



Governing Body 'Keeping in Touch'

Newsletter 3 – 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

This is the 3rd Governors' Newsletter and we would like to use this as the platform for publishing our annual governance statement for the academic year 2018/19. This statement demonstrates transparency and accountability of the way governors and the school leadership team work in partnership.

Message from the chair – Sandra Allen

Once again it has been a busy year for Elm Park Governing Body in supporting and challenging the Head Teacher and Staff appropriately to ensure the school continues to thrive and provide the best for our children.

Areas of focus for the governors during the year have included:

School Improvement: We have monitored closely the actions taken as part of the school improvement plan throughout the year, including governors meeting with staff responsible for Maths, English, Science and the Wider Curriculum to raise the attainment of all children in line with National Expectations in these areas. Our core monitoring of children with special educational needs and pupil premium continues to ensure the best outcomes and progress for these pupils is in line with their peers.

Finance: We have continued our scrutiny of the schools' financial positions, planning for known future events and using scenario testing to understand the extent of our financial resilience. This has been a challenging task in today's educational finance climate and the decline in young families in the local community. We are, however, confident that we are in a position currently to invest in staffing, technology and sports that all contribute to the pupils' daily experience. Our Chair of Finance has been working determinedly with the LA and Senior Leaders to improve the facilities and buildings of the school throughout the year and delighted to have secured a new building for the education of our children.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: We have increased our focus on the wellbeing of both the staff and the pupils this year with the school being part of the South Gloucestershire Wellbeing Award. I look forward to seeing the impact of this initiative in the coming year.

This year has been a challenging time in relation to staffing with some long-term sickness of Senior Leaders. The Governors have worked in partnership with the school to minimise the disruption to learning for the children whilst maintaining a strong leadership to continue to improve outcomes for pupils.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the PTFA and the chair Toria Wrangham and Emma Winslade for their determined efforts in organising fund-raising events for the year which have raised an amazing £14,855 for the school. This money is vital in a climate of cuts to education to provide those enrichment opportunities for children. Monies have been pledged towards a variety of projects such as funding circus skills day, forest skills, and a variety of resources for individual classes. We would

like to thank you for supporting these fund raising endeavours and hope you will continue to support the PTFA in whatever way you can as it really makes a difference to the school.

It has been a privilege to be elected as Chair of Governors of Elm Park for the 2nd year and would like to thank my fellow governors for all the time and hard work they have volunteered this year. I am looking forward to seeing what we can achieve with the staff, parents, children and PTFA in the next year.

Governance Arrangements and Attendance

| Governor name | Category | Term of Office | Meetings Attended 2018/19 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Mr. Matthew Lewis | Clerk | 24/9/2014 | FGB 6/6 P&F 3/3 L&S 0/2 S&C 0/1 EGB 1/1 |
| Mrs Sandra Allen (CHAIR) | Co-opted | 18/1/19-17/1/21 | FGB 6/6 P&F 3/3 L&S 2/2 S&C 1/1 EGB 1/1 |
| Mrs Nicola Allaouat | Co-opted | 23/11/18-22/11/20 | FGB 6/6 L&S 2/2 S&C 1/1 EGB 1/1 |
| Mrs Samantha Conway RESIGNED | Co-opted | 28/9/2017-25/9/18 | Resigned at the start of the Year. |
| Mrs Karen Anderson (VICE CHAIR) | Co-opted | 23/11/18-22/11/20 | FGB 6/6 S&C 1/1 EGB 0/1 |
| Mr. David Hollis RESIGNED | Co-opted | 21/9/18-24/02/19 | FGB 2/3 P&F 0/1 |
| Mr. Andrew Evans | Headteacher | 01/09/17- | FGB 5/6 P&F 1/3 L&S 2/2 S&C 1/1 EGB 1/1 |
| Ms Jo Briscombe | LA | 27/11/18– 26/11/20 | FGB 5/6 L&S 2/2 EGB 1/1 |
| Mr. David Drew | Co-opted / (Parent up to 19/05/19) | 20/05/19-19/05/21 | FGB 6/6 P&F 3/3 S&C 1/1 EGB 1/1 |
| Miss Sarah Harttrup RESIGNED | Parent | 3/5/17-14/11/18 | FGB 1/1 |
| Mrs Carol Bond | Staff | 02/01/18-01/01/20 | FGB 4/6 P&F 2/3 EGB 1/1 S&C 1/1- Observer L&S 1/1 - Observer |
| Mrs Vicky Drew | Co-opted | 14/01/19-13/01/21 | FGB 3/4 L&S 1/2 EGB 0/1 |
| Mrs Claire Hall | Parent | 01/12/18-30/11/21 | FGB 4/4 P&F 2/2 EGB 0/1 S&C 1/1 |
| Mr Jason Walker | Parent Governor | Elected at the end of the School Year | No meetings to date |
| Vacancy | Co-opted | | |
| Vacancy | Co-opted | | |

KEY:

FGB - Full Governing Board, **P&F** - Premises and Finance, **S&C** - Staffing & Communications, **EGB** - Extraordinary Governing Board, **L&S** - Learning and Standards

The Governing Body of Elm Park is made up of 12 governors. We still have two remaining vacancies. To compliment the skills of the current governors we are interested in recruiting co-opted governors who have an interest or background in finance and/or building. If you are interested or know anyone in the local community who have the necessary skills and would like to join our dedicated team of people then please contact the **Chair of Governors, Mrs Sandra Allen, via the school office.**

Overview of the school aims:

Our school vision is '**Inspiring Learners, Enriching Lives, Achieving Together.**' At Elm Park the children are at the heart of everything we do. They are encouraged to aim high and develop a love of learning. To ensure this is at the forefront of the curriculum staff and governors have revisited this on our In-service training this month focusing on how each aspects links to the curriculum taught.

Governors' role in promoting school improvement

At Elm Park School each member of staff and each governor is a leader of at least one aspect of the school's life, working as a strong team to improve learning and to raise standards.

Pupils, parents and staff voice are important parts of our consultation and decision-making process. This year we have engaged pupils, parents and staff views via questionnaires to identify areas of strengths and improvement. These findings have been shared with school leaders and, where appropriate, will form part of the next School Improvement Plan.

The Governing Body monitors school improvement priorities through regular committee meetings. We have clear agendas which focus on the impact of actions in the school development plan. Governors also visit the school regularly to take part in learning walks, as well as watching the children at work to see first-hand the impact of the school's work.

Our successes this year

This year we have been continuing our work from last year on two key areas: -

- Raising attainment and progress for all children, particularly mathematics and phonics and aiming to achieve at least national average at the end of year assessments in Key Stage 1 & 2 and Phonics.
- To ensure that the children have good quality teaching across the school.

The school has continued to build on the practice and provision of the previous year in phonics and mathematics and this has had a positive impact on meeting our goals

- We have achieved our goal of raising attainment in phonics with an increase of 2% of children meeting the threshold for Year 1 phonics from last year and above the National Average.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 this year we have broadly maintained the number of children achieving Age Related expectation in Maths but still strive to meet National Average.
- EYFS continue with its good practice with 73% achieving a good level of development (GLD) and above provisional National Average.

Governors would like to recognise the dedication and commitment to those leaders that have led initiatives to raise the outcomes as outlined above.

In respect of leadership and permanent staff the school continues to strive for continuity and consistency. Due to the decrease in intake from 45 to 30 children this year it has been necessary to continually monitor the staffing structure and adjust with children's learning and wellbeing at the heart of any decisions.

Alongside our focus areas the Chair of Finance and Premises continues to work with the Local Authority to maintain our current premises to ensure our children are in a safe environment and secure a commitment for a new school. Whilst engaging in this project for the new school the School Leadership and governors are committed to ensure that the well-being, safety and education of the current children is paramount.

Update from Chair of Finance and Premises – Dave Drew (Co-opted governor)

Plans are now underway for our new school! Currently we are in the design stage, prior to a formal planning application being submitted to the council later this year. We should have an outline plan to share with staff, children, parents and the local community in mid-November. Work is currently planned to start next summer, with completion currently planned for the start of the new school year in September 2021. These are very exciting times. We hope to continue the Elm Park theme throughout the new school design, with an emphasis on open views to the trees and our great outdoors.

Our response to Ofsted/ Our current priorities

Our good Ofsted report in 2016 highlighted two areas why the school was not yet outstanding

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) screening check is rising but is still below national levels. Pupils going into Year 1 already falling behind do not have teaching which is precise enough to help them to catch up quickly.
- Teaching in science does not challenge pupils' thinking enough and so they do not develop scientific skills at the same rate as they develop factual scientific knowledge.

Both areas continued to be included in 2018/19 School Development Plan. We have seen a steady increase in the number of children achieving expected standards in Phonics since 2016. In 2016 72% of children met the standard, below National average and now in 2019 84% met the standard, above National average. We are very proud of our children's achievements and will continue to embed this good practice.

During 2018 -19 a member of staff developed a Science Action Plan to address this action. A focus of this plan was a skills-based curriculum with progression across the school. An additional objective was to involve the whole school in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programme and LEGO Robotics, coding and programming in Year 5/6. These initiatives are in their infancies.

Emerging priorities for 2019/20 are

- Improve learning outcomes for all pupils within KS1 and 2 to reach expected / national standards or better (at both expected and at greater depth).
- Improve mental calculation to ensure all children are fluent in key number facts and times table calculation.
- Provide a high quality, inspiring curriculum for all pupils in Science and the foundation subjects which positively impacts on their achievement of core skills in English and Maths.

As well as continuing with our key actions from Ofsted 2016.

We have identified these priorities through analysis of school data and our monitoring role. The school has a Raising Achievement Plan that clearly sets out how these priorities will be addressed.

The achievement of our children: Attainment and Progress

The tables below show 2019 statutory assessments results reflecting the good achievement of Elm Park children.

| EYFS (Reception) - % of children achieving 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|-------|
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| Elm Park | 61% | 81% | 79% | 73% |
| LA | | | | 77% |
| National | 69% | 71% | 72% | 71.8% |

Another good year for EYFS with % of children achieving a good level of development continues to be above National.

| Phonics - % of children achieving the standard | | | | | |
|--|--------------|------|------|------|-------|
| | | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| Elm Park | Y1 screening | 72% | 74% | 82% | 84% |
| LA | | | | | 85% |
| National | Y1 screening | 81% | 81% | 83% | 81.2% |

An increase in the number of children meeting the expected standard in Phonics for the 3rd year. This clearly demonstrates how the school priorities have impacted positively on children's phonological knowledge.

| KS1 Summary July 2019 against Age Related Expectations (ARE) | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| | Reading | Writing | Maths | R+W+M |
| Elm Park | 60% | 55% | 58% | 48% |
| LA | 80% | 74% | 80% | 70% |
| National | 73.2% | 69.2% | 75.6% | |

| KS2 Summary July 2019 against Age Related Expectations (ARE) | | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|--------|-------|-----------------|
| | Reading | Writing | Maths | R+W+M | R+W+M above ARE |
| Elm Park | 75% | 78% | 68% | 60% | 13% |
| LA | 74% | 82% | 79% | 66% | 11% |
| National | 73.2% | 78.5% | 78.75% | 64.8% | 10.5% |

We are pleased that the % of children achieving Age Related Expectations in Reading and Writing continues to be above or in line with National average.

All the outcomes above have been analysed and areas for development will be included in the School Improvement Plan.

Our support for children with SEN/D

To fulfil our legal requirement to ensure the needs of children with Special Educational Needs are met a designated governor, Mrs Sandra Allen, is assigned to monitor the provision throughout the school and the progress of this group of children. At Elm Park we are committed to providing high quality education to every child. We believe that all children, including those identified as having Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND), have a common entitlement to an accessible, broad and balanced academic and

social curriculum, and that they should be fully included in all aspects of school life where and when they are able.

The SEND governor meets regularly with the SENCo and updates the governing body to ensure that SEND work is valued and well supported together with monitoring how the SEND budget is used. Monitoring this year has shown that the school has good systems in place for the identification of children with additional needs, providing the relevant support in line with the SEN Policy and School Offer as well as providing a wide range of training for staff to provide the appropriate provision. Furthermore, the school have effective systems in place to monitor the progress of children on individual plans. The SEND Policy can be found on the school website alongside the School's SEND's Information Report. These two documents are useful if you believe your child has an additional need as it will explain the process to remove barriers to learning by following the **Graduated Response**. This is a four-part cycle, **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**. Elm Park believe a key role in removing barriers to learning is a trusting and supportive partnership with parents and children.

Attendance

There is a proven link between good attendance and making good progress. Therefore, governors take this very seriously and monitor attendance closely. Our nominated governor is Mrs Sandra Allen who meets regularly with the Attendance lead, to discuss attendance and the school's approach to tackling issues. Our target for 2018-19 year was 96% and we have met this target for the first time in a few years. We would like to thank you all for your commitment to ensuring your child is in school and benefiting from the education the school provides.

The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered students of school age attend school regularly and punctually. Children whose absence falls below 96% or are continually late will be supported to improve attendance. If attendance does not improve legal action will be taken in line with our policy that can be found on the school website. Governors support the school in implementing improvements to boost attendance. The main issues the school are addressing are lateness, absence due to taking holidays and persistence absence. Currently the Attendance Lead, Governors and the Education Welfare Officer are working on new strategies to tackle these two issues and improve attendance.

Working with parents and the community

As governors we value the contribution of parents and carers and keen to seek your views. We were pleased with the number who completed our questionnaire last March. As previously stated, these findings have been shared with school leaders and where appropriate will form part of the next School Improvement Plan.

Contact details

The Governing Body welcomes suggestions, feedback and ideas from parents/carers. Please contact the **Chair of Governors Mrs Sandra Allen c/o the school office**.