

# Governors' Newsletter

## Spring Term 2012



**Dear Parents and Friends,**

What a brilliant start to the year! The children have been immersed in their learning and producing some fantastic work on the theme of **patterns in nature**. Out of the classroom they have been on visits to Bowood Farm and Castle Drogo and working hard in the gardens and grounds. Thankyou to those of you who have been involved and supported these outdoor activities.

### **Kitchen Update**

It has been almost a year since we brought in Norse to run our School kitchen. A recent audit has shown that this is not cost effective, so after much research and number crunching the decision has been taken to run the kitchen ourselves. Don't panic! This does not mean that Governors will be cooking meals! We are very lucky that Bridget has agreed to continue as Kitchen Manager.

What it does mean is that she will have more control over the menu and which

suppliers we use. An information leaflet and menus will be sent out at the end of term. Menus will continue to follow the healthy eating guidelines but you can expect to see some positive changes. There will now be a packed lunch option for the bargain price of £1.80 and we will continue to have class and community meals which have been really successful. The Children's and Eco Councils will be involved in making the kitchen more environmentally friendly and finding learning opportunities.

**Please come along to the tasting session on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 3.00pm.**

I am sure you'll agree that this is a thrilling project for our school and appreciate that your ongoing support is essential to make it a success.

### **Update on our School Improvement Plan**

The School Improvement Team have been monitoring the impact of the current priorities. Part of this monitoring has included observing teaching and talking to pupils and staff.

The current priorities are:

1. Staff to take part in a professional reflective maths project to enable them to review and develop the curriculum and teaching & learning strategies.
2. Explore new technology & teaching opportunities for ICT and continue to improve our provision. This will be through purchasing 15 more laptops for Otters class and video conferencing equipment.
3. Establishing the principles of "THRIVE" throughout the school. This is a way of working which considers the children's emotional wellbeing and its impact on their learning.

4. Exploring and developing collaborations with other schools through sharing resources, professional expertise and curriculum activities.

It is proposed that due to the temporary management partnership, the current School Improvement Plan is continued for a further term with the addition of an extra Action Area regarding the school kitchen developments – this would include:

- ensuring financial value
- collaboration with local schools
- direct links to the curriculum
- involvement of pupils through the Eco Council & Children's Council
- outdoor learning opportunities for all classes
- completion of further Eco awards

And also to include the Thrive Action Plan which is being completed as part of a planned action for this year and an action plan for the use and integration into the curriculum of our new video conferencing equipment.

### **Changes to Key Stage 2 SATS**

Every year in May, children in year 6 sit Government set tests. These tests have been in maths, reading and writing. This year there is no statutory writing test; instead only a teacher assessment level will be reported. However, the school has been selected to sample a new English Writing Test which will be taken by all children in 2013.

### **Phonics Testing for Children in Year 1**

In June or July children in year 1 will take part in a statutory testing for Phonics skills. More information will be sent to parents nearer the time and there will be a phonics

and reading workshop on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April for parents of children in Hedgehogs.

### **New Governor**

We welcome Becky Huxtable to the Board Governors and say goodbye to Annie Sparrow with a big THANKYOU! for all her support and contributions to the school. There will be another parent Governor vacancy in September. We ideally need someone with financial experience but would like to hear from anyone who is interested in supporting the school. Being a Governor can be time consuming but is a very interesting and rewarding experience through which you are well supported by your colleagues. **Everyone** has something to offer, so give it a try!

### **Parent View**

As part of the new Ofsted framework there is an opportunity for parents to give their views in an online questionnaire. We would like to encourage you to register at [parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk) where you can take part and view the results for the school.

**And Finally..** As you know, Miss Yates is going on maternity leave and I am sure you will all join me in wishing her well at this exciting time. Governors would particularly like to thank her for continued dedication to the school and diligence in forward planning whilst she is away. We are confident that everything is in place to ensure the smooth running of the school in her absence.

Have a very Happy Easter!

Best Wishes

Alison Bennett

On behalf of Board of Governors