



The Foxwood Academy
Governors' Newsletter

AUTUMN 2016

FOXWOOD FRIENDS



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The ethos of Foxwood Academy

After several months of exciting work with our pupils, parents, staff and governors we are proud to share with you all the final version of our values in the Academy Vision Statement.

Our work started with a governor event, where all governors looked at some meaningful statements. From this, we decided what we wanted to keep and what we wanted to change. The staff at Foxwood were then consulted.

As we reported in the Summer 2016 edition of this publication, we asked Mrs Val Musson to take on the task of consulting with our 'student voice' via the Outspoken group and she did some extremely valuable work with to make sure

that the statements were easy to understand and relevant to them.

These refined statements were then shared with parents and carers and once again, edited and updated to include their ideas and suggestions.

Over the summer of the 2015/2016 academic year, these value statements were subject to a final polish by Lindsey Norton and governor Amanda Giles, before presenting to the Pupil and Curriculum Committee of the Academy and can now be published.

I am sure you will all agree, Foxwood Academy now has a meaningful, inclusive and valuable 'ethos'.

Care

To provide a caring and nurturing environment for all.

To assist families to be knowledgeable regarding ways they can support their child.

Educate

To provide a supportive and safe environment where every student will make progress academically and emotionally.

To ensure that every student's individual needs are understood by all and met by providing enjoyable learning opportunities that are relevant, accessible and inspirational.

To ensure that our students are treated with dignity and respect upholding fundamental British Values in order that they can make a successful transition into adult life.

Independence

To encourage our students to become as independent as possible in all areas of their life.

To engage our students in decisions whenever possible.

To ensure that all of our students and their families are supported to make informed decisions about progression after Foxwood.

Celebrate

To ensure that Foxwood provide opportunities to celebrate the achievements and talents of all of our students.

Sports Week Summer 2016

By Amanda Giles, local authority governor

Well I thought I would pop in and help with the Academy on one of the days during the annual Sports Week this summer.

I did well and chose a brilliant sunny day, so I donned my sun hat and applied the sun cream factor 30!

What brilliant fun, I met with each pupil who were all encouraged to participate fully. This ranged from throwing foam javelins, to popping into a sack and jumping along! Each pupil cheered on each other, and it was clear that they all thoroughly enjoyed the 'taking part', rather than the winning!

It was a very hot day and because there wasn't much shade, the children couldn't sit out for long, but the heat didn't discourage them from participating, with their teachers and teaching assistants encouraging each and every individual achievement.

This prepared them all for the next few days of sporting activities that took place during the Sports Week. I am sure many parents and carers attended some of these events and found it enjoyable and fascinating to observe their child taking part, as some of them often perform very differently whilst in the Academy environment.

Many thanks must go to Foxwood Learning Support Assistant Sam Hicklin, without whom the whole Sports Week would not have been such a success. An aspiring sports coach, Sam showed great commitment and worked tirelessly



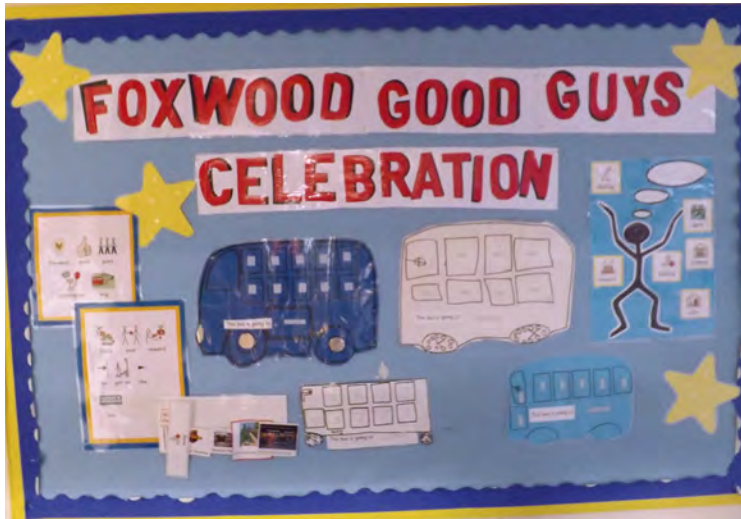
Elliot, one of the delighted winners of the Bocchia tournament held during Foxwood Academy Sports Week 2016



to ensure the whole week worked smoothly. This included the added bonus of a visit from an ice cream van, but sadly not on the day of my visit!

The governors also wish to recognise the valuable contribution of Andy Curzon, who was also heavily involved in the organisation and running of

the Sports Week, particularly in giving very effective support to Sam and providing him with the opportunity to lead and manage the activities.



Governor visit to Foxwood Academy: Assessment tracking and data recording systems

By Nancy Lee, community governor

On 16 June 2016, myself and Amanda Giles met with Lindsey Norton, deputy head teacher and Sandria Taft, data manager. Amanda Giles is the Chair of the Pupil and Curriculum Sub-Committee and is the designated safeguarding governor. I am a community governor with an interest in the quality of teaching.

The purpose of our visit as governors was to look at and develop an understanding of the Academy assessment, tracking and data recording systems.

We looked closely at the work that Lindsey and Sandria had recently been carrying out, in order to ensure that the Academy has a clear and robust focus on the achievement and attainment of

all the children and young people attending Foxwood Academy.

We hoped that the outcome of our visit would be to both receive helpful feedback on the Academy assessment and tracking systems and also to find evidence that the Academy is keeping and maintaining records that are up-to-date, easy to access, informative and which clearly show the progress and attainment of all pupils.

Fortunately, we were not disappointed! It is fair to say that the quality of the data and the analysis which Lindsey and Sandria had undertaken far exceeded my own expectations and my experience of assessment and tracking systems in other schools with which I have been involved.

The data that was shared with us demonstrated a relentless and meticulous focus on capturing individual pupil and year group attainment and progress. It enabled us to see exactly where pupils had been at the beginning of their academic journey. It showed how much progress they had made academically and how this compared with national expectations of pupils with similar start points, in terms of academic attainment.

All the data had been methodically analysed and the levels of attainment and progress were impressive. Any pupil who had not achieved the aspirational targets set for them had been carefully considered. A range of interventions had been planned to enable them to meet the high standards set for them.

It is clear that the target setting that Lindsey and Sandria have put in place will enable all pupils to fulfil their potential and achieve all that they can, and will guide the work of all teaching and support staff at Foxwood Academy.

The enthusiasm, competence and commitment of these two members of staff shone through and made this meeting a real pleasure!

As a governor, I feel very confident about the commitment at Foxwood Academy to ensuring that all pupils achieve all that they can, in order to be the best that they can be.

Following the visit Sandria commented, "... I am really proud, of both of us, to read such positive feedback from a governor visit. The professional comments made regarding both of us are lovely, both Nancy and Amanda are so kind. This has made my day."



Review of Foxwood Academy Policies

*By Joanna Ward,
community governor*

As you can imagine, keeping all the separate policies that we have in the Academy for all manner of matters and issues up-to-date and relevant is a big job. This takes a considerable amount of work, from researching, to writing, reviewing and re-writing, right through to adoption. But in order to keep everyone safe and protected, and to ensure our standards are high, it's an essential ongoing task.

This term, we are pleased to report back on a number of new, revised and updated policies.

New policies written by Charlie Brown and adopted by the governors this term include:

- **Written Marking and Oral Feedback**
- **Sex and Relationships Education**
- **Assessment and Recording Policy**

It's important to have these policies in place and governors would like to record their thanks to Charlie Brown and other staff involved in their development in taking these forward to adoption of formal policies.

Reviewed, updated and approved by the governors were the following policies:

- **Investment Policy**
- **Risk Register**

If you would to have a closer look at any of the policies mentioned above, please just ask at the Academy office.



Long term prospects – employability

by Barbara Pearce, community governor

Inevitably, parents are concerned about the longer-term prospects for their children, beyond school. As a governor, I can see what the Academy is doing to foster independence and development. In particular, the efforts to encourage and teach the skills of independent travel, which are so important, not just for employment purposes but also for a fulfilling and varied life.

The Academy has invested in strong support for a structured approach to developing awareness but also in encouraging real life experience through Project Search and the Sweet Treats shop. Ever-tighter budgets mean that Sweet Treats in its present form must go, but I do hope that something similar can be set up within the building. My one visit some time ago demonstrated the amount of learning that was taking place.

Project Search involves the Academy working in partnership with a specific large employer, for example, The Queen's Medical Centre (QMC). This partnership provides longer periods of work experience for individual pupils, with some potential for gaining employment. I met two placement students when I visited there, and will not forget the impression each of them made. One was working with the mattress team, shifting heavy mattresses all day. When asked what he thought about this he said: *"This is important work, if I get it wrong, patients will suffer."*

The other, who was working in an administrative capacity, filing records, told me: *"You need to have a good eye for detail, it would not do to make a mess of filing records."*

I was also impressed that the hospital staff had taken time to colour code records to make them easier to file.



Learning Walk: British Values

By Joanna Ward, community governor



Just before the end of the summer term in July, I was honoured to be invited with fellow governors Amanda Giles and Richard Taylor to be invited to take part in a Learning Walk at the Academy.

The purpose of planned Learning Walks is for a small group of governors at one time to come into school, during school time to:

1. **Develop relationships between staff and governors**
2. **Improve the effectiveness of governance in driving school improvement**

Each Learning Walk concentrates on a different specific topic.

For me as a relatively new governor, who has a busy full time job and who cannot always spend as much time as she would like during the school day in school; it was a

good excuse to spend some time there getting to know some of the children, the staff and getting to grips with the locations of the different buildings and the layout.

The Learning Walk that took place in July focused on British Values, and looking for evidence that these are being incorporated across the curriculum.

We were looking for evidence of the values listed by the Home Office as Fundamental British Values:

- **democracy**
- **the rule of law**
- **individual liberty**
- **mutual respect**
- **tolerance of different faiths and beliefs**

The three governors were accompanied by Charlie Brown,

and in pairs went to visit classes right across the Academy.

Two thirds of the classes in the Academy were visited on the day, and all of the governors felt welcomed by staff and students alike and really enjoyed the Learning Walk experience. We felt that it was a really positive and useful experience and were pleased to have the opportunity to spend time in the Academy when students were present.

We were especially impressed by:

- **the high levels of tolerance shown by the students to one another**
- **the behaviour displayed by the students, which was never less than good**
- **the ways in which the seeds of Fundamental British Values are sown, from the beginning in Foxcubs, with emphasis on the importance of tolerating one another, sharing, turn taking and listening**
- **the depth of knowledge of Group 1 students learning about Sex and Relationship Education and how they could use British Values to address a range of theoretical scenarios in order to achieve the best outcome**
- **the high levels of mutual respect and tolerance shown by members of Group 5, which allowed them to take part in a parachute game centred around individual differences, and Group 4**



which allowed them to have a productive discussion about their individual similarities and differences

- students in 3S being devolved individual liberty in order to promote their own mathematical learning
- students in Group 5, Hedgehogs, Squirrels and Foxcubs being devolved individual liberty in order to follow their own behavioural expectations and work productively, in a range of ways that worked best for the individual

- the ability of the Group 1, 3S and 3O teachers to explain the ways in which Fundamental British Values had been reflected in what the governors had seen

As clearly evident from the list above, the governors were very impressed with the amount of time and effort that has been put into developing the curriculum with British Values at the centre, and all the hard work undertaken by students and staff to tackle some very challenging topics in a mature and impressive way.

We are pleased to report that the conclusion of the visit was:

- Fundamental British Values have become integrated with the Foxwood Academy ethos
- Fundamental British Values have become incorporated into the Foxwood Academy curriculum
- Foxwood Academy's practice regarding Fundamental British Values is robust

Annual Academy presentation evening – 6th July

by Barbara Pearce, community governor



For the second year running I was lucky enough to go along to Foxwood's annual presentation evening. Getting there proved to be a problem however, as my taxi driver didn't understand where we were going! Clearly someone else was having a similar problem as we kept seeing the same car bombing off in a different direction, when we tried the same route, we saw the same car heading back! Finally we made it.

All the trouble was worth it however, because of the quality of the evening and of the entertainment. Parents and pupils were justifiably proud of their achievements and awards. I noted that more pupils were confident in coming forward to receive their awards and faces were wreathed in smiles. Parents and staff alike must be congratulated on the encouragement and support they give to students. I was so glad to be there and, as previously, to marvel at what is being achieved.



Contact us

Governors actively invite the views of all parents. If you have any issues, concerns or feedback you would like to bring to our attention please contact the Chair of Governors Richard Taylor by emailing him at :

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