



A year of change

As part of the Colston's community, you don't need the school governors to tell you Colston's Primary School has experienced a significant amount of change over the last year. We have a new school site for Early Years (Elmgrove), a new Headteacher, and with the end of Levels, a new assessment framework to understand.

It has been a busy time for governors and there have also been some changes to the governing body. Now comfortably into the school year, we'd like to re-introduce ourselves, provide an update on our involvement in recent changes, our current work, and plans for the future.

With lots to report, we will do this over two governors' newsletters. This spring edition concentrates on who we are and recent changes. Our summer edition will report on governor activities relating to curriculum, resources, and the ever changing political landscape within which our Colston's community needs to make good choices for our children.

Governors welcome Alex Bell as Colston's Primary's new Headteacher

We would like to take this opportunity to say a public fond farewell and big thank you to Maddy Kent who departed in December 2015, and in the next breath, extend a warm welcome to Alex Bell, who joined the school as Headteacher in January 2016.

School governors are responsible for appointing new headteachers. A sub-committee of governors led the recruitment process and made the final appointment, with advice from Richard Chalkley, our School Improvement Officer. As part of the recruitment process, all governors were invited to presentations made by shortlisted applicants.

Alex Bell has eight years experience of heading up a split-site school with an Outstanding Ofsted, so we are looking forward to working with him as Colston's grows and develops.

Two terms in, we are enjoying working with Alex. His first initiatives have been to single out three areas for addition to the overall School Strategic Plan for improvement. These are:

- the development of positive behaviours and attitudes to learning
- playground development at the Cotham site
- the continued improvement of communication

Governing body re-balanced and re-explained...

As a Co-operative Academy our governing body is made up of the Headteacher, parent governors, staff governors, community governors (elected from the community), co-opted governors (appointed to the governing body for relevant skills and knowledge) and a governor appointed from the Co-operative Society. This means we have a balanced combination of representatives from parents, staff and the wider community.

Currently we are a fifteen strong team, with a combination of skills and knowledge between us to act as a constructive 'critical friend' to the school. Alex Bell, as Headteacher, is our principal professional advisor, and attends all meetings. Rob Davies, the School Business Manager also attends all meetings as a non-voting attendee.

As school governors, we are devoted to playing our part in assuring success for all children at Colston's Primary. We meet regularly as a full governing body and in our two subcommittees, sometimes inviting school staff along to help us gather and discuss information relevant to our agendas. We are in touch with each other in between times, visit school often to remain familiar with the two school sites, and talk to staff and children as much as we can.

...and re-populated

Goodbye to ...

Parent governor, Peter Rolt, former Literacy Link Governor
Parent governor, Emma Gledhill, former Chair of Finance
Community governor, Alison Watson Jones, former Chair of Premises

Many thanks to them all for the valued contributions they made during their time as School Governors here.

And Hello to ...

Our new community governors:

- Pauline Allen, the co-ordinator for CAPs, Colston's after-school care provider
- Emily Warren-Ballard, a Bristol University student living locally

Our new co-opted governors:

- Helen Woods, a former long serving teacher at Colston's primary, now retired
- Shuaib Omar, a parent with three daughters at school here and works for the NHS

New Chair of Governors

Kate Swainson Price is the newly elected Chair of Governors. A Colston's parent for nearly five years now, she has two boys at school here in years one and five and an older one at secondary school. Her professional background is in education, media and the arts. In response to her recent election, she said:

I am very happy to be voted Chair of Governors for our lovely school. I have enjoyed being involved at such an interesting time for the school with so many exciting and challenging changes afoot.

As well as keeping a keen eye on the very best outcomes for our children in every way, I am also personally particularly interested in communications, and the thread of arts and well-being running through the culture of Colston's.

I am around quite a lot at school so do say hello, and feel free to contact me with governor related questions ...

Governors would like to thank Cate Robbins for her work as Chair since September. Cate oversaw the change over of Headteacher. She remains within the governing body and is the link governor for assessment.

Watch this space for more governor news next term. In the meantime, we wish everybody an enjoyable spring break!

For further information about the governing body at Colston's go to
www.colstonsprimary.co.uk
Our dedicated email address is
governors@colstonsprimary.co.uk

