

Whitehall Park School Governor's Newsletter

Report from Whitehall Park Governing Body : SUMMER TERM 2017

Dear parents, carers and members of the community,

This has been a busy term for the Governing Body and whole school community. The term began with our first Ofsted inspection, one component of which is the school's governance arrangements. I'm sure that all of you are very proud of recognition that Ofsted has given of the progress that we have made at Whitehall Park School. I can see the tremendous contributions from the staff team, the pupils, the parents and the community in the Ofsted report.

Our first Ofsted inspection is an important milestone for the school, but we see it as a milestone along our journey to develop a school that combines the best of the state and independent sectors, not a destination. This term, the governing body has been working with the school leadership team to assess our progress as a school and draft our School Development and Evaluation Plan (SDE) for next year. The SDE, which we produce every Summer term, guides everything that we do as a school across the year. We've also worked with the school team to update the Home-School Agreement based on our first three years of experience as a school.

The GB meets twice a term. In May, the GB focussed on amongst other things on the outcome of the Ofsted inspection, Safeguarding, the 2017-18 Budget, the staffing structure for the 2017-18 academic year, reviewing key policies and progress resolving outstanding issues with the school site. In July, the GB focussed on extended schools provision and the Headteacher's Termly report, including examination of key data on educational outcomes which are very positive. The GB as part of their development programme received a very informative presentation from Jo Fynaut (Teacher) on the planned Year 3 curriculum in September.

One key part of the July meeting was reviewing parent feedback from the BPET parent survey. Parent Surveys are a key way for us to understand the needs and concerns of the community. Thank you to everyone who completed this.

Our work extends outside of these main governing body meetings. Our education committee meets termly and focuses on Teaching and learning at WPS as well as areas such as Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs provision. Our finance committee reviewed and approved the 2017-18 budget and worked with the school team to ensure that the budget can support the school's staffing strategy. We also regularly visit the school. I visited the school in May to better understand how the school is implementing the Thinking Schools programme and discuss the curriculum more broadly. Other Governors undertake a rolling programme of link visits and learning walks for their areas of responsibility. In the summer term these included Literacy across all Year Groups, pupil attainment and achievement, and pupil attendance.

Finally, I'd like to update you on changes in the governing body. Whitehall Park School has a skills-based governing body, where we work ensure that the Governing Body has the right breadth of professional skills to support and challenge the school. To that end, Thom Wyld, a principal planning officer in the Borough of Barnet and a parent of children in Year 2 and Reception, has served on the Governing Body as an Associate Governor for the last two years. The Governing Body has benefited tremendously from his expertise in helping to lead us through the process of building our new building. Now that the building is complete, I'd like to ask you to join me in thanking Thom for his contribution. Meanwhile, I'd also ask you to join me in welcoming Linda Trapnell to the Governing Body as a community governor. Linda has a remarkably strong background in education as a teacher for 45 years across all phases of education, mainly in inner city settings. She managed Early Years settings from scratch including project managing the building work. For 10 years, she was a Primary Head Teacher and since 2002 has operated as an independent consultant. She developed an interest in Thinking Skills and has become a recognised expert in the field. She is the "expert" on Governance for a Hotseat session in an online course Leading in Independent Schools (LIS), which is Nationally recognised.

PAUL DOMJAN, CHAIR OF GOVERNING BODY