



Governor Newsletter

Issue 3 April 2016

Hello and welcome to this the third Governor's Newsletter, I hope you find the contents informative. Last year was, as always, a very active year for governors, dominated, of course, by the search for a new headteacher following the retirement of Mr Pearson.

Our intention was to have a new head in post by September of last year and hopes were high as the advert was placed on the County Council website. Sadly the response was not as high as we had hoped and we decided that it would be in the best interests of the school to wait a few weeks before we tried again.

Miss Prodger was asked if she would be willing to temporarily take on the role of head, assisted by Mrs Hewes as deputy. Both agreed to step up to the new roles and I'm sure you will agree that they have carried out the task both confidently and professionally.

The new advert was somewhat more successful and following shortlisting in December a two day selection process took place in late January. This resulted in the successful selection of Mr Peter Taylor, who is currently head of Larkfields Junior School in Nuthall. Peter's selection was ratified by the full board of governors and by the time you receive this newsletter he will be in place.

Whilst no governor has stepped down over the past year we have been joined by three new parent governors, Mrs Kirsten Rawson, Mrs Juliette Sunderland and Mr Simon Atkinson, all three have very quickly become active and valuable members. I have been a governor at BHPS for over 20 years and I truly believe that the current board is one of the strongest we have had during that period.

Finally I would also like to put on record our sincere thanks to the PTA who work tirelessly to raise funds for various projects around the school. We have always benefited from an active PTA at BHPS and the current team is no exception, the school is very lucky to have such a devoted group assisting it.

Richard Knightsbridge - Chair of Governors.

Governors at Parents Evening – by Cate Ross-Wadell

During Parents Evening week I was able to be on the main door, welcoming parents and checking if they knew where their child's teacher was based. I really enjoyed meeting parents and having a short chat to them as I showed them where to go. I introduced myself as a governor and had very positive feedback. Many parents said that they didn't know who the governors were and that it was good to put a face to a name. Some commented too that they appreciated the Governor newsletter.

We want to get to know parents and be available to chat about any aspect of school life.

It was a positive experience for me and this is something the governors will now do on Parent Evenings.

Funding for Schools

The Minister for Education is consulting on changes to the way the government currently provides funding for schools. The present system is made up of a number of factors, based mainly on an amount of money per pupil and various sums linked to individual pupil and school needs. This money is paid to the local authority who then pass (most) of this on to the school after taking out a percentage for administration etc. The amount passed on varies by area but currently Nottinghamshire is one of the better authorities.

By far the largest sum is the per pupil allocation which, surprisingly, is not a national figure but one historically based on location in the UK. This can mean that some local authorities, and hence schools, receive significantly less than others.

Nottinghamshire has always been in the lower allocation bracket and as a result our school receives less per pupil than an equivalent school in, for instance, Hertfordshire and significantly less than in many parts of London. This has been a thorn in the side of a number of local authorities for some years now and although an attempt was made some 3/4 years ago to address the problem, nothing really changed.

However, it would appear that the present government has finally recognised this inequality and has made some positive proposals (without specifics!) to address this thorny issue and is proposing to implement changes to local authority education funding from 2017/18. In addition, from 2019/20, the proposals are that funding will be paid direct to schools, so cutting out the local authority altogether; presumably this is intended to link in with the move toward academies due at the same time.

Governors would argue that any change to the present system can only be to the benefit of BHPS and Nottinghamshire in general, time will tell.

Governor Week – by Juliette Sunderland

Twice a year the school has Governor week when the Governors are invited into school to attend classes, run assemblies and to take an active part in the school. This term Governor Week was w/c 21st March. I was present at school during the week and attended the Lower Junior show which I can wholeheartedly say was excellent, despite there been a huge amount of children off sick. The children and teachers put a lot of effort into the show and it was enjoyed by many of the parents through 3 separate performances.

I undertook spelling tests in 1W and also helped with the reading in F2F as I am the Link Governor for Foundation. The children are great fun and always super behaved when you go in to visit. I have much respect for the teachers who managed incredibly well, despite the increase in class size and constant curriculum changes.

Other Governors attended Rainbow Grammar, took maths sessions and interviewed pupils. We hope that it was a positive experience for the pupils and teachers alike.

Other News

The school is working closely with the PTA to fundraise to improve the playground area over the next 2/3 years. Any donations or ideas on how to raise the money are always gratefully received by the school & the PTA.

The budget has been set for this year and although it's been tight we have been able remain in the black, due in no small part to additional pupil numbers. This will be debated at the next finance meeting. The Minister for Education is looking at the current unfair system school of funding which gives some areas much more money per pupil than others. As Nottinghamshire is in the lowest funding group this review can only be to our advantage. Fingers crossed!

Academy Status

Readers of previous newsletters will be aware that governors have periodically visited the topic of academy status and on each occasion felt that the school had little to gain by taking this important step. Although little has changed to make us wish to alter this decision, you will, I'm sure, be aware that the government has recently announced that all schools will become academies over the next 2/3 years.

Although we have yet to receive any information from the government, this announcement would appear to effectively change the 'should we or shouldn't we' decision to one of 'what type of academy do we wish to be'. Over the next few months governors will be investigating the various options open to us and taking

this important step only when we feel the time is right for the school and our children. We will, of course, make parents and carers aware of our decision before any action is taken.

Brightening up the school

We are acutely aware that our school is beginning to look a little 'tired' particularly around the entrance to the reception area. Funding for this type of project has been, and continues to be, very tight and so we would welcome any inexpensive suggestions that you may have as to what can be done. I can't promise that we will take up your suggestions but we will certainly view them seriously.

Who are the Governing Body at BHPS?

As its been 2 years since this was updated we felt it was important to send out an updated version.

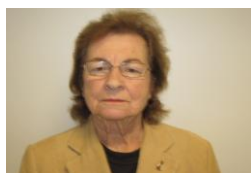


Richard Knightsbridge - Chair of Governing Body

Link Roles: Creative Arts

I have been a Governor since 1995 and have been Chair for the past 9 years. In addition to attending regular in-school meetings I often attend assemblies, school council meetings and help coach the school cricket teams. I live locally and am now semi-retired. My wife was a long serving staff member and both my daughters are

past pupils.



Margaret Summerfield - Vice Chair of Governing Body

Link Roles: Safeguarding, SEND, LAC and Year 1

I am Vice-Chair of Governors - a retired teacher with experience of primary, secondary and tertiary education. I have been governor for nearly 17 years. My main interest is as Chair of the Pupils and Personnel Committee which deals mainly with staffing and pupil issues. I am proud to be able to contribute to the work of this outstanding school.



David Watts

Link Roles: Year 4

I was originally elected as a parent governor and then co-opted after my term as a parent governor finished. I have a daughter (Molly) at the school and my older daughter also came here before moving on to Bramcote School when she reached year 7. My wife Gill is chair of the PTA. I am a solicitor working in Nottingham and was

previously a Borough Councilor on Broxtowe Borough Council.



Cate Ross-Waddell

Link Roles: Year 5, Music and Foreign Languages and Eco

I am a part-time lecturer in German at Nottingham Trent University and my three children all attended BHPS. I enjoy contributing to the life of this excellent school.



Sue Headland

Link Roles: Member of Staff

I have a son in Year 5 and daughter in Year 3. I work at the school as a Teaching Assistant in Year 4 and was asked to remain as a Co-opted governor at the end of a 4 year period as a parent governor.

I bring both a parents' perspective to the role of Governor but also that of a member of the staff team. I feel my previous career in Human Resources gives me good consultation, reconciliation and listening skills. I have worked on a number of working parties whilst on the Governing Body and bring my commitment, organisation and communication skills to the team.



Ty Yousef

Link Roles: PE and Sport

I passionately believe that good education is vital to children's future prospects and I am supporting BHP to ensure children are being helped to achieve to the best of their abilities. I have a background in child protection work and service improvement work. I am a father of three children.

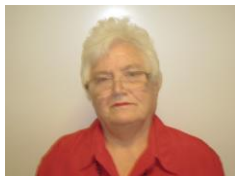
Pete Whyard



Link Roles: Member of staff

I have been a teacher at BHPS since January 2004 and am currently teaching in Year 6. I manage the athletics club and occasionally referee home football matches. In school my responsibilities include Assessment coordinator, D&T coordinator and taking a lead on Enterprise.

Eileen Atherton



Link Roles: Year 2

Before I left work to have children I was the Secretary to a Partner in a firm of Solicitors in Nottingham. After having my eldest daughter I left that employment and for 34 years from 1968 to 2002 I was the Licensee of an Off License in Central Avenue Beeston. I am Secretary of the Beeston & District Civic Society from October 2003 and was elected a Member of Broxtowe Borough Council for the Chilwell West Ward in May 2007, 2011 and 2015.

Michelle Whiley



Link Roles: Member of staff

I have been working at BHPS for over 17 years and currently work in Year 6 and have various roles within school. I am involved in organising sporting events that take place, support the ICT coordinator and help manage any playtime conflicts and resolution needed in school that involves organising the playtime crazes. I also work for the City Council undertaking a Play and Youth Worker role.

Yael Meier



Link Roles: English and Closing the Gap

I was elected as a parent governor in 2012 and shortly after became Chair of the Strategic Development Committee. I currently have a son in FS2 and my daughter has just left BHPS to go to secondary school.

As a primary school teacher, I have extensive experience across both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. I bring this experience with me as a governor at BHPS, and it places me in a good position to understand the school data and assessment protocols – allowing me to both question and support new and existing initiatives within the school. I am fully committed to support the governing body and the school to continue to develop and build a better BHPS, so that our children carry on being afforded the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Nick Grayling



Link Roles: Governor Training and H&S

I am an ex-pupil of the school with a daughter in Year 5. I want to make sure each decision is right for the children and that we are fit for purpose.

Juliette Sunderland



Link Roles: Foundation

At present I am a full time parent to my two daughters who are currently in Year 1 & 3. Up until I stopped working I was employed in local Government for 8 years as a Project Officer for the Supporting Local Communities programme and have knowledge in conservation, heritage and interpretation as well as community liaison. I was also previously a Product Manager for several well-known companies in Nottingham and have an academic background in business and marketing. As well as my role as a parent Governor I am also a Trustee of a local heritage project in Beeston Rylands, which has secured heritage lottery funding.



Kirsten Rawson

Link Roles: Year 3

I have a daughter in year 5 and another starting school in September 2016. My current role is as an IT advisor for the Education Funding Agency working on the Priority Schools Building Programme. Previous professional roles have provided me with experience in managing people and managing buildings, and all the associated tasks this brings such as appraising staff, managing projects (IT, building and change related), ensuring budgets are set and buildings managed safely and efficiently. Until last year, I had been involved in Scouting for 25 years.



Simon Atkinson

Link Roles: ICT and Science

I have a son who has now left BHPS and a daughter in year 3, I want to ensure that the school provides the best education possible for our children. I have a background in IT as both a software developer and a business analyst. I also have a keen interest in education and learning and am currently studying for an MA degree in Education.



Roger Spowage

Link Roles: Maths

I have been involved at BHPS for around 18 years. I have had four boys go through the school with the last one leaving in 2010. I was Treasurer of the PTA for about 13 years and when I decided to step down Mr Pearson asked if I would like to continue my involvement with the school. I am keen to see everyone involved with the school do well and the school to continue to be a valuable part of the local community. I run a small business in the area and like to try and provide some advice and input in connection with the school's finances.



Sue Clarke

Link Roles: Member of staff – School SENCO and Year 3 class teacher

I have served school as a Governor for 9 years and, previously to that, was the Teacher Representative on the Finance and General Purpose Committee for 15 years. I currently serve as a committee member on P&P committee, updating Governors on issues related to Special Educational Needs.

What is a Governing Body?

For new parents and those who just need reminding we have compiled this easy guide to understand the role of a Governor within BHPS

The Governing Body is made up of volunteers who are passionate about the education of the children at our school. It plays an important role in the strategic management of the school and in shaping the ethos.

School Governors are drawn from different parts of the community and can be parents, staff, co-opted from the community or nominated from the Local Authority. BHPS has 16 members on their Governing Body and they each take on different responsibilities for monitoring the school's progress and holding the schools' leadership to account.

Why Do We Have One?

The Governing Body has a wide range of duties and powers with a view to promoting the high standards of educational achievement. Its responsibilities include:

- Helping to establish the aims and policies of the school
- Working to raise standards
- Supporting the Head Teacher and staff
- Making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based
- Appointing staff
- Managing the budget

Vacancies

None at present but if you are interested please contact the office.

How to Contact Us

We always like to hear parents' views on the school so please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Chair via the school office. There is further information on the Governing Body and our roles on the school website www.bramcotehills.org.

Our Committees

We currently have the following sub-committees and these meet twice every term:

Finance & General Purpose – budgets, finances, health & safety and premises management

Pupils and Personnel – staff appointments and performance, safeguarding, special educational needs, attendance and behaviour, parental issues and concerns, equality issues and inclusion

Strategic Development – pupil attainment and progress, curriculum development & monitoring, school improvement planning and inspection outcomes.

What we DON'T Do

Write school policies

Undertake audits

Spend much time with pupils

Fundraise

Judge quality of teaching

Do the job of the school staff

We hope that this newsletter has been informative and useful. Please don't hesitate to give us feedback or ask questions. Just contact the office at school and they will put you in touch directly with an appropriate Governor: office@bramcotehills.notts.sch.uk