



Westfield Primary School and Nursery

# Governors' News

July 2018

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of the Governors' Newsletter.

## Governing Board Membership

The Westfield Governing Board currently has 16 people, comprised of:

- Four parent governors
  - Six co-opted governors
  - Three associate governors
  - One Local Authority governor
  - One staff governor
  - The Headteacher
- **Andrew Doran** (dad of Leon Y6 and Will in Y4) has now completed a third year as Chair. This is a very time-consuming role and we are grateful for all the hours and commitment he has put in over the last few years.
  - Thank you also to **Emma James** (mum of Alice in year 2) who has continued as Vice-Chair for a second year, supporting the Chair and the rest of the governing board with a significant number of additional responsibilities.
- We have welcomed four new governors, most of whom got in touch in response to another mail drop around the town. They are:
    - **Roger Wotton**, who brings a lifetime of experience in education to the team and is currently Emeritus Professor of Biology at UCL;
    - **Mary Gaughan**, a Programme Director of Executive Education at Imperial College Business School;
    - **Oliver Matthews**, Director of Business Development at Potato, an Online Media company;
    - **Debbie Hawkins**, mum of Charlie in Y1 and Head of the Programme Management Office at the NHS Camden Commissioning Group.
- All of our new governors have settled into their roles extremely well and are each using their unique skills to make valuable contributions to the team. We are extremely lucky to have them and are grateful for the time that they give to us.
- Sadly this year we say goodbye to a number of our long-serving governors:

- **Laura Wells**, mum of Eila in Y6 and Charlie, who is now finishing Y9 at Ashlyns. Laura joined the Board in 2010 as a parent governor and very soon afterwards picked up the role of Chair. Laura has

been a fantastic governor and was instrumental in leading us through our transition from being a First School to a Primary School as well as in recruiting Mrs Stace as our Headteacher.

- **Jo Head**, mum of Ella in Y6 and Emily, who is completing Y7 at Ashlyns. Jo has been a Westfield governor since 2011 and has always been someone to take on significant roles within the team, such as Safeguarding, Health and Safety and monitoring our use of the Sports Premium.
- **Jill Hunt**, mum of Alice in Y4 and Freddie, who also started at Ashlyns last year. Jill joined us in 2013 and has also taken on major roles, focused on Special Educational Needs (SEN), Inclusion and our use of the Pupil Premium.
- **Julie Huke**, who leaves us after a number of years as our Staff Governor. More on Mrs Huke later in the newsletter!

We are very sad to lose these key governors from the team but very grateful for all of the time and effort that they have given to the school.

Rebecca Harvey has now been with us for two years as our Clerk. She has a key role in organising and minuting the Full Governing Board meetings every half term and providing insight to the team on specific topics during our meetings. We are grateful for all the experience and knowledge she brings.

We are always on the lookout for new governors with enthusiasm and time to spare. Being a governor is hard work but extremely rewarding. If you are interested in joining our team, please do get in touch by speaking to anyone on the Governing Board. You can find more details about our current members on the governors page of the school website.

## What we do

Our Governing Board is a team of volunteers drawn from parents, staff and members of the local

community. We are not involved in the day-to-day management of the school — this is the role of the Headteacher and staff. We are there to ask questions and challenge the Headteacher in order to ensure that the school continuously improves. To achieve this, our main responsibilities are to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school;
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.

The full Governing Board meets every half term. In addition, governors are members of one or more of the following committees, which meet four or five times a year:

- Finance, Premises and Personnel
- Curriculum, Staff and Pupils
- Pay and Performance Management

Individual governors are also responsible for specific subject areas linked to school development priorities. We meet regularly with lead members of staff to keep ourselves informed about how the school is approaching learning in Maths, PE, English, Growth Mindset, Forest Schools. We are also there to ensure that the school is fully meeting its obligations on matters such as Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium Spending, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Finance.

In addition to the priorities in the School Development Plan, the Governing Board has focused on a number of key areas this year:

- We have continued the work with Ashlyns, Bridgewater, Greenway and Swing Gate schools to become an academy and form the Berkhamsted Educational Trust.

- Prioritised and authorised improvements to the premises and school grounds in conjunction with our site manager, Mr Bray. This has included the beautiful new nature area, electrical works, decoration within the school, installation of new outdoor table tennis equipment and fencing repairs. We have also planned changes to give staff a better working environment, particularly during their planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time; these will take place over the summer ready for the new school year in September.
- Kept up-to-date with training within the Governing Board, both on an individual basis and collectively as a group. We also attended the annual Hertfordshire Governor Conference in November.
- Monitored how we use our 'pupil premium' funding, to ensure that pupils that are (or have previously been in receipt of) free school meals, those that are or have been in local authority care and children of those working in the services make good progress in their learning.
- Conducting our staff and parent surveys, analysing the results and following up on actions identified.

Day-to-day, the Governing Board looks in detail at the school's finances and in the current climate, every penny counts. The board works closely with Mrs Stace to try to ensure that the school achieves the best possible value for money.

Whilst the governors usually meet outside of school hours, this year they once again had the privilege of spending a day in school in order to get a better understanding of school life. Governors each had the opportunity to sit in on four different lessons/year groups and also attended a Key Stage 2 assembly led by Miss Davies. They had time to chat informally with staff in the staff room at breaktime, and most governors stayed on to sit and sample school lunch with children in the dining room. This year governors were also given the opportunity to have two 'pupil voice' sessions where governors sat with small groups of children from different

year groups and were able to question them on a range of topics. Two of the governors stayed on in the afternoon to attend the Forest School session led by Mrs Lambert. Some quotes from the day:

*"I really enjoyed my short time in the school. Grounding experience for me. Staff – superb. Students- brilliant. The embodiment of a learning environment. Amazing stuff."*

*"It was a real privilege to spend the morning at Westfield. The school's ethos and values come shining through from the minute you walk in the door. The atmosphere is positive, friendly and welcoming. The children are bright, enthusiastic and articulate and are clearly very proud of their school."*

*"My overall impression was that the children I saw were happy, safe, positive, confident and well aware of the school's values which they could articulate without prompting."*

*"The children I spoke to were unanimously positive about Forest Schools. They love being outside whatever the weather and enjoy making fires, using saws and learning about knots. They described it as a place where 'I can just be me'."*

*"One Year 5 boy said 'I used to be very scared of dogs but having Milo has helped me overcome this a bit and now I don't feel so nervous around them.'"*

## **Standards / Attainment**

We continue to be supported by our School Improvement Partner, Alan Phair. This is a service which the school chooses to buy into and Alan visits us each term to support and advise the school on maintaining standards, to offer objective scrutiny, challenge and advice and to ensure that we are continually striving to improve. He also supports a number of other schools in the town.

There were two main areas of focus for his visit in March this year: to evaluate the progress we have made with our agreed School Priorities, and to provide an independent assessment on the school's overall effectiveness.

Alan was once again very impressed with what he saw as these excerpts from his report demonstrate:

*"The school's promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical wellbeing is outstanding."*

*"...leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of education at the school. This has helped to plan actions to improve the school's work through its improvement plan."*

*"Evidence from the visit points to a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires children to learn."*

*"The staff met with during the visit are highly reflective of the way they teach."*

In addition to overseeing results and quality of teaching and learning, the Improvement Partner also advises the school on areas for school improvement, which in turn feeds in to our School Development Plan.

## KS2 SATS RESULTS

Our Y6 children have worked incredibly hard, supported by Mrs Edwardson and Miss Davis, and they should be very proud of what they have achieved. The results below show the percentage of children in Year 6 who have achieved the Age Related Expectation in Reading, Writing, Maths and Spelling and Grammar at Key Stage 2, and those children who are working at 'greater depth' in these subjects.

We have included the national average scores for comparison but do not yet have this data for those working at greater depth.

## Attainment

	Reading		Writing		SPaG		Maths		Combined	
	E	GD	E	GD	E	GD	E	GD	E	GD
<b>Number (60)</b>	52	25	46	13	50	28	46	19	38	9
<b>%</b>	87	42	73	22	83	47	77	32	63	15
<b>National 2018 %</b>	75		78		78		76		64	

E = Working to at least the expected standard

GD = Working to greater depth

SPaG = Spelling and Grammar

## Progress

Pupils are expected to make three steps of progress in a year to be making good progress. This table shows the average progress children have made since the end of Year 2. Expected progress = 12.

	Reading	Writing	Maths
<b>All (60)</b>	12.7	12.7	12.6
<b>Girls (28)</b>	12.6	12.7	12.7
<b>Boys (32)</b>	12.7	12.8	12.4

## KS1 RESULTS

Whilst we have the data for this year's Year 2 SATS results, we do not yet have comparative data for National and Hertfordshire. We have therefore included last year's national averages for comparison.

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	E	GD	E	GD	E	GD
<b>Number (30)</b>	26	9	24	6	26	10
<b>%</b>	87	30	80	20	87	33
<b>National 2017 %</b>	76	25	68	16	75	21

## PHONICS

In the National Year 1 Phonics Screening test, 90% of the cohort achieved the expected standard. National 2017 was 81%.

In Year 2, 4 of the cohort retook the phonics screening test. 75% of this cohort achieved the expected standard (3 out of 4).

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

83% of the Reception cohort achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). National 2017 was 71%.

These results have all been closely analysed by Mrs Stace, the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Board, alongside the school's assessment data for children in all the other year groups. We use this information to inform the School Development Plan as we assess what the school's Teaching and Learning priorities should be for the coming year.

## Parent Survey

Part of the governors' role is to gather and consider the views and opinions of our stakeholders, including parents and carers. Each year we ask parents to complete a survey online so that we can get a representative idea of how parents and carers are feeling about Westfield. Thank you to all of you who completed it this year. Of the 83 online responses received so far the key results are as follows:

### *Academic progress and achievement*

- 100% of you see the teaching at Westfield as good.
- 96% of you believe that the school helps you to support your children's learning;
- 96% of you think your children were making good progress at Westfield, with 80% of you feeling well informed about the progress they are making;
- 97% of you feel that your children are encouraged to work hard and do their best;

- 93% of you believe that your children get the right amount of homework.
- 95% of you think that the information linked to English and Maths given to parents and carers at the start of the year helps you to support your child's learning (e.g. Key Instant Recall facts; Non-negotiables; year group reading list; year group spellings).
- 95% of you believe your child's confidence in Maths has improved this year, with 89% of you saying that your child regularly practices multiplication and division facts at home.

### *Well being*

- 99% of you believe that your children are safe and well cared-for at Westfield and 98% of you feel that your child is happy there.
- 100% of you believe that the school promotes a healthy lifestyle to its pupils, and 100% of you think that your children are encouraged to try new activities and experiences.
- 91% of you think that Milo has had a positive impact on your child's experience of school.
- 93% of you said that Forest Schools has taught your child added respect for the environment, with 59% saying that since starting Forest Schools your child has wanted to spend more time in the outdoor environment.
- 93% believe that the school makes sure your child is well prepared for the next step in their education (e.g. changing year group, taking on responsibilities, changing schools).

### *Behaviour*

- 93% of you think behaviour at Westfield is good, and 80% feel that misbehaviour is well-managed.

### *Communications*

- 96% of you think the school communicates effectively with parents and 93% of you feel the school responds well to any concerns raised.

### *Leadership and management*

- 95% of you believe that Westfield is well led and managed.

Overall, 98% of you are happy with your child's experience at Westfield, with 92% of parents feeling that Westfield meets their needs.

We continue to be encouraged by these overwhelmingly positive results, which are broadly in-line with those from last year. Our initial review of individual comments has noted some themes, including: ensuring all children are sufficiently stretched, feedback to parents on pupil progress, views on homework and the desire for a more competitive aspect to some school activities, including sport. We will analyse these further and consider how to address as a Governing Board over the coming year.

The theme of competitive sport also came through in last year's survey, and Westfield has responded by giving children more opportunities for this, particularly in KS2. We have seen the results both in the children's enjoyment and in our sporting achievements as a school. Thank you to all of the staff and parents who have given up their valuable time to support these activities.

### **School Development Plan (SDP)**

We are pleased to report we made very good progress against the priority targets identified last year:

- **Increase the percentage of children meeting the end of year expectation in Maths across the whole school**  
This has been met, with 77% of pupils meeting the end of year expectations and 32% greater depth across the school, contrasted with figures of 70% and 30% last year respectively.

- **Majority of disadvantaged pupils to be making at least good progress from the end of each Key Stage**

This has been met with the majority of disadvantaged making at least good progress from the end of their key stage.

- **Ensure the standard of teaching and learning of the foundation subjects produces high quality outcomes in KS1 and KS2**

This year the school have invested in new planning for foundation subjects and many new resources to support the children's learning. These have had a significant impact on the teaching and learning and subsequent high quality of outcomes produced in the foundation subjects across the whole school. This was also recognised and commented on by the school's Improvement partner in the mid-year review. We will be continuing to embed these changes in the coming year.

- **Consolidate our existing robust and tight monitoring systems and further develop opportunities for sharing good practice**

Mrs Stace and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have worked hard this year to refine and embed robust and tight monitoring systems across the school. This has enabled areas of strength and development to be identified quickly and support to be put in place. There have also been many opportunities for the sharing of good practice and ensure continuing professional development for all our staff.

- **Collaborate with local schools to form the Berkhamsted Educational Trust (BET)**

We have continued to work with and support the other schools involved in setting up the BET; an update will have been sent to you this week on where we are with this.

The plan for the coming year was discussed and agreed at the beginning of July at a meeting attended by Mrs Stace, the Senior Leadership team and four of our governors. Key priority areas identified for 2018-19 are:

- Increase the percentage of children meeting and exceeding ARE in Maths across the school through embedding the improvements made in 2017-2018
- Ensuring that our teaching and learning improves children's vocabulary, questioning, reasoning and enquiry;
- Further equip our children to be more responsible members of society through the implementation of a new behaviour policy, following current best practice;
- Use the leadership structure to further develop distributed leadership and the impact of middle leaders on teaching and learning.

These goals will be honed and finalised at the start of the Autumn term.

## Sports

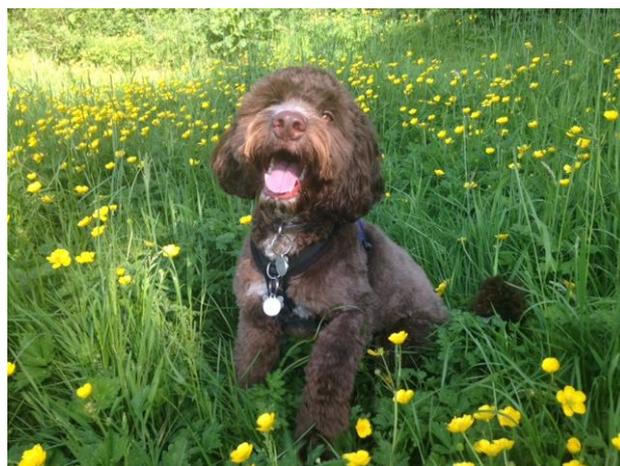


Through the Government's commitment to ensure all children lead fit and healthy lifestyles, Westfield received a Sports Premium grant of £18k for 2017/18. This has doubled from previous years due to the introduction of the sugar tax. This grant supports the enjoyment of sport and PE for all our pupils, including our continued up-

skilling of PE teaching across the school and high quality sports coaching from external providers.

## School Dog

Milo has settled in well to life at school and has been a positive addition to the Westfield community. We have been very pleased with the overwhelmingly supportive feedback we have had from the children, which has been mirrored by parent feedback from our latest survey. During the year, Milo has regularly joined in with the Daily Mile and has enjoyed lunchtime walks with KS2 children. He is showing real potential to becoming a therapy dog and the children who have spent time reading to him have said that it makes them feel happy and more confident. As he gets older and his training continues, the aim is that more children will have the opportunity to interact with him more regularly.



## Staffing in 2018-19

You should already have been informed by now of the staffing arrangements for your child's class next year.

Firstly we would like to welcome Gemma Walker who joined the office team in June. She has hit the ground running and is settling in fast to the Westfield Team. She will be covering Mrs Baxter's maternity leave from September 2018. We wish Mrs Baxter and her family all the best and look forward to welcoming her back at the end of the school year.

We would also like to welcome back Mrs McGovern, who has returned from her maternity leave and will be sharing the teaching of Reception, with Mrs Evans, on Thursdays and Fridays from September.

We are very proud to say that Mrs Huke successfully qualified as a teacher this year and will be taking up a Year 1 post at Swing Gate Infant School from September. Mrs Huke has been with the team for many years as a Teaching assistant and a school governor prior to her embarking on this new journey. She will be greatly missed by the staff, governors and children and we wish her all the best in this next exciting adventure.

Finally, we would like to say goodbye to Mrs Boothroyd who has worked closely with the current Year 6 cohort over the last few years and to Mrs Shirley for all she has contributed to Westfield. We wish them all the best as they embrace new opportunities.

Recruiting and keeping great school staff is not easy in the current environment with a general shortage of

teachers; we feel extremely fortunate to have such a strong and dedicated team here at Westfield.

### **And Finally...**

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you once again to everyone who gives up their time for the school, either by supporting children with reading, helping teachers with admin, supporting on school trips or donating gifts, money and time to the school. In particular we would like to give a gigantic thank you to the W1SPA team who have worked incredibly hard over the year to raise a possibly record-breaking £20,608 for the school! The money raised by the team with help from parents, carers and the children makes a huge difference to the school through providing much-needed resources and equipment and contributing towards enrichment activities such as school trips and workshops.

The Governors would like to wish you a very happy Summer holiday. If you would like to get in touch, or would like to find out more about any of the items in this newsletter, we would love to hear from you. Please email us at [governors@westfieldprimary.herts.sch.uk](mailto:governors@westfieldprimary.herts.sch.uk).