schools to academies by 2020. With this in mind we must carefully consider Sytchampton' s future.

For small schools like ours - and indeed, for all schools - clusters of schools are joining together to form Multi-Academy Trusts. This arrangement has many benefits such as, increased opportunities for our learners through collaboration and shared working. It also provides further economies of scale .

We already collaborate with other schools: we are a strategic member of the Rivers Teaching Alliance which offers training opportunities for staff, we meet with the schools in the Droitwich pyramid to share best practice, we partner the University of Worcester in supporting Initial Teacher training for student teachers, as well as St. John's Middle School in Bromsgrove and Stourport High School. We collaborate with Ombersley and Wy-chbold first schools, local private schools and nurseries and we are currently making links with other local primary schools . We have transition points at year 4 and year 6 and ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

We are currently investigating all of the issues associated with this process and are still fact-finding and as soon as we have more information we will be consulting with parents.

As I'm sure you will agree from all the above, under the leadership of Mrs Williams and with the backing of the governors, Sytchampton has a strong team of staff, an ethos of high expectations for learners, a vibrant and relevant curriculum and excellent community links which all ensure that we continues to make exciting progress.



Our Current Governing Body

Headteacher: Mrs Sharon Williams

Local Authority: Dr Pinky Jain (university of Worcester)

Parent Governor: Mr Paul Marshall

Mr Gareth Williams

Teaching Governor: Mrs Jen Cutler

Lloyds Foundation Governors:

Dr Stephanie Gait (Chair)

Mrs Ros Brocklehurst (Vice-Chair)

Mr Paul Adams Dr Claire Kneebone (Parent)

Mrs Bethan Houston (Parent)

Dr Paul Steele (Parent) (Stourpot High School)

Mrs Iris Fox (retired Deputy Head)

Clerk: Mrs Jane Lawson

How can you contact us?

Your elected Parent Governors, Paul Marshall and Gareth Williams can often be found on the playground, along with the other governors who are parents: Bethan Houston, Claire Kneebone and Paul Steele. Should you wish to contact any other governors, then please do so through the school office.

Dr. Stephanie Gait, Chair of Governors