

Governor news (Autumn 2015)

This has been a busy term and some governors have spent a number of days in the school.

We began with a business meeting in September to plan the work of each committee and map this to the school's own development plan. Our statutory obligations are to hold the head and his staff to account for the outcomes of the school, so we need to check on this on a regular basis. That means visiting classes to observe what goes on in the classroom, talking with staff about their teaching plans and receiving reports from the head and his subject leaders. We check this information out on a regular basis but more usually this is in the full governing body meeting. Three governors attended the Christmas dinner and were impressed not only with the excellent meal prepared by the staff, but by the behaviour of all the boys.

As we have reconstituted there are fewer governors to oversee the various committees and work of the school. We decided to incorporate the curriculum and standards committees into the full governing body and retain the finance and personnel committee as a separate body. This has had its first meeting of the year in November to approve pay and performance recommendations for staff, ensure the budget is on track and to review and ratify some of the policies for which it is responsible.

We have planned individual training and scheduled group training on exclusions for next term. We are mentoring new governors into their role. Link visits will take place next term. The chair will lead a twilight session with the staff in February on the school development plan and the related work of the governors.

Our main focus this term has, however, been dealing with the news that the head plans to take retirement in August next year and the work of recruiting his successor. Governors decided who would be involved in the process, what we would be looking for and how this election would take place. Unfortunately, we have not been able to appoint this term and must re-advertise the vacancy early next term.

Finally, we have lost one of our governors again to the pressure of work. We would love to hear from anyone who feels that he or she has the time to commit to the very important role of being a governor. If you have read any of Sir Michael Wilsher's thoughts on governance you will know that this is a role he takes so seriously that he has now combined it with the inspection of leadership of the school. We will help you get into the role and guide you through the early days of governance with planned training, mentoring and support.

Please do get in touch with the school, either by emailing me or the head with your interest and we will be happy to show you round and talk more about the work.

Finally, on behalf of all the governors, we wish you a happy Christmas and look forward to working with the boys and staff again next term.

Pat Furness

Chair of governors