



Northchapel Community Primary School and Little Oaks Preschool



GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER 2018

Producing high achievers through creative learning

As we write our Governors' Newsletter for the year, we want to remind you about who we are and what we do for our School.

Our Governing Body consists of nine Governors, who give their time voluntarily to ensure

- The clarity of vision and ethos of the School
- The Head Teacher is accountable for the educational performance of the School
- The financial accountability of the School

We would like to say a big 'thank you' to Rosanne Corbett and Julie Gibbs for all their hard work on the Governing Body, as they completed their term of office during the year.

We have recently welcomed Liz Gent as a new Parent Governor and are currently looking to co-opt someone to fill the remaining vacancy on the Governing Body. We currently have two associate Governors.

Who are we?



Anthea
Martin-Jenkins
Chair of Governors



Andy James
Vice Chair
Chair of Finance



Helen Coleman
Head Teacher
Safeguarding Lead



Deborah Coggin
Deputy Head
Pupil Premium



Andy Tate
Premises
Health and Safety



Heather Lucas
Special Needs
Well-Being
Safeguarding



Elaine Brown
Data
Associate
Governor



Dan Grinter
Chair of Teaching
and Learning



Liz Gent
Parent Governor



Rick Blanco
Associate
Parent Governor

What we do

We attend termly Governing Body Meetings and meetings of the various committees to set targets and review progress. We work closely with county advisers, outside agencies, other schools and attend training courses to help the Head and the Staff to achieve the best possible results and to ensure that we continue to improve the standard of education by offering a broad and exciting curriculum to the children attending our School.



How is the School doing?

Young Voices Choir at the O2 arena

Teaching and Learning:

In a time of extraordinary change in education, we have continued to work hard as a school to aim for our vision of producing high achievers through creative learning. Our Preschool, Little Oaks, offers a super start to children joining our school. They have enjoyed the wonderful new outside area this year, developing 'in the moment planning' alongside our Reception children in Oak Class, to engage every child in inspiring learning opportunities. Our results from the end of Early Years are strong again with 75% achieving the expected Good Level of Development. Ms Ruxton has enjoyed her first year in Rowan Class teaching Y1/2. Every child in Y1 achieved the standard for phonics, continuing our trend of producing great readers and our Key Stage 1 results show children making a strong start to their learning, with results in line or better than National data.



We have worked particularly hard this year to improve progress in the core subjects across Key Stage 2 and have seen this focus paying off as children complete end of year assessments. Please see the data review early next term for further analysis of our results. Our focus on improving Maths, with a change to Mastery style teaching is beginning to show results as children have greater fluency, problem solving and reasoning skills. Our focus next year will be in writing, in particular improving the standard of handwriting, spelling and content as well as continuing to develop our Maths teaching with support from a Specialist Maths Teacher.



Finance:

Despite tight budgets, we have been able to manage our finances well again this year and balanced the books. However, a lot of discussion has been happening during the year considering the impact of the changes to future Government funding which will particularly, and adversely, affect small rural primary schools. West Sussex Council has agreed to allow transitional measures over three years for all affected schools but the new National Funding Formula means that, in 3 years' time, we will be losing around 10% of our current funding. We are confident that we should be able to balance the books again for next year but each year it is becoming progressively harder to achieve and we will need to start finding additional savings to help us meet the reduced funding targets. It is also really important that we continue to support Little Oaks as much as possible to ensure we have as many children as possible coming into the main school each year.



Northchapel PTA 5K run

Premises:

The past year has been a very busy time at Northchapel regarding premises.

Our biggest achievement was that, in the summer holiday of 2017, the whole of the rear of the Scola Classroom Block was remodelled. All the old concrete, paving slabs, wood chips, fences, planters, and grass were removed, the old overgrown hedge and trees at the rear were cut back or removed to our original boundary line and finally the old storage sheds were taken down. Valley Landscapes were our contractors and they levelled the site and installed a wonderful new coloured play surface to the whole of the area - so from the classroom doors right to the new boundary fence. This layout had been designed with input from our staff and children and includes a "path" and a "river" plus hills and tunnels. Areas are set aside for a sandpit, water wall (learn flow and fluid dynamics), mud kitchen and climbing tower. The smooth surface is also very easy to keep tidy and clean compared with the previous mixture, and the canopy at the rear of the Scola Block has also been extended all the way along the back giving a full covered area at the rear of each classroom. To maximise the use of the new facility it was decided to keep the area flexible and open without any fenced divisions and purpose built storage sheds are installed at either end for the play equipment.



Beech classroom was remodelled with the removal of the redundant disabled toilet room just inside the main door. This has resulted in a very useful gain in the class area, much needed with the increase in numbers of Beech Class. The existing classroom sink and worktop bench was kept and moved to the location of the new space. The overall job was well finished and the classroom gained extra space and also an extra window.



We have had a number of investigations of the floor in Willow Class and funding has now been confirmed so the undulating floor should be re-laid later this year. We have also moved the library to a central position to create a light welcoming entrance reading space with a calming fish tank, giving us back a teaching space next to Willow Class for small groups and independent work space. We are delighted to have Neil Banks starting as our new Premises Officer in July. Neil works for a company of ex police officers called Trust in Blue, offering premises support to local schools and businesses. He has qualifications in carpentry so we will quickly get him to work around the school.



Wellbeing:

Heather Lucas is the Governor responsible for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Safeguarding and Wellbeing and she sits on the Teaching and Learning Committee. These are areas that she is passionate about and she is proud to be a part of Northchapel School.

This year has been about improving the focus on well-being, special needs and safeguarding. These now have a regular agenda item at the Full Governing Body meetings and Heather meets with key staff regularly over the year to share the successes and plans. Small schools benefit from the close community feel where everyone knows everyone, but they also must be more resourceful with the smaller budgets. We are currently focusing on working even smarter, streamlining reporting and logging procedures and looking at the wellbeing of pupils and staff in a more structured way. Pupil progress has been a focus alongside the more obvious pupil attainment and the individuality of each child has remained a core priority. Please come and say hello to Heather if you see her around school.





Our wonderful swimming pool

What next?

- We are pleased that we have a strong staff team all set for September.
- More workshops to help parents to understand the Mastery Approach to Maths.
- Continued focus on our Maths teaching and planning.
- Improving handwriting and spelling.
- Early identification of reading or spelling difficulties through our work to achieve the Dyslexia Friendly School Award.

And finally...

As you may have read in the Press, small schools in West Sussex are under threat, so it's very important that we do all we can to ensure that our School strives for the highest possible standards and remains at the forefront of our local community. We can do that with hard work from the Governors and Staff but it is vital that Parents and Carers support our efforts to protect Northchapel School for our children.

Our grateful thanks to our dedicated teaching, administration and all other support staff who have worked very hard throughout the year. Thank you, too, to Parents, Carers and Grandparents who have also played their parts in the daily life of the School. Thank you to the committed parents of our PTA who have raised a huge amount to support the ongoing work of the school this year.

Above all, well done to the children, who have done their best to make good progress this year.



Our dance team for the Rother Valley Arts Festival

We hope you have happy summer holidays and we look forward to the start of the new academic year in September.



Brighton Dolphin Project February 2018



Wey Assembly Team



Some'Hare' over the Rainbow – our entry to Haslemere Hares