

WE ARE 'REACHING HIGH'

Governors' News

The governors' newsletter of Fairlands Primary School and Nursery

Issue 3

www.fairlands.herts.sch.uk

December 2007

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope that you have all been enjoying the festivities at school over the past couple of weeks. The staff and children have been working extremely hard preparing the events and they have all been a great success. Thank you to all the staff for their tremendous efforts and thanks to all parents for supporting the school. We would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. Enjoy the break!

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

December – Julie Jeffries

I think that I chose possibly the best month of the year for my Governor visits – full of festive fun! I visited KS1 and watched the dress rehearsal for what was a fantastic Christmas performance! After watching it 3 times I still enjoyed it although I did have to stop myself from singing along the final time! I spent a fascinating hour with the school prefects in KS2 discussing the Home School Child Agreement and the roles of a prefect. Their input was excellent and their behaviour was first class, definitely a credit to the school. I also helped at lunch, during which I managed to see firsthand how hard the MSA's work. I was lucky enough to catch some of the pupils singing in the Town Centre which was very festive and well supported by parents. The nursery staff have also kindly invited me to help at their Christmas activity morning later this week. So all in all a packed few weeks and very enjoyable!

Q: Why did you become a governor?

A: *To learn more about the way in which the school is run and to see how I could "do my bit".*

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

A: *Knowing that my small contribution can help so many.*

Q: What's your favourite TV programme?

A: *Definitely "The West Wing". I was devastated when they aired their final episode and could easily watch it over and over again!*

Q: Last film seen at the cinema?

A: *Ratatouille.*

Q: Best book ever read?

A: *Really difficult question as I adore reading. Probably "Wild Swans" by Jung Chang.*

Q: Your best school moment from childhood?

A: *Being one of four children out of 400 to win a scholarship to boarding school at the age of 11. It was the start of an amazing 6 years.*

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

A: *My iPhone (couldn't live without communication or music!), some decent red wine and a HUGE supply of Cadburys!*

CONGRATULATIONS TO MISS MILLER!

We would like to say congratulations to Miss Miller who has recently achieved a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of Hertfordshire which she passed with Distinction! A fantastic result and one which she should be immensely proud of.

BEING A GOVERNOR by Jim Callaghan

One question that I am frequently asked is "exactly what do the school governors do?" Hopefully the following will provide some insight.

The school governors are here to ensure that Fairlands is well run. We are volunteers that help decide on the direction, focus and ethos of the school. Between us, we form the "Governing body" which consists of parents; school staff; Local Education Authority appointed; and co-opted governors. This ensures that school decisions are made by people with a wide range of experience and views.

The school governors lead, but do not manage, the school. The job of day to day management is left to the Head Teacher, although it is the governors' responsibility to recruit and appoint the Head Teacher. In addition, we discuss and have input on issues such as:

- School policies such as Uniform, Sex Education, Bullying and Homework
- Long term plans and future of the school
- How the school budget is spent
- How we try to reach our performance targets
- Repair and maintenance of school buildings
- Use of school premises outside of school hours
- Complaints from pupils, staff and parents

No specific qualifications are needed to contribute to the Governing body, just an enthusiasm for helping children get the best education. There is no denying that it can be hard work at times and requires commitment, but it is also immensely rewarding.

Finally, please do remember that the governors are also your representatives. Please feel free to approach us on any issue where you might otherwise feel uncomfortable about approaching the school directly.

INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL PREFECTS

The prefects were full of information about the Home School Child Agreement which was recently sent home to all the pupils. They all seemed to think that it was a good thing to have and offered some great ideas about ways to improve it, particularly about making it more appealing to younger pupils. They also thought it may be a good idea to have a copy on display in every classroom for all to see and that all new pupils could then be shown it in the classroom by fellow pupils.

We also discussed the role of prefects at Fairlands and a whole list of ideas was produced! It seems that the prefects are quite keen to take on extra duties in order to make the role a more valued one. Some of their ideas were:

- Having a prefects assembly once a term possibly starting with the theme of school uniform – why we have one, what the correct uniform is etc.
- showing people around the school
- helping at lunchtimes
- helping in KS1 at playtimes
- more non-uniform days

The discussion we had was excellent, the ideas were well thought out and the prefects seemed genuinely interested in making Fairlands a better school. All of these ideas have been passed onto Mr Staples so watch this space!

SCHOOL GATES

As the end of our autumn term is approaching and the spring term will be with us very soon, we would like to remind parents/carers about the way we should all behave around the school both in the mornings and afternoons.

We appreciate that parking is a problem, but please do not park on the yellow zig zag lines. These are out there for the safety of your children and please remember not to use the staff car park to drop off/collect your children.

The Home School Child Agreement was sent home recently and under the Home section one of the clauses is:

"Model and support the school's behaviour expectations and policies"

Parents/carers smoking at the school gates and all entrances to the school is inappropriate, as is the use of foul language. This is not supporting or modelling behaviour expectations. It has been brought to our attention that this is occurring on a regular basis and we hope that you will agree that this is unacceptable. Please try to remember this at the start and end of the school day.

Please do not bring dogs onto school premises and keep them well away from school entrances.

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