

Governors' Newsletter



December 2018

Thank you for taking the time to read the Governing Body's newsletter. We hope that it will give you an overview of the work we have done this term. Thank you also for the continued support that you have provided to the school this term. We wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year holiday!

Headteacher

We recently confirmed that Mrs Abley will remain at Templewood as Interim Headteacher until the end of the academic year, giving us time to explore all the options for the school going forward. Putting in place a permanent headteacher for the school does of course remain governors' first priority.

Other areas of governors' work

Governors have responsibility to ensure that safeguarding is effective at Templewood. This work is continuous, and requires regular monitoring of systems and processes as well as awareness of any matters causing concern. This term, governors considered the effectiveness of Templewood's anti-bullying policy. The effectiveness of the policy relies on proper recording of incidents, however small, that might (when taken with other incidents) constitute bullying as well as regular analysis of these records to identify patterns. Governors are satisfied that these processes are in place, and that when a pattern is identified, the school responds appropriately. This term, some classes have had additional PSHE lessons focused on related issues where this has been identified as necessary along with individual actions.

Governors continue to have oversight of the school's budget. School budgets are continually under pressure but Templewood's is relatively healthy at present. We have identified some funds to put towards replacement toilets after the boiler and heating system has been replaced, and are also seeking external funding for other improvements to the building. We are grateful to parents and to the TSA for the recent significant contributions which have enabled the school to purchase learning resources which it would not otherwise have been able to afford.

We have also continued to work with the County Council to ensure the boiler replacement goes ahead as soon as possible. Progress on this is slower than we would like, and out of our control – however, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council last week granted listed building consent to undertake the survey that is necessary before the boiler and heating system can be replaced. We understand that the application for the works has been submitted too, but this has not yet been released for comment, and so we are waiting to hear when this will be considered by WHBC.

Along with the senior leadership team, governors are keen to improve communication between parents and the school, and a Parent Forum has been put in place to will give parents, staff and governors the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue. The first meeting will take place in January 2019.

SATs results 2018

Key Stage 2 SATs results for 2018 have recently been published. The children and staff in last year's Year 6 worked very hard to achieve these results, and we are proud of them. Never the less, there is a significant difference in the results compared to the previous year, and they illustrate some concerns about progress which we are addressing. Each child and each class is therefore different, but we want to ensure that every child makes good progress no matter their starting point. As we do with all data, governors and senior leaders have used these results to highlight areas for improvement in teaching and learning, and have been carrying out work to implement changes as a result. The internal assessment process since the beginning of the year, to ensure that we track every child's progress more carefully over their time at Templewood, giving a better picture of the rate at which they learn and highlighting any concerns. Senior leaders and teachers are now better placed to put in measures to address these concerns.

If you have any queries about the progress your own child is making, please contact your child's teacher.

Changes to our team

We recently invited nominations for a vacant parent governor role. One nomination was received, and an election was therefore unnecessary. We are very pleased to welcome Katharine Lovell to the governing body as a parent governor. Katharine is a deputy head teacher at a Hertfordshire secondary school and has children at Templewood.

This term we have also welcomed Sharon Irvine as a staff governor and Helen Pendell as a co-opted governor. Sharon has worked at Templewood for several years, and Helen specialises in teaching English to year 5 and 6 children at a boys' private school, having completed a dissertation as part of boys' learning as part of her PGCE.

We are confident that all our new governors will prove an asset to the team during their four year term.

External Review of Governance

Each year, the governing body carries out a self-assessment to review how well it has worked and to identify areas for improvement. It is recommended that from time to time an external review is carried out, and governors have therefore initiated an external review of Templewood's Governing Body. This will highlight any areas for us to improve the way that we work.

Contact us

Governors are happy to talk to parents or others in the school community about our work, although any questions or concerns about the day to day running of the school must be directed to the appropriate member of staff.

If you need to get in contact with us, please leave a message at the school office or e-mail chairofgovernors@templewood.herts.sch.uk

Parent Survey 2018

The school conducts a parent survey annually. In 2018, the survey was sent out at the end of the last academic year, so that parents could reflect on the whole year. However, we received a low number of responses and so the survey will now be conducted earlier in the year. The responses received show that parents feel their children are safe at Templewood, but are concerned both about their children’s progress and the extent to which they are informed about this. Parents generally feel that their children are taught well and that school deals with issues of bullying effectively, but there are concerns about behaviour. The survey also showed that parents would like the school’s communication to improve. The school is taking action to address issues of concern, as can be seen from the work outlined above.

