



Governor Newsletter to Parents

We would like to welcome you to the first Governor Newsletter to parents. Members of the Governing Body at Chivenor J/I School, who are keen to keep you informed of what is happening in school and provide you with updates on how the school is performing, have written this.

Who are the School Governors?

Every school has a governing body. It will include:

- Parents elected by other parents at the school

The parents who are currently members of our governing body are:

Ms Elaine Gordon (Vice Chair) and Miss Dawn Price

(There are currently 3 vacancies for parent governors and elections will be held in September)

- Teachers elected by their colleagues -
Mrs Ruth Sparkes
- A governor elected by support staff -
Mrs. Hilary Roach
- Local education authority governors -
Mrs Celia Banner, Ms Lynda Clinton and Mr Nicholas Cobill
- Community Governors (members of the local community appointed by governors) -
Mr James Martin (Chair of Governors), Mrs Gillian Grundy and Mr David Cronin
- The head teacher -
Mrs Melisa Louca

The Clerk to the governors is Mrs Anne Stevens.

What do Governors do?

Governors work as a team. They are responsible for making sure the school provides a good quality education. Raising educational standards in school is now a key priority. This has the best chance of happening when there is a high expectation of pupil achievement.

Governors also promote effective methods of teaching and learning when setting the school aims and policies. They do this together with the head teacher, who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school. Head teachers are chosen by governors - and most head teachers choose to be governors themselves.

Governing bodies may also include representatives from the charitable trusts, businesses or religious leaders. Special schools may have health authority or voluntary organisation representatives.

Governing bodies are responsible to parents, funders and the community. Numbers vary depending on the school's type or size. Governors are appointed for 4 years. The governing body's main role is to help raise standards of achievement. Its other duties include:

- Being accountable for the performance of the school to parents and the wider community.
- Planning the school's future direction.
- Selecting the head teacher
- Making decisions on the school's budget and staffing.
- Ensuring that the national curriculum is taught.
- Guiding the school in encouraging pupil's spiritual, moral and social development.
- Making sure the school provides for all its pupils, regardless of age, religion, disability, gender or ethnicity.

Governors are at the heart of how a school operates. It is important they get things right. How they do their job affects the interests of pupils, staff morale and how the school is seen by parents and others in the community.

Governors support and challenge the head teacher (as a critical friend) by gathering views, asking questions and deciding what's best for the school.

How Do I Contact a Governor?

Parents are welcome to contact a Governor directly. Parent Governors are often to be found at the school at the start and end of the school day and are approachable! If you wish to write to a specific Governor, this can be done by addressing the letter and handing the letter in at the school office for the Governor concerned. Letters to the Governing Body should be addressed to the Chairman and delivered in the same manner.

While we welcome letters and value your comments, initial complaints and issues relating to the day to day running of the school, should in the first instance, be referred to the Head teacher, Mrs Louca.

Current Issues

Funding for School Trips

An issue currently under review is that of voluntary contributions for school trips. As you are aware, in line with Birmingham LEA policy, Chivenor School has requested a voluntary contribution in order to cover the cost of school trips. We would like to thank those parents who have made contributions over the year.

However, this year the cost of trips has not been fully met by parents' contributions. This has resulted in the school having to fund the £1600 shortfall. The governing body is currently reviewing whether school trips will be able to continue to take place.

We would welcome feedback from parents regarding this matter, in particular ideas of how the situation could be remedied. It would be a pity to have to stop school trips for all children because some parents agree to contribute and then fail to do so.

Vacancies of Parent Governors

As mentioned previously there are 3 vacancies for parent governors and the elections will take place in September.

Parent governors are elected by other parents at the school to serve for four years. They must be a parent of a child on the school roll at the time of their election. If their children leave the school before the end of their term of office, they may continue to the end of term of office (which lasts for 4 years).

Normally governors meet as a whole body just once every term. The sub-committees such as curriculum, staffing and finance and environment will each also meet once a half term.

We hope that this newsletter has given you a better understanding of the role of governors. If you are interested in becoming a parent governor, or have any questions, please speak to any of the governors who will be happy to help.