

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER

JULY 2018

Welcome to the 4th formal governors' newsletter for staff, parents and carers of pupils and students of St Anne's School, Sixth Form College and Residence. This newsletter does not replace the normal school publication about term times and events etc. Its purpose is to keep parents and carers informed of all key developments in the school, college and residence that are within the remit of the Board of Governors. It reflects discussions and decisions taken at the full meeting of the Board on 24 May and an extra-ordinary meeting on 20 June 2018 featuring the following issues and decisions.

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1 Membership of the Board of Governors

At the meeting on 24 May governors welcomed Yvonne Briggs as a new governor to the meeting. Yvonne's considerable experience in education at all levels was covered in my February Newsletter.

2 Plans to Build a New School

The plans to build a new school were considerably advanced and a final design had been agreed. When the costs of this were estimated they were £1 million pound over budget. The reasons for this were linked to the level of the site and key features such as a new hydro therapy pool etc.

Additionally, discussions with the residents of Welton reflected concerns about access to the building site for vehicles and materials etc. Access has to be separate to the school for reasons of safety and to allow the school to function normally whilst the new school is built. A full traffic survey was therefore necessary.

With regard to the cost other options are currently being considered by governors and the local authority. A decision will be made towards the end of August and I hope that a formal announcement of amended plans can be made at the start of the academic year in September.

Governors have thanked all the ground staff for their work in recent months to move the sixth form shop, poly tunnels, install new footpaths and picnic/activity tables along with the new horticultural areas. The grounds look splendid and, as visitors arrive, first impressions are of a school that cares about the care, safety and education of its pupils. Well done to Steve and the team.

3 Academy Status and The Consortium Academy Trust

Governors have continued to research the advantages of converting to an academy and joining The Consortium Academy Trust. During April and May teams of governors visited Cottingham High School and Sixth Form College, Hessle High School and Sixth Form College, Wolfreton School and Sixth Form College, Penshurst Primary School, Hessle and Croxby Primary School, Cottingham all schools within the TCAT structure.

The visits were very positive. All are excellent schools that work well together. The three secondary schools have a history of working together for 25 years and within the new consortium provide high quality support to each constituent school. The Trust has been developed to provide a platform that delivers high quality educational experiences for the children and young people in our local community.

Special Educational Needs provision in all five schools is strong but would benefit with the inclusion of an outstanding additional needs school within the network. Additionally, there would be many benefits if St Anne's joined particularly relating to support for the Head and Leadership Team, shared resources, access to courses for sixth form students, joint working and continued personal development.

After a long discussion on 24 May governors resolved to move to the next stage of due diligence and commence formal negotiations to become an academy and join TCAT with an effective date being 1 September 2019. This would allow for a full consultation process to take place with staff, parents, carers and key partners.

On the very day that this resolution was approved governors were informed of the difficulties with the plans to build a new school as outlined above. It was clear that as new options were considered a lot of work would have to be undertaken this year and this would over stretch the Leadership Team, governors and key partners. An extra ordinary meeting of the Board was held on 20 June where it was decided not to convert to an academy or become a full member of TCAT at this time or next year.

It was decided though that St Anne's School, Sixth Form College and Residence should apply to become an associate member of the Consortium with effect from 1 September 2018 at the start of the 2018/19 academic year. This does not mean that we change the status of the school as it remains a maintained school within the structure of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council. It does however signify the longer term intentions of the school as the landscape in education changes. Trusts and Local Authorities work closely together for the benefit of all learners which of course is crucial for an additional needs school such as St Anne's where we have many other partners particularly in the health network.

The immediate advantages of joining as an associate member early is that our head would join the Headteacher's Board of the Trust where she would have support and challenge from colleagues. Savings can be made by accessing HR support if we require it, leadership development and Continued Personal Development for staff trust wide would be available in addition to St Anne's staff providing SEND support to other schools in the trust. There will be support for staff new to leadership at whatever level to work shadow staff in similar positions within the trust.

After a number of years and particularly after the new school has been built governors would revisit the status of the school having regard to the assessment of the associated membership benefits over that period.

Staff, parents and carers will be kept fully informed of developments within the Consortium and the school over the months ahead with a further newsletter towards the end of next term.

4 Headteacher's Report to Governors

In her report to governors on 24 May Lesley covered the following issues:

- School Improvement Partner Report.
- Newly Qualified Teachers and the success of the NQT programme at St Anne's.
- PSHCE with a report from the newly appointed PSHCE Co-ordinator Emma Holmes.
- PE with a report from Rachel Pearson.
- Children Looked After with a report from Chris Lee.

- Autism Accreditation update.
- Pupils admissions for 2018/19
- Achievement of pupils.
- Partnership Working.

Governors are very grateful for the detail of the Headteacher's Report and for the contributions made to it by middle leaders.

5 Committee Meetings

On 24 May reports were received from the following committees:

- Safeguarding and Well-Being. A full safeguarding audit had been submitted to the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board. A review of the school's medication policy was to be undertaken with additional training for all staff. A new partnership with MIND was approved.
- Finance. The school was within budget and reserves would be ring fenced towards the associated costs of building a new school.
- Residence Committee. Plans to build a new 4 bed unit were being developed as part of the wider building programme.
- Health and Safety. External visits to swimming pools were discussed.
- Curriculum. Presentations were given on PSHCE and autism.

6 Humber Night Challenge

In the last newsletter I mentioned the Humber Night Challenge competition and outward bound activities generally encouraging parents and carers to support their children taking part. Five students took part in the Humber Night Challenge Competition on 24 March from Brantingham Park. They successfully completed all 13 miles of the of the course during the night, found all 24 of the OS Grid Points and completed all the challenges which followed the theme of sexual exploitation, online safety and criminal justice. I accompanied the team along with the staff members and independent leaders and all five students were a credit to the school. They demonstrated the skills and independence they had learned in the school highlighting once again that our pupils can achieve their potential.

7 Work Experience and Transition

Governors have been pleased to note that more work experience opportunities have opened up with partners along with potential employment but much more has to be done in this crucial field. We particularly urge parents to have confidence in the school and the assessment by staff of students as suggested placements are considered.

On 20 March, Mary Moverley one of our parent governors organised a seminar at the school for parents whose children were approaching transition. This was excellent as presentations were given by the parents of a student on their experience of finding a placement, a consultant in Education and Health Care Plans and an Assistant Principal of Linkage, a Grimsby based charity delivering high-quality specialist education, care and employment opportunities in the region for post 19 students from additional needs schools.

There were many questions and the importance of accurate, comprehensive and timely Education and Health Care Plans was highlighted. Parents are encouraged to contribute to these and challenge agencies when they have concerns about the process. Thank you Mary for arranging this seminar in your role as a parent governor.

8 Fund Raising for Extra Curricular Work

Whilst the general finances of the school are in budget, support is frequently required for extra curricular activity such as visits, sport and other activities. We are fortunate to have a number of generous benefactors who support the school with donations but other means of raising funds are welcomed by governors.

On 20 April East Yorkshire Glazing and the SMILE Foundation sponsored a corporate 'Ball and Dinner' at the Willerby Manor Hotel to raise funds for the St Anne's Residence. Sue Larter one of our co-opted governors was heavily involved in the planning and sponsorship of this event which was highly successful. It raised over £11,000 for the Residence but also raised the profile of the school with the many businesses and employers present. This has opened up new work experience and employment opportunities for our pupils. Our thanks go to Sue and the sponsors for all the hard work in organising this event.

9 Retirement of Dorothy Colley and Staff Changes

Assistant Headteacher Dorothy Colley has given notice of her intention to retire with effect from 31 August.

Dorothy's service at St Anne's spans 24 years initially as a teacher but with the last 8 years as assistant head teacher in the upper school. Her service has been exemplary. As a key member of the SLT Dorothy has helped the school, college and residence achieve its consistently outstanding position as assessed by Ofsted, the local authority but above all our pupils, parents and carers. Her passion and enthusiasm has been an example to others and this view is shared by all governors. During my time as Chair we have had to face some difficult challenges not uncommon in schools catering for children with complex needs but these have been met and dealt with successfully thanks to the contribution, guidance and wise counsel of Dorothy with her senior colleagues.

We wish her a long and happy retirement when she will hopefully have time for the hobbies she has after all the long hours well into the night spent at the school over the years.

Following Dorothy's notice of retirement and with the departure of our assistant head in the Sixth Form last year we had 2 vacancies for assistant head and the following appointments have been made.

Hendi Longman, a long-standing teacher at St Anne's, has been appointed Assistant Headteacher Upper School.

Victoria Hubbard has been appointed as Assistant Headteacher for the Sixth Form. Victoria has experience of leadership at an additional needs school at Scunthorpe.

We welcome both new assistant heads to their new roles for when they join the team in September.

10 Contacting Members of the Board of Governors.

Any governor can be contacted through the school office and I can be contacted through the office or directly via the email address geoff.ogden@stannes.eriding.net

Geoff Ogden, MBE
Chair of Governors