



The Althorp Partnership of Primary Schools

Governor Newsletter

July 2018



Welcome to the 2018 Governor Newsletter.

This newsletter gives me the opportunity to wish you all a wonderful summer that is packed with lots of fun and happy memories but also time, I hope, for a well-deserved rest after another very busy academic year.

But I'd also like to reflect on the progress that both schools have made over the past couple of years too and give you some insight on some of the Governing Bodies plans for the future.

Jon Lake
Chair of Governors

Ofsted inspect and regulate schools of all types across the UK and do this through a network of professional regional inspectors. After Harlestone's inspection in March 2017, it was Brington's turn this March. I am always amazed and proud of the work that the staff at both schools put into the education and development of our children and it is always nice to get some professional acknowledgement that the work that is being done is moving us all forward and that was very much the theme and outcome of both inspections which judged us as 'Good'. We are not complacent though and our plans moving forward very much centre on the philosophy that 'better never stops' and we are always looking to improve. I'd also like to thank any parents or carers who spoke to the Inspectors at either school or fed back through Ofsted's Parent View portal across the time of their visit to provide such a positive perspective on the schools.



Whether you are a supporter or not, the academy agenda continues to move forward and it is unavoidable to notice the amount of primary schools locally that have, or are in the process of, converting to an academy. It is true that the very public failure of the Local Authority has put quite severe pressures on all parts of the Council and been another driver in schools taking these decisions. For example, the support normally offered to schools - whether that is for finance or for school improvement - is difficult to secure and schools are looking to work with other schools to ensure that they get the support that they need when they need it. In that regard we are no different and have demonstrated from the federation that we have formed that working in partnership can work for all. As part of our evolution, we have been talking about our academy options for many years with the Governing Body and have always sought to meet our self-defined criteria of looking to work with like-minded schools that value collaboration and their own unique identities. You may have seen a letter sent over the past few weeks about our current work with some schools within the Moulton Cluster who we have known and worked with for some time. The plan is to look at the options to formalise the work we already work together on like staff training, moderation and head teacher development. Discussions are still in the early stages and we will keep you posted with any developments.

We are a small but very committed Governing Body with some really broad expertise and experience. Our constitution is regularly reviewed and we carry out annual skills audits to ensure we have the right skill set to continue to develop. If you are interested in joining us or know someone who could be, please do not hesitate to let the school office at either of our schools know so they can pass on the details to the Chair of Governors to follow up.



We are all focused on helping everyone in our schools ‘be the best they can be’ but, to have a chance of succeeding in this, we need children to be in school. Whilst we do understand that there are times when children are just too ill to attend, attendance at both schools has been an area of concern to the Governors for some time and the school has implemented some creative solutions to maximise attendance. Despite that, attendances are still only at around 95% at each school and this is below the levels expected. There is plenty of evidence that shows the link between poor attendance and poor attainment – at a basic level, children who do not attend school struggle to keep up with work and miss out on social elements of the school day. If there are any issues which could impact on your child’s attendance at school, it is important that you speak to the school as soon as possible.

We do not underestimate the partnership that we have with our parents and carers in maximising the potential that our children have to learn. Our attitudes about education can inspire children and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey. The school really value the input that parents and carers have in supporting learning objectives and reading at home, engaging in homework and projects and looking for any other learning opportunity whilst your children are not at school all helps – simple things like calculating the cost of your shopping or reading a menu when you go out for something to eat all have positive effects.



Jon Lake
Co-Opted
Chair of Governors
Chair of Safeguarding & Standards Sub-Committee
Member of Resources Sub-Committee



Karen Whitcomb
Co-Opted
Vice-Chair of Governors
Chair of Resources Sub-Committee



Ione Francis
Community Governor
Member of Safeguarding & Standards
Member of Resources Sub-Committee



Gary Shaeffer
Local Authority
Governor
Chair of the Policies Sub-Committee



Stephen Taylor
Parent Governor



Claire Favier-Tilston
Parent Governor

In addition, the Executive Head and Heads of Teaching and Learning also form an important part of the Governing Body in addition to associate members, the School Business Manager and the Clerk who provide advice and support but have no voting rights.



Sadly, Stephen Taylor has recently resigned from the Governing Body due to relocation out of the County – we all wish him and his family well with their new opportunities and thanks him for his input. We will be looking for a new parent governor in September so watch this space!



To all of the children, staff, parents and carers of the Althorp Partnership – have a fantastic summer.

