

WE ARE 'REACHING HIGH'

Governors' News

The governors' newsletter of Fairlands Primary School and Nursery

Issue 5

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July 2008

Dear Parents/Carers,

Fairlands School has had an incredible year. I write just after the Open Evening when so many parents were able to see all that was going on in the school, and Governors, like me, were able to talk to students and see how enthusiastic they were about their work. The summer fete was a brilliant success thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it such an enjoyable day, and we were lucky with the weather! Only a few days earlier many of us had seen the amazing production of 'The Wizard of Oz.' Who needs Judy Garland after this?

Who would have thought this was possible after the fire? On that dreadful Sunday morning it looked as if the school would have to be closed for weeks. In fact, as you may all know, only one day was lost, and Fairlands School was able to show the OFSTED inspectors just how well we responded to a crisis, a much bigger one than any of us could have dreamed of. The quick re-opening of the school was only made possible by the way all those involved; staff, parents, pupils and governors all rallied round.

We got the good report deserved, and everyone involved in Fairlands School can take well-deserved holidays knowing that Fairlands is moving onwards and upwards. Thank you all. Have a good break.

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
Mrs Rosemary Biggs
Miss Maxine Franklin

Parent Governors

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

GOVERNOR OF THE MONTH

MAY – JULIE JEFFRIES

As part of my duties for Governor of the month I had the privilege of interviewing for the role of Assistant Head for KS1. Part of the process included being interviewed by several members of the school council from all year groups. The representatives had put a lot of thought into their questions and were all very well behaved and articulate.

I have also been involved in the process to open a Pre-School facility in January, which has involved putting together the tender package. I am now looking forward to the next stage and seeing the Pre-School up and running and it making a valuable contribution to what Fairlands offers.

Name and Position on Governing Body

Julie Jeffries, Parent Governor

What power would you have if you were a superhero?

I'd love to be able to make myself invisible – my incredibly inquisitive (aka nosy) gene would love that!

What book are you reading at the moment?

"The Audacity of Hope" by Barack Obama and my trashy read is "The last to know" by Melissa Hill.

What is your favourite album at the moment?

Easily "Scouting for Girls" by Scouting for Girls.

What has been your highlight of being a governor so far?

Without wanting to repeat Neal's words I would say it's the Ofsted report. The work put in by everyone involved in the school has been fantastic and we're definitely improving all the time.

What strengths do you bring to the governing body?
I would say that I'm an organised person and get fully committed to whatever task I'm involved in.

Is there anything you'd like to see done differently at Fairlands?

I would like to see our reading scores a lot higher and would love to see a real interest in reading across the school. I feel that getting a thirst for reading at an early stage is vital as it's an essential tool for life, not just in education and work but reading is a great pastime too. I would also like to see a lot more parental support when it comes to the fundraising events, which the school hosts, after all it's everyone's children who benefits.

Apart from governors meetings(!) what other event have you enjoyed participating in during the last school year?

The school has hosted many events this year and every one that I have attended has been excellent – from the fundraising Bingo/Quiz/Family Fun Day events to the Wizard of Oz production and Sports Day.

JUNE – KAREN OAKLEY

As ‘Governor of the month’ I attended the regular parent’s forum, which as usual was very interesting. For those of you who have never been to one, they are very informal, a great way to get to know the school and other parents better, and the perfect chance to air your views – good or bad!

This month we discussed school uniform, and Mr. Staples showed us some sweatshirts and cardigans along with the proposed new school logo.

We also had Sara Hassel from Parentline Plus joining us. Sara is a great ‘listener’ if you feel the need to talk and has run some really good workshops over the last year, offering some great advice for parents. There will be more workshops on offer from September. A group of parents are also hoping to set up their own support group for those of you who have children with challenging behaviour.

Parking was another topic – yet again discussed! Many of us still feel there are parents out there ignoring the dangers to our children when they park. Please try and consider this!

If any of you parents do want to discuss or suggest anything in the future, come along and join us at the next parent forum (even if it is just for the free cup of tea!).

Name and Position on Governing Body

Karen Oakley, Parent Governor

What power would you have if you were a superhero?

Id love to be able to fly!

What book are you reading at the moment?

Vanished, the truth about the disappearance of Madeleine McCann

What is your favourite album at the moment?

The Osmonds!

What has been your highlight of being a governor so far?

I’m not sure, as I have only been a Governor since October. However the three-course meal at my induction course was definitely a good start!

What strengths do you bring to the governing body?

Hopefully I bring my views as a parent.

Is there anything you’d like to see done differently at Fairlands?

There is nothing that I can currently think of.

Apart from governors meetings (!) what other event have you enjoyed participating in during the last school year?

Definitely the quiz night!

NB Karen’s team were the winners – beating several other governors’ teams and staff teams!

JULY - NEAL MUGGLETON

Name and Position on Governing Body

Neal Muggleton – Parent Governor.

Resources committee member and Extended Services Governor.

What power would you have if you were a superhero?

I’d love to be able to fly; I could then avoid traffic jams and Heathrow Airport.

What book are you reading at the moment?

The first is ‘Talk to the hand’ by Lynne Truss. The second is ‘Man walks into a bar – the ultimate collection of jokes and one liners’ Stephen Arnott & Mike Haskins, I have been reading this for about three years, but my joke telling ability is still appalling.

What is your favourite album at the moment?

I have many favourites, but Lisa Stansfield ‘Affection’ is an all time classic.

What has been your highlight of being a governor so far?

The very positive Ofsted report. Well done to all of the teachers, support staff and the children.

What strengths do you bring to the governing body?

I am an inquisitive and resolute person, keen on probing and understanding why and how things are accomplished in school. I have many years of experience working within international businesses managing sizeable product development budgets and professional teams. This provides a useful alternative view on supporting the management of a school.

Is there anything you’d like to see done differently at Fairlands?

Greater use of the facilities available at Fairlands by the local community. Extended services during and outside of the ‘normal’ school day.

More involvement by all supporting the school and the Friends of Fairlands fundraising and social activities.

Apart from governors meetings(!) what other event have you enjoyed participating in during the last school year?

The recent Friends of Fairlands Quiz event -a great evening.

READY FOR THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

It’s been a dreary start to the summer so far and with the end of the school year on the horizon, it’s a good time to start to look at how to keep the children entertained over the six weeks holidays.

In conjunction with Parent Line + who run courses for parents and can give parents helpful hints and tips on how to cope with all aspects of bringing up

children, here are a few on how to have a happy stress free holiday break with the children.

Always set a budget - it's important that children are aware that there are limits to the amount of money you spend.

A DIY picnic - preparing for a picnic is a whole morning's activity in itself. Your child can help plan the picnic menu, and get out all the ingredients such as bread, butter, cheese, ham, fruit, squash etc. Then it's time for you to step back and be on standby as your children make the sandwiches and organise the rest of the food themselves. It may help if you've written out a checklist for them to follow, ticking off each stage as it's done.

Make a tent - recreate the thrill of being under canvas by pegging old sheets or blankets over the washing line or rotary dryer and weighting them at the corners to create a tent. Put a blanket on the ground and let your child take a favourite book, a few snacks and toys inside.

Get crafty - stock up on basics like paper, felt pens and paints, and buy some simple activity and puzzle books to bring out when there's nothing to do. Other craft activities can be all-day affairs, like making peg dolls, or a 3D landscape for toy soldiers. And music and story tapes are a great way to pass some time.

Memory lane - spend a wet afternoon making up a book with pictures of your child growing up. It's a lovely way to talk about each stage of his/ her life.

