

# Benton Dene School Governors' Newsletter

December 2018



Dear Parents and Carers,

Benton Dene School Governors are committed to ensuring Benton Dene School continues to provide the best possible education and outcomes for your children so they are well prepared for their future lives. We would welcome your feedback about school. The termly Governors' Newsletter is a way of keeping you informed about the work we do. We will use the newsletter to let you know about opportunities to meet us. I write this one following being elected as the new chair of Governors in the last governing body meeting. Christine Jack, whom was the previous chair and a dedicated and hardworking governor, remains on the governing body.

Details of how to contact us are below.

Best wishes

Marianne Allan

Chair of Governors

## **What do governors do?**

The Governing Body is made up of Parents, Staff, Community, North Tyneside Learning Trust Governors and Local Authority Governors with a wide range of skills and expertise. We meet twice a term as a full Governing Body and then half termly on sub-committees which concentrate on different aspects of school life: Staffing and Finance, Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Pupils, Families and the Community.

Governors are responsible for setting the school's long-term vision. The governing body agrees the strategic priorities, aims and objectives for the school and signs off the policies, plans and targets for how to achieve them. We challenge, monitor and check on progress and hold the Headteacher to account by asking questions.

We also have a responsibility to ensure all our children are safe at school.

Individual governors visit school regularly. This allows us to find out more about what is happening in classrooms and to see assemblies, performances and other activities.

We meet regularly with the governors from Benton Dene Primary School to look at issues that affect both schools and to ensure we work well together and benefit from our partnership with the primary school that shares our building.

Governors are volunteers. Between us we have a wide range of experience and skills. We can access training to ensure we perform our role effectively.

The school website has more information about the governors, including pen portraits about each of us: <http://bentondeneschool.schooljotter2.com/our-school/our-governors>

### **New Governors:**

This term we are pleased to welcome three new governors to our team. We have Suzanne Wood who brings a breadth of experience and skills and joins us as a foundation governor. We also have Kerry Clegg who works for the local authority as a reading recovery trainer and as staff governor we have Chrissy Taylor.

### **Staff Appraisal**

Governors are involved in ensuring all members of staff are supported to do the best job possible. The Staffing and Finance committee leads the process; senior leaders in school are responsible for appraising the performance of all staff. On an annual basis they report to the Staffing and Finance Committee. Governors also conduct the head teacher's performance management. Identified Governors have completed training from the Local Authority and are then supported by the School Development Partner to ensure the head teacher sets challenging personal targets that link to the school development plan. It is the role of governors to evaluate whether these targets are met.

Governors are also involved in the recruitment of staff. This term we welcomed two new members of staff to the leadership team of the school, Mrs Moira Banks, Deputy Head and also Helen Milburn, Assistant Head. Both have attended all governor meetings as observers .

### **Governor Training**

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November all governors attended a fabulous morning in school to look at school development. Mrs McAllister led the morning with an inspiring presentation about teamwork and how this is vital to the work that takes place at Benton Dene. We all looked at the systems in school for monitoring the progress of our pupils.

### **Visiting school**

One of the best aspects of being a governor is spending time in school. It is always lovely to spend time in class working with children, or walking round school to see what staff and children are doing. We also try to come to as many events as possible. One of the best occasions is always the Christmas performance. Governors are looking forward to this year's production and you will see most of us there. The Christmas Fayre this year builds on the success of last year and the fabulous enterprise skills of our children. The fayre shows the aspirations and ambitions of the staff to ensure that children are taught the very best life skills and the fayre is all about the pupils. We love to see the products the children have made.

This term governors have visited school looking at Science and the Early years.

Part of the governing body role is to look at how effective pupil premium funding is spent and the impact on outcomes for the pupils. This is funding allocated to children whom are in receipt of free school meals and this report is available on the school website for you to look at.

### **Contacting governors**

If you want to contact the governors to find out more about their role, or to provide feedback, you can do this by contacting the school office.