



Newsletter Date  
18th July 2016

## ***Welcome to our winter Governing Body Newsletter***

We are now at the end of Mrs Dunne's first term with us in a full time role and it has been great to have stability in our senior leadership team to take the school forward. In particular, having had Miss Willetts as our interim Deputy Headteacher, we are delighted that she will continue this role on a permanent basis from January.

As governors one of our objectives was to improve our visibility and communication within the school. We very much enjoyed meeting some of you at this term's parents' evenings and will be looking to have a governor presence at these and other events in the future.

On behalf of the governing body I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and we look forward to another successful year at Long Furlong in 2017. We also join the school in wishing one of longest serving members of staff, Mrs Hilary Lane, all the very best for the future when she leaves us this week.

**Nicola Gladwell**  
Chair of Governors

**Governor News**

*Further information on the governing body, including approved minutes of full governing body meetings are available on the school website.*

## *Strategy, Vision & Ethos*

### *School Development Plan*

The leadership team has been working very hard to pull together our school development plan which sets a clear direction as to what areas the school needs to focus on, both in the short term and over the next three years. As a governing body, it is our responsibility to evaluate and monitor progress against the objectives and actions in the plan and to challenge if things are not kept on track. This can be either done by individual governors with specific roles, or by one of the committees, but ultimately the full governing body is responsible. Part of the plan is the work that has already started in respect of “Growth Mindset” and “Anti-bullying” which you should already be aware of. I know Mrs Dunne and the rest of the staff are keen to share more on these initiatives with the wider school community next term. The plan also includes objectives around improving pupil’s attainment in writing and quality feedback and assessment.

### *Academy Consultation Process*

As set out in my letter this term, we have put together a working party to consider all the different options - including making no changes - open to the school in the context of the government and County Council’s drive for all schools to eventually become Academies. As promised, I would like to provide you with a brief update of what has happened so far and what we will be looking over the course of the next term. I would also like to thank those of you who have taken time to give us your views on this matter.

What is important, however, is that this exercise should not distract the leadership and governors from their usual duties. As such, we are very grateful that Mr John Kostoulas, one of our parents, has agreed to manage this exercise for us. In doing so, he has become an associate member of our Strategy and Finance committee in order to keep the Governors apprised of our progress. As it stands, the working party is made up of staff and governors but we would be delighted if some parents would like to join us – the invitation is still open!

Our first meetings looked at identifying circumstances which may force us into Academy status or some other form of collaboration. We then considered the risk of any of these occurring based on current circumstances. As it stands, the working party did not think any of the scenarios to be high risk at this moment in time. Our next workshop will focus on looking at the pros and cons of different scenarios identified.

John and I also attended a local event where a number of speakers gave short presentations about their own experiences, and the key questions Governing Bodies need to ask when considering the “Academy question”. It was evident that those schools represented are all going through the same process as us and are considering their options. It was also clear that no-one was in a hurry to change without seeing real evidence of a positive impact on the children’s learning as opposed to just operational efficiencies (which might be achieved by other means).

## ***Accountability***

The governing body has a rolling agenda of items that have to be reviewed or reported, some of which on an annual basis whilst others may be less frequent. One such item is a report on how we are supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable groups. This is reported to the governors and must be published on the school website. The latest report can be found under the “Curriculum” tab or by clicking [here](#)

Many people may think that SEND is only relevant to a small number of children with specific needs but in fact, it stretches to many more pupils through the provision of targeted interventions run by our Teaching Assistants and other specialists every day. You will see from the report the variety of ways our pupils are supported and the impact of the interventions used. This analysis informs the school which interventions work best. Where a program does not produce the expected progress, it allows Miss Willetts and the staff to consider if they are appropriate for the relevant children’s needs, being run in the right way, or are an effective use of our resources.

Of particular note is the fantastic impact our volunteer parents are having on the children’s reading progress through the RALF Readers program. I know Mrs Dunne and all the staff are extremely grateful to the volunteers who give up their time to come into the school to help the children. Thank you from the governors too – you can see how you really make a difference.

## ***Finance***

As you may be aware, schools receive additional funding for disadvantaged pupils (Pupil Premium) and for PE and Sports.

We are obliged to publish on our website, on an annual basis, how we have spent this money. I would therefore like to draw attention to the updated reports on the school website which can be accessed via “Links”.

## ***People***

### ***Changes to and within the Governing Body***

Due to work commitments Freyja Madsen (Co-opted governor) has decided to step down from her governor role. If you know of anyone outside the school community who might be interested in taking her place, please contact Rose-Marie Smith at the office. Unfortunately, the role cannot be taken by a member of staff or a parent as these governors are recruited in a different way and we need to maintain a balanced representation across the board.

Miss Willetts will be coming to the end of her current period of office as staff governor in January; we are holding elections for a member of staff to continue this role going forward. In the meantime, we would like to thank Miss Willetts for her hard work and contribution over the last four years. We look forward to continuing to work with her in the future, not least as part of her SENCo and leadership roles.

### *Other appointments*

- Victoria Middleton appointed as Vice Chair (temporary)

### *Governor training*

A number of our new governors have completed their induction training course this term. Natalie Sands also attended a governor Finance & Budgeting course. Linda Butler has completed the NSPCC e-safety training module.

### *Governor visits*

As well as attending the parents' evenings, our governors have met with Mrs Dunne on a regular basis. Some governors have also visited classes as part of the school development plan objectives and the monitoring of policies and procedures.

# Governor News