



Ardeley School Governor Focus Summer 2018



Welcome to the summer edition of Governor Focus, our termly newsletter which aims to keep you up to date on the work and thoughts of the School's Governing Board.

How is our school doing?

The governors buy in a service from Hertfordshire Learning called a Hertfordshire Improvement Partner (HIP). This service provides a practicing head teacher from a good or outstanding school or academy in Hertfordshire. Each HIP acts as a critical, professional friend to the school. Helping its leadership to evaluate performance, identify priorities for improvement and plan effective change. In summary, HIPs support the building of the school's capacity to improve the attainment and progress of all pupils, and other key outcomes that have a bearing on pupils' achievement. We have three visits per year, the structure of these visits and the content is set by the governors and head teacher.

We were visited in March with a main focus to look at the teaching and learning in English. The HIP undertook a learning walk with Mrs. Connolly, reviewed how the environment supports and promotes high quality learning and celebrates learning. English teaching was observed in all years across the school. Pupil's work books were scrutinised. During a meeting with the schools subject lead in English, a governor and the head teacher the pupil's data was reviewed to look at the impact of the schools actions. The final report shows the school has improved the range and depth of the reading books for children across the whole school. The teachers are using effective planning with clear objectives. Handwriting is modelled well by teachers and is a strength at Ardeley. Pupils are confident, self-assured learners and their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are of a high standard. Generally current pupils are making consistently strong progress in English. The overall effectiveness is seen as good due to the strong leadership of the head teacher, supported by the governors and staff.

The governors were pleased with this feedback and are looking forward to our next review at the end of this month.

News from the Governing Board

The Ardeley School Governors AGM was held on Monday 19th March. During this meeting, there was an election of Officers in which Governors assume responsibility for specific practical roles, eg Health and Safety, Special Education Needs and Disability, Equality and Energy, or areas of the curriculum eg Literacy, Numeracy and ITC. A full list of all the appointments is displayed in the school foyer together with a photo board of all the Governors.

For several years, much of the work of the Governors has been conducted in the two committees. The Standards and Curriculum Committee has held responsibility for educational aspects including setting targets for the school, develop plans for reaching them and monitoring progress. The Resources Committee has overseen the school budget and been responsible for the fabric of the school and personnel issues. However, the Governing Board has agreed to adopt a "Governing without committee" model and dispense with the Resource and Standards Committee meetings, this is a very forward thinking way of school governance! Instead, additional meetings of the Full Governing Board will be held each term in order to best utilise the skills and expertise of our Governors across all aspects of governance. As always, our key aim is to ensure that all our children receive an inclusive education of the highest quality within the context of our Christian faith and practice.

Meet the Governor – Ben Twiston-Davies

Our newest member of the Governing Board is Ben Twiston-Davies who was elected as a parent governor last term. Ben and his wife Rebecca moved to Wood End in 2012 and their eldest son, Leo, is currently in nursery at Ardeley St Lawrence. Hopefully, younger brother Felix (aged 3) will be attending in due course. Ben is a fine artist, specialising in figurative sculpture, having previously worked as a TV news journalist. He spends a few weeks each year as a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire and is passionate about the importance of education. Ben has taken on a number of new roles and is Governor for Equality, Curriculum Literacy and School Council.



Enhancing the school environment

As you are aware government funding for schools is currently very limited, as a church school we are very fortunate in that we can apply for funding from the diocese. This money has been vital in allowing Ardeley School to maintain such an old building and develop its premises.

The school has received funding from the Diocese to improve the building infrastructure and grounds. The award will enable the replacement of some outside windows and doors and this project will be completed during the summer holidays to avoid disruption to the working week. The diocese also received some additional funding from the government for fitness and well-being. Mrs. Connolly's bid was successful and will be used to refurbish the pond area and develop a sensory garden.

Your Opinion Counts

The Governors value feedback from all parents and there are a number of ways you can let us know what you think about all aspects of our school, including what we are doing well and suggestions for ways in which we can improve. The Governors issue a general questionnaire to parents each year in the summer term which gives you the opportunity to comment on various aspects of school life. Thank you to all the parents who took the trouble to complete this. We aim to make our school the best it can possibly be for the whole school community, and we can only do this if we know what you need. We will feed back to you next term.

Please join us!

We will be looking for a new parent governor to join the team in the autumn term.

Serving on the governor board is an excellent way to be involved with the school, it is both challenging and rewarding. The time commitment is variable, but we meet in the evenings twice a term and you may be required in school time one day per term. If you have a passion for education **please do contact** Jackie Hayward Chair via the school office.....we can meet for an informal chat.

Lastly

To those parents who are leaving us we wish you well, thank you for entrusting your children's education to Ardeley School. We hope a little bit of Ardeley stays with you always.