

Governor's Newsletter

I'd like to welcome our new families to Shelton Infant School. The Autumn term is already nearing the end and it's only a week away from the Christmas Fair! As always Shelton Infants has offered its pupils a broad and creative curriculum with lots of adventures and opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. But what have the School Governors been doing since our last newsletter?

The Governors would like you to have an overview of how 2016/17 was for our pupils, your children. Let me start with a summary of the results of our parental and pupil annual questionnaires and the school's response to them. We had a record breaking response from parents this year with **59%** of our parents completing the survey. Many parents completed a questionnaire during the annual 'Bring Your Parents to School' evening and I enjoyed speaking to many parents at this event. Thank you to all the parents who found the time to fill out our survey. The full results and individual comments made by both parents and pupils can be seen on our website at www.sheltoni.derby.sch.uk or a copy can be given on request at the school office.

Parental Questionnaire 2016/17

"My son loves school and his friends and his teachers! He is always happy to come every morning."

The Headline Results:

In **15** of the 18 statements in our questionnaire **98%** or more of parents strongly agreed or agreed with those statements. All parents agreed that the school kept their child(ren) safe and that teaching was good in school.

The 3 statements with the lowest score had a proportion of parents that 'didn't know', not because they 'disagreed' with the statement.

"Always recommending this school to others"

Parents negative comments and suggestions and the schools response:

- Activities for parents to attend could be at times better suited for working parents.

The school offers some after-school events such as Parent's Evening, Bedtime Reading & PTA events. Many events have to be held during the school day because of their nature eg. lesson observations and Mother's Day lunches. With the pupils being so young they would often be too tired to perform at evening events.

- Class sizes are too big.

Class sizes are allocated by Derby City Council & not the school.

- I've noticed some litter in the school.

The school has also noticed this and addressed the issue.

"Shelton Infants is such a great school, from the teachers to the exciting learning ventures & after school clubs. It's by far the best decision I made".

- Concerns about the behaviour of Shelton Junior School children.

Whilst we do have links with the Junior school it would be more effective if parents could speak to the junior school directly about their concerns.

"Haven't got a bad word to say about anything."

Parental Questionnaire 2016/17 Continued

●Some of the school dinners are not healthy.

Our meals are provided by Shelton Junior School who state that all meals adhere to the school standards set by the School Food Trust. All food, except chips (only served once a week), is oven baked. In addition to the menu a salad bar, fruit & yoghurt is offered daily

●I would like to know more about school governors and what they do.

Hopefully these newsletters are giving you an insight into what the governors do. If you'd like to talk to me to discuss this further please contact the school and book an appointment, or chat to me at any of the school events.

"I find the school app very useful."

●Communication by email could be better.

The school now has an 'app' which can be downloaded from the Play Store on Android phones.



"The foundations that are set for the children are truly memorable! The entire staff so extraordinary, from the lovely receptionist admin staff, teaching assistants, teachers and of course Mr Leigh. Any member you come into contact with is unbelievably dedicated and approachable. The school stands as it does because of the phenomenal team it has behind it. No one is ever too busy or too tired to stand back- each and every member goes above and beyond their normal required duties. The time and dedication each individual puts into all events is exceptional! Our deepest heartfelt gratitude for your readiness and kindness. Thank you ALL for being a credit to your profession!"

Pupils Questionnaire 2016/17

In June one of the Governors and myself once again enjoyed speaking to some of the pupils at Shelton Infant School and asked them what they thought about their school.

All pupils were very confident in talking about their school. Once again all pupils said that they felt safe in school and knew who they could talk to if they were worried or had a problem.

Pupils were also able to describe in detail what they had learnt at school and in particular a favourite topic, book or learning adventure.

When it came to asking what would they change about the school, the majority said they wouldn't change anything, although a few suggestions were:

"Change the playground into a big adventure playground."

"More maths. Read more. Play more. More making things."

"Have 10 classes so we can have more friends."

"Have a TV room so we can watch Britain's Got Talent."

"Mr Leigh's office should be bigger."

What do we do with this information?

The school then collates this information and uses both the positives and negatives to inform the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2017/18. If you would like a copy of the School Improvement Plan, please call in at the school office.

All parental and pupils results and individual comments from the questionnaires were also shared with all the governors at our September governor meeting.

The governors are satisfied that the parent and pupils views are considered and taken into account.

What else did Governors do in 2016/17?

Along with the many reports governors have to read and analyse each year and attend evening meetings, it's just as important for governors to spend as much time in school as possible to see and experience the school provision for themselves. Our Forest Schools provision is very popular with the pupils and parent governor, Rob Wain, joined in a Family Forest Schools session during the Summer Term.

I joined the reception children for a Forest Schools afternoon on the 27th June. The forest school leaders, Tim Cremin, Mrs Wain and Mrs Bongartz introduced us to the health and safety aspect of the forest school environment and the ethos of the forest schools experience. They made it clear that the children were instructed in what was acceptable behaviour and what wasn't within the Forest School environment.

Tim explained the aim of the Forest School activities. The environment allows children to test boundaries they would not normally get to experience in the modern world, but in a safe manner. This includes introducing them to the dangers, benefits and importance of an open fire, negotiating obstacles safely, confidence in their senses (other than sight) and the skills required to build shelter in the form of 'dens'. It also introduces the children to nature first hand, rather than through a book, television or on-line format.

The first activity we participated in with the children taught them how the hunters capture their prey, whilst the prey avoid the hunters. All the children stood in a circle, whilst 2 stood in the middle blindfolded. The prey then had to avoid being tagged by the hunter and the hunter had to capture the prey using all their senses, except sight.

As the game developed the children tuned into the boundary of the circle, as well as using their other senses (hearing for example) to try and locate their prey and evade the predator. The confidence of the children could be seen to grow as the game progressed.

The second activity involved 2 parallel lines of children with small bean bags. The aim was for an individual to run between the lines and reach the flat without being thrown by the children. The game saw players adapting their approach trying different strategies to try and achieve a successful outcome.

The third activity was designed to give children confidence in unnering situations. One individual was blindfolded and then asked to run across the grassed open space towards the people at the other end who were shouting their name. Individuals stood quietly either side to ensure the safe zone. The children were positively encouraged to overcome their fear due to not being able to see, trust the rest of the team and run as fast as they could in the direction of the voices.

We then gathered round the fire where Tim re-iterated the safety requirements. The children were then given hot chocolate and popcorn cooked on the fire, with the assistance of an adult. They were then allowed to toast and

eat marshmallows. Everyone then sang a song, led by Tim.

The afternoon ended with a game of hide and seek. The children were able to hide in bushes and dens that they had helped to construct. It was thoroughly enjoyable, with the children clearly having fun, learning new skills and beginning to gain an appreciation of how to behave in and around activities that present a level of risk, to ensure that they come to no harm. It also taught them valuable skills which they can draw upon in stressful situations and gave them confidence in their own abilities. Talking to a selection of children, they clearly loved the Forest Schools experience as it offered them a chance to take part in activities they cannot easily do in the modern world. They also clearly understood how the Forest Schools activity helped achieve the school ethos of Aim High, Achieve Well and Have Fun.



Latest News for this year 2017/18

At the start of the new academic year we had a role change within the governing body with Rob Wain taking up the role of Vice-Chair.

Already this Autumn Term our new governors, Angela Sims and Katie Lymer, have attended their induction training with Derby City Council. This is over 2 full

days and covers a broad overview of the school governor role and responsibilities.

In addition to this Angela Sims has also completed Governor Health & Safety training monitor which will give the governing body update information and allow us to review and monitor Health & Safety procedures more effectively.

I have also attended the Chair's Briefing this term which again is hosted by Derby City Council. This is a jammed packed evening which keeps governors up to date with the latest educational changes, Ofsted priorities, Government, National and Derby City Council initiatives.

A School Governor's Typical Year

After giving a brief overview of the governors role in the last Autumn newsletter I thought I'd add a little more detail to the actual commitments that governors have to make each academic year.

All governors are responsible for attending 6 full governing body meetings. These always take place in the evening and last for about two hours. Documents and reports are sent to governors prior to each meeting which must be read in advance, normally taking 2-3 hours, so that governors are able to have informed and challenging discussions with Mr Leigh. Some of these meetings can also be used for training and refreshers for governors.

Most governors are part of 6 sub-committees which are additional evening meetings that we attend which give a lot more detail about a specific area: Finance, Personnel, Premises, Curriculum, Data & Performance Management. All Governors are asked to attend an annual Governor's Day at school too, spending the whole day in class with our pupils and staff.

Some governors also have link roles for Safeguarding, Eco Schools, British Values, PE/Sports Premium, SEND and Health & Safety and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSCD). These governors visit school as often as possible for specific monitoring visits meeting pupils and staff.

In the next issues I'll expand on the Chair of Governors role.

Shelton Infants Governing Body

School Governors are volunteers from all different backgrounds and skills who oversee the running of the school whilst also challenging the Senior Leadership Team and acting as a critical friend. We have parent governors, staff governors and governors who are co-opted particularly for their skills and knowledge.

Our Governing Body is made up of 11 members:

Headteacher: Anthony Leigh

Chair: Gill Hall **Vice-Chair:** Rob Wain

Co-opted Governors: Nicola Turnbull, June Keegan, Debbie Smith, Laura Neale, Sue Derbyshire

Parent Governors: Angela Sims **Staff Governor:** Tracey Radley

LA Governor: Katie Lymer

We also have -

Associate Governor: Dominic Hutchinson-Backer

Clerk to Governors: Lesley Douglass

I look forward to meeting you in the coming year.

Gill Hall