

WE ARE 'REACHING HIGH'

Governors' News

The governors' newsletter of Fairlands Primary School and Nursery

Issue 2

www.fairlands.herts.sch.uk

October 2007

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back hardly seems the right thing to say with the half term break just ahead of us already! We hope that you've all settled back into school life smoothly after the six week summer holiday – can we really say that it was a summer though? Welcome to the new parents to the school, we hope you're finding that Fairlands is everything you want it to be. Should any of you have any questions or comments about the governing body then please do not hesitate to contact us. The office will pass on any details to us and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We are your governing body and would like to work closely with you to ensure that we are providing the right environment for all at Fairlands. Our next newsletter to you will be out on 17th December and if there are any areas you would like us to cover then please let us know.

Regards

The Governing Body

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

GOVERNOR OF THE MONTH

Each month we have a "Governor of the Month". They will report their activities from the month in this newsletter and also let you know a little more about them!

October – Rosemary Biggs

This month I have visited KS1 and shared with them their exciting stories about their trip to Clacton. The displays, which included photos, drawings, writings and plenty of shells, were very impressive. Later in the month I hope to attend the School Council meeting and the Parent Discussion Group.

Q: Why did you become a governor?

A: *To become involved in the important decisions required to successfully run a school.*

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

A: *To know that I have contributed to the children's teaching, learning and welfare.*

Q: What's your favourite TV programme?

A: *"Home and Away". Is it because it is filmed basically at Summer Bay High School? No, it's to dream of sun, surf and sandy beaches.*

Q: Last film seen at the cinema?

A: *Atonement – Brilliant acting and beautiful scenery.*

Q: Best book ever read?

A: *The Cruel Sea by Nicholas Monsarrat.*

Q: Your best school moment from childhood?

A: *Being sent to the Headmaster's office at Senior School and awarded a high grade "O" Level Certificate.*

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

A: *My diary (I would have to record what happened each day), gardening magazines and of course...knitting!*

NEW GOVERNORS

We're very pleased to tell you that we have two new parent governors; Neal Muggleton and Karen Oakley.

Neal has two children at Fairlands. He works as Head of Marketing and Product Management and feels that he can bring industrial experience and support to the management team. He hopes to help attain even higher standards and results for all. Karen has four daughters, two of which attended Fairlands. The other two attended Fairlands and are now both pupils at Thomas Alleyne's. She is a full time homemaker and is a regular face at the Parents Forum. She became a governor as she is keen to see how the school is run.

We're very excited to have them on board and look forward to working with them. We're sure that their commitment to the governing body will help us to achieve our goals.

BEING A GOVERNOR

FROM PARENT GOVERNOR TO VICE CHAIR

I have been a governor at Fairlands since November 2001. Like most people I was a bit apprehensive about what was involved and if I was up to the job. I had a meeting with the then new head Mr Hayes who gave me a tour of the school whilst discussing his plans for the school.

A week later I attended my first meeting and I felt a bit lost - a lot of talk of Panda reports, investors in people and Ofsted. What had I let myself in for? I was signed up for the Resources committee and then the meeting was over. I left unsure if I had helped much, but the other governors were friendly and I got a cup of coffee and a biscuit.

Over the next few meetings (1 full governor and 1 committee meeting each half term) I began to feel more confident and that I had a contribution to make. This has grown over the 6 years I have been on the governing body. I have seen a number of changes over the years but the one thing that has never changed has been the genuine desire from all governors that any decisions made were with the best interest of the children at heart. This has at some times led to difficult decisions to make or plans to be radically changed.

Now I am Vice Chair is my role any different from when I first joined? In the most part no, my main role is to help and support the school by being a critical friend the same as all governors. It is important that anybody who volunteers to be a governor has an equal say in the decisions made by the governing body and that comes with a shared responsibility to do what is best for the school.

I would encourage anybody who has an interest in their children's education to become involved. I have learnt a great deal and have a much better appreciation of what is involved in running a school - and you still get a coffee and biscuits.

Phil Swallow
Vice Chair Governing Body

FIRST MEETING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Two weeks into the new term we had our first Full Governing Body meeting of the academic year. It is always our first job of the year to elect our chairperson and vice-chair. Michael Downing was re-elected (unopposed) as chair and Phil Swallow was re-elected (also unopposed) as vice-chair. We all feel that they provide consistency to the role and that they will provide stability to the management team and staff.

BULLYING

As governors at the school we work very hard with teachers and the Head to create a safe environment for our children while they are at school. As part of the parent survey feedback, 23% of you thought that your child has been bullied or harassed at one time.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.** If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a Telling school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families classifies bullying under 3 main headings: **PHYSICAL, VERBAL** and **INDIRECT**. Cyberbullying is a new form of Indirect bullying that is happening to children as they use such things as personal computers and own their own mobile phones. Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats, intimidation, harassment or "cyberstalking" e.g. repeatedly receiving un-wanted texts or instant messages. **Cyberbullying, like all bullying should be taken seriously, it is never acceptable.**

www.kidscape.org.uk is a fantastic website that will give you more information about bullying and abuse, or you can contact Parentline plus (0808 800 2222) for more information about any aspects of bullying.

The School is holding an Anti-Bullying week in November led by the school council; please get involved and support your child and your school.

TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY AT OUR NEXT MEETING

Once a term we hold a scrutiny meeting and have a presentation made to us by the Head and/or the Senior Leadership Team. We then get to ask questions and offer any support or advice. We learn a lot from these presentations and they enable us to stay informed about the day to day operation of the school. At our next meeting we will be having a presentation on "Achievement and Progress". We will be able to find out exactly how pupil standards and achievement are monitored and we will be given the opportunity to question the Senior Leadership Team on the methods being used and their success.