



# Governor Newsletter

May 2019

---

*By Richard  
Houldsworth*



I cannot believe it is well over a year since I completed my last Governor report, how that time has flown by. It has been amazing to see the changes in the school (and the pupils) over that time and exciting to think of all the changes ahead.

As well as attending the Full Governing Body Meetings twice a term. All the Governors have been busy completing a number of training courses to help expand their knowledge to better support the school. We have also undergone a change in the Governor structure. John Drewery has stepped down as Chair of Governors and Jenny Turner stood to take over the position for which she was duly elected. I think we all owe a great deal to the enthusiasm and commitment John has given the role over the last two years, which we all have greatly appreciated. I'm sure Jenny will put her own stamp on the role and we look forward to supporting her and the school for her tenure as Chair of Governors.

**Richard Houldsworth**

A few weeks ago I (along with Mrs Miller, Mrs Waller and Yvonne Wright) helped to create a parent survey. This was developed to better understand how the parents feel about the school. At every parents evening we try and ask the parents what they think of the school and communicate our role within the school. However, to understand how we gauge this consistently, we wanted to regularly carry out similar surveys so we can compare the results. Yvonne has the details in her report below.

## GDPR

I have also taken shared responsibility (along with Peter Apostolos) for the linked governing of GDPR, which is headed up by Miss Dienel who is our Data Protection Officer (DPO). Our role is to oversee the implementation of the standards and to support the school where possible. Miss Dienel and the school have done a fantastic job ensuring all staff are trained on how to control sensitive personal data to ensure the school is fully compliant.

## Computing

I have visited the school with Miss Brown and been shown the great work the teaching staff do to incorporate computing in to all aspects of learning. There have also been a number of improvements made to school computing systems software, so the operations can work more effectively and securely.

## Governor Recruitment

Due to a number of Governors coming to the end of their tenure in recent months, we are now actively recruiting Community Governors (these are Governors that are not parents of children who attend Wheatcroft Primary School). I have helped to design a couple of leaflets. One was used at the last Parents evening and another will be used at a recruitment drive in Stevenage this week.

---

## **An update from Peter Apostolos – Vice Chair of Governors**

The automated gates are nearing completion and will help to make the school more secure. A great deal of effort has been made to ensure that these works have been conducted in a sympathetic manner to reduce the effect on the school day. My thanks go to Mrs Miller, Mrs Coates and to Mr Dicker for achieving this. The contractors have conducted themselves very well on site and have done a great job.

The ceiling project begins this week and will bring with it many challenges. The Governors have been informed of the measures required to meet the on-going works and are happy with the proposed plans.

## **An update from Jenny Turner – EYFS & Safeguarding Governor**

I have visited our reception and nursery classes to look at the EYFS action plan, assessment data and to support setting targets for next year.

I have also taken on the role of Safeguarding Governor along with a focus on wellbeing for all. Mrs Miller and I have reviewed the staff survey to address any wellbeing suggestions, which are being discussed and addressed in school where appropriate.

I am also looking forward to joining Year 5 on their residential this month

## **An update from Rachael Adler – Parent Governor**

This term 3 governors supported on the year 5 river trip, which saw the pupils walk from the school down to Hartham Common, exploring the various nature and river aspects they had been learning about in Geography.

I sat with Mrs Rampersaud our new Science subject lead to understand how the school is progressing against its Science action plan for 2018/9 and to understand the focus for the summer term. We discussed the recent science week where the children all took part in an experience in their class rooms (dancing raisins) which the children found very exciting!

Myself and the Chair of governors sat in on a recent staff meeting where the focus was science, and the teaching of the new curriculum, which we found very informative.

I sat with Mrs Waller (joint Maths subject lead with Miss Jones) to review progress against areas set out in the School Improvement Plan for Maths, and discuss the impact of Maths week, which from the feedback was really enjoyed by all pupils, particularly the challenge they all took part in, and getting to hear from parents who's job involved the use of Maths.

**Angela Thornton** is our Inclusion Governor and focuses part of her visits on SEN (Special Educational Needs) children and also the MA (More Able) children. Angela met with Mrs Tuck and Mrs Standen to discuss the progress of children with SEN, focusing on the school's results, pupils' achievements, and pupil's attitude, values and personal development. They also discussed current SEN related issues within the school. As per usual, she was impressed with the amount of work the team put in to supporting children with SEN. They met in the revamped quiet room and saw the bubble tube and LED lights working; it is now a very calming and relaxing place to be.

---

## **Update from Yvonne Wright – Parent Governor**

### **Wheatcroft Parent Survey 2019**

We were pleased that so many parents participated in the Parent survey and the results helped us to see what we are doing well and where future areas for development may be.

The overwhelming majority of parents feel that their children are happy, well taught and well looked after. Most parents also felt that their children were well behaved, this was reflected in the feedback from Ali Pepper our Hertfordshire Improvement Partner who noted that ‘behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary’. There were some individual comments regarding playground behaviour, to ensure that safer playground behaviour is encouraged all MSA’s have had training in encouraging positive play.

Communication with parents is an area that we continue to develop and improve. The recent revamp of the website has enabled clearer signposting of items such as term dates, diary dates, copies of letters sent home etc. The weekly newsletter has been modified and appears on the website and also emailed out to ensure everyone sees what the children have been up to in the week.

Homework appears a controversial topic with some parents wanting more and some wanting less. The Senior Leadership team is looking at a more consistent approach across the key stages so watch this space.

Many thanks to all of you who took the time to provide us with feedback, it is much appreciated. The next formal Parent survey will take place next academic year but don’t forget you can always leave comments on the Feedback Posters at Parent Consultation evenings.

**Hope you all have a great May bank holiday break, fingers crossed for more sunshine!**