

WE ARE 'REACHING HIGH'

Governors' News

The governors' newsletter of Fairlands Primary School and Nursery

Issue 4

www.fairlands.herts.sch.uk

March 2008

Dear Parents/Carers,

This has been a dramatic period for Fairlands School. On the Sunday morning after the fire I, like most others present, thought it would be difficult for the school to open for at least a week, and I think everyone there took it for granted that the OFSTED inspection would have to be postponed until the Summer term.

As you know the school was open with only one day lost, and OFSTED came the following day as planned. Fairlands School was able to show the inspectors how it dealt with a crisis, and they don't come much bigger than this!

The inspectors were obviously impressed with the way the whole school community coped, especially with the way the children responded. Their report, which you have all been given to read in full, recognises the progress the school has made in difficult times.

That we have dealt with the immediate crisis after the fire and demonstrated good progress to the inspectors is a tribute to everyone involved; staff, parents and pupils. On behalf of the Governors I want to thank you all and wish you a happy Easter.

Regards

Michael Downing
Chair of Governors

LEA Governors

Cllr Michael Downing (Chair)
Mr Jim Callaghan

Community Governors

Mr Phil Swallow (Vice Chair)
Rev Geoff Tickner

Staff Governors

Mr Rob Staples
Miss Michelle Bridge
Miss Jackie Miller
Miss Maxine Franklin
Mrs Rosemary Biggs

Parent Governors

Mrs Teresa Callaghan
Mrs Sue Hurren
Mrs Julie Jeffries
Mr Gary Warmby
Mr Neal Muggleton
Mrs Karen Oakley

SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to say a huge thank you to Mr Horner for the fantastic role he has played since the fire. He was the first to arrive on the scene and the last to go home. His hard work in getting the school up and running safely and quickly has been much appreciated.

We would also like to say thank you to both Mrs Pateman and Mrs Walker. They have taken on the reception classes (Ash and Beech) at short notice and are doing a great job. We are extremely grateful for their hard work and support.

GOVERNOR OF THE MONTH

January – Sue Hurren

Before I knew it, January had come on gone, Unfortunately I was unable to come in to the Foundation stage as planned, I was hoping to see the children and their work and get an inside view of the classroom before my little girl starts in Jan 09. I still hope to do this though in the summer term.

I was however asked by Mr Staples to have a meeting with the Ofsted inspectors. I was a little nervous, but found them to be very friendly and relaxed.

Overall they seemed pleased with the progress of our school and I hope that my input as a Governor, confirmed that we are a progressing school and that our children are happy and we have a strong sense of community.

This is (in my eyes) evident after the fire, the huge amount of effort from teachers/staff/children and parents to get the school open and up and running as quickly as possible. I am proud to be a governor of this school.

Governor Position: Parent Governor

Q: *Why did you become a governor?*

A: I felt that by becoming a governor I could make decisions that would impact on my children's schooling and also be helpful to the school in some way.

Q: *What do you enjoy most about being a governor?*

A: As a governing body, we can make those decisions which ensure that the school acts upon them. We also are able to help the Head raise the profile of our school, of which I am very proud.

Q: *What's your favourite TV programme?*

A: Heroes, can't wait for series 2.

Q: *Last film seen at the cinema?*

A: Sweeney Todd, excellent!

Q: *Best book ever read?*

A: Good night Mr Tom (when I was 10, after that I was hooked on books).

Q: *Your best School moment (from your childhood)?*

A: Being asked to represent my school at the school athletics Nationals and coming 1st in High Jump. (And school skiing trips, great fun!)

Q: *Name three items you would take on a desert island?*

A: A big thick book, a lifetime supply of Vodka and tonic and my mobile, I like to keep in touch!

February – Neal Muggleton

Governor Position: Parent Governor. Most recently I have taken on the new role of Governor for Extended Services.

Q: *Why did you become a governor?*

A: I became a Governor to offer my business experience and to support the school achieve its target of reaching higher standards.

My initial intention was that it would act as a good hobby, a worthwhile focus from my normal occupation that allowed me to get involved in my children's school.

Q: *What do you enjoy most about being a governor?*

A: I enjoy being a volunteer (and sometimes being volunteered) at the school. We are planning on opening a pre-school at Fairlands. It has been very interesting being directly involved in the team that is implementing that project - although do ask me again once it is up and running.

My position of Extended Services Governor should also be an interesting activity. It is a new position that will help the school develop its services and connections with the local community. We are looking at schemes how we can use the great facilities at Fairlands outside of the normal school day. If you have any suggestions on what you think the local community needs please do let me know.

Q: *What's your favourite TV programme?*

A: Now for the tough questions – I have several favourite TV programmes unfortunately. Grand Designs, Spooks and general gardening programmes.

Q: *Last film seen at the cinema?*

A: Ratatouille

Q: *Best book ever read?*

A: Bravo 2 Zero by Andy McNab, and most books by Dan Brown.

Q: *Your best School moment (from your childhood)?*

A: I really enjoyed the whole of my time at school; most memorable was my first school trip away to Dell Farm near Whipsnade, Bedfordshire.

Q: *Name three items you would take on a desert island?*

- 1) IPod
- 2) Some fancy solar powered recharging device to keep the IPod running
- 3) Guinness on tap

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Governing bodies have a key role to play in school food; in some cases the schools governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school food standards are met. In all schools governing bodies have a duty to ensure healthy eating culture is fostered throughout their school and forms part of its ethos.

As Governors at Fairlands we are committed to giving staff our full support in their efforts to give all pupils consistent messages about health. We support the schools "Five a Day" campaign to encourage children to eat fruit and vegetables five times a day.

We continue to monitor the school to ensure that they promote healthy diets for the children and have produced a Food Policy.

We can monitor this annually and implement changes to the schools approach to food/health/diet.

A copy of the Food Policy is on the schools website. www.fairlands.herts.sch.uk

HOME SCHOOL CHILD AGREEMENT

As you are aware we have implemented a "Home School Child Agreement" for all pupils. These were sent out via book bags last November, requesting that were to be read, signed and returned to school. Thank you to those of you who did this.

Unfortunately we are still waiting on a lot of these to be returned. Reminders have been sent out recently from the office so if you have received a reminder copy please return it to school at the start of the summer term. If you have received a reminder and cannot find it then please either contact the office or check the website.

It is important that **all** children have read and understood the agreement and that we are **all** working with it.

FAIRLANDS IN THE PUBLIC EYE!

Obviously we have featured in the Comet a few times recently with articles about the fire. We are now featuring in the national press! The Times Education Supplement (out on Good Friday - tomorrow) is running an article on our recent Ofsted inspection. A few of the children will be

quoted so don't forget to get a copy and see if it's your child!

We will also be featured as Hertbeat's "School of the Week" the week after the Easter holidays. A few of the children will be interviewed and then their parents will have to answer questions about the children. Stay tuned to see the results of that quiz - should be interesting!

If you have any suggestions or queries you would like to raise with governors, please use the suggestion box, placed by the school office.