

Fairlands Primary School and Nursery Governors' Newsletter



Welcome to our 1st Governor Newsletter for this Academic Year, a termly newsletter which aims to give you an insight into work School Governors are doing at Fairlands Primary School and Nursery.

This newsletter is meant to be informative and we would welcome feedback on any issues that you would like us to consider. You can contact us via the School Office on 01438 351053 or the school e-mail admin@fairlands.herts.sch.uk



Is Fairlands a “good” school?

Two years ago, Fairlands Primary School was judged to be “satisfactory” by Ofsted, as is the case for many Stevenage primary schools. Since then, the school and the governing body have been working hard to address the concerns raised in the report – for example, the quality of teaching. The governing body has been doing this by visiting classes and by reviewing pupil performance information to ensure all children are making adequate progress. As reported in the latest OFSTED report, the quality of teaching has improved, with most being good and an increasing proportion that is outstanding.

While this has been happening, there have been many changes to the way Ofsted inspects schools – with a greater focus on the quality of teaching.

Fairlands Primary School received an official Ofsted inspection on 3rd and 4th October 2012. A team of three inspectors visited the school and judged us to be “**Good**”. The Governing Body are enormously proud of everyone in the Fairlands Primary School Community. Being judged “**Good**” by Ofsted is not an easy thing to achieve in light of the new Framework. This outcome is the result of years of hard work and commitment by all the people involved with the school. I would like to say a big thank you Mr Staples, the SLT, teaching and support staff, all students, parents and governors for their achievements, support and positive attitude. The Ofsted inspection team were very rigorous. Over the two days they visited nearly 30 lessons, held meetings with students, staff and governors, talked to lots of students around school, scrutinised a wide range of school documents and analysed feedback from parents, staff and students. As a result, they found that the vast majority of what we do to be **good** and some things are **outstanding**. The inspection team had many complimentary things to say about the school.

Pupil Premium

The “Pupil Premium” is extra funding the school receives for every pupil who meets certain criteria. You may have read about it on the news recently. It is right to expect that every pupil, from whatever background, should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This funding, the equivalent of around £600 per eligible pupil, will go towards supporting your school to ensure that our motto “Reaching High” is achieved.

The school publish details of what the Pupil Premium is on the schools website. It is being spent to support this aim and what the expected outcomes are, and the governing body will be monitoring the results closely with the school.

Examples of how the money is being spent in this academic year are: the employment of a Family Life's Worker, a speech & language therapist, additional TA help and extra maths / literature resources.

This extra funding is directly linked to the number of pupils who receive **Free School Meals** – to check if you are eligible for Free School Meals, please go to www.hertsdirct.org/freeschoolmeals or contact the school office for details.

Parental Involvement

Governors are keen to enhance parent(s) involvement in the education of their child. Many studies into parental involvement show that a parent can have a very positive impact on their child's success as a learner in school. We're continuously looking at ways to improve parental involvement and you can get involved, for example:

- Attend school assemblies, parent evenings and other events organised by the school.
- Spend time each day helping your child with their homework/reading and checking their reading record every evening.
- A weekly Homework Flyer is sent home giving details of phonics sounds that are being taught that week and key words to learn.
- A Curriculum Information Booklet is also produced and sent home each half term. This gives details of suggested activities that parents can do with their child.
- Reaching High Target Flyers are sent out half termly with activities on them.
- Ask about any parent courses which may help you assist your child with their homework.
- Come along to the Parent Forum and share your views.
- Keep in regular contact with your child's class teacher, we provide lots of opportunities for you to meet them throughout the year.

If you have any issues about your child's learning, you want more information on any ways that you can help your child learn at home or if you have any issues, you can meet your child's teacher, who will always be happy to arrange a time to discuss your child's progress.

Attendance

Governors continue to monitor attendance figures of the school and fully support Mr Staples and the senior management of the school in its endeavours to improve attendance. We cannot stress enough the implications of children having poor or late attendance, for whatever reason, and we would continue to ask for parental support in this matter to ensure that this aspect improves and that, wherever possible, holidays are taken within the normal school holiday period.

The attendance rate is important because children are more likely to succeed in school when they attend school consistently. It is difficult for the teacher and the class to build their skills and progress if a large number of children are frequently absent.

David Gray
Chair of Governors