



GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER



Yenton Primary School

Issue No. 1

19 October 2017

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Chair's Message

Welcome to the first edition of the Yenton School Governors' Newsletter.

It is our intention to circulate a newsletter each term so we can keep you up to date with changes that affect the school, report on what we have been up to, the impact for the school, and what our plans are for the future.

Since taking over as Chair of Governors in September 2016, it has been an absolute pleasure to observe the good progress of our pupils and the positive atmosphere within the school. I am pleased to say that I have been re-elected to Chair the Governing Board for another year. I will continue to ensure that the governors, working alongside the staff, will strive to ensure that our children have the best educational experience possible.

As most of you will know, Yenton has been receiving Leadership support from Mr Smith (Acting Headteacher) and Mr Taylor (Acting Executive Headteacher) who work for Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust (MAT) based in Hall Green. Since September last year, a number of initiatives and strategies have been implemented throughout the school. Those of you who have attended the various Parent Presentations we held last year, will be aware that the school has carried out a coaching cycle for staff, introduced a new behaviour policy and implemented new teaching strategies such as Talk for Writing, cursive handwriting, Cornerstones curriculum and maths reasoning and problem solving. All of these initiatives are aimed at developing our children's oracy, writing, verbal reasoning and mathematical skills, whilst ensuring their exposure to a broader curriculum which allows them try out new and creative activities.

Teaching demands exceptional delivery and skills to ensure that all of our children reach their potential. Over the past year, it has been an eye opener to me to realise what is expected of staff involved in teaching and learning. We are fortunate to have a very motivated and committed staff group at Yenton, who have taken on board the new initiatives and have worked hard to ensure that they are implemented across all our year groups. The Governing Board has agreed that we will continue to work with Robin Hood MAT for the time

being, to ensure stability within the Senior Leadership Team and that the new initiatives introduced in school are fully embedded to deliver positive outcomes for our children.

We are already seeing positive progress in our results and school data and we will continue to address and monitor those areas which require further improvement. In September, the school underwent its third external review in 12 months. We were really pleased to hear that in their opinion the senior leaders and governors are providing stability and clear and positive direction across the school and that leaders and staff are focusing on the right priorities to secure further academic improvement.

As we await Ofsted any day now, I feel confident that the changes implemented by the school's Senior Leadership and all of our staff will be positively recognised.

However, despite having great teachers our success is not all down to the staff. Yenton is lucky to have curious and creative children who embrace learning, are motivated and keen to learn. Whenever I am in school, the children love to show off their work and tell me about what they have been learning. It is lovely to see and listen to such confident and creative children. I don't remember being so confident when I was their age – but then it was a long time ago!

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank parents and families who have shown outstanding support over the past year, supporting children with their learning at home, attending assemblies, parents' evenings and inspire workshops. Ensuring our children receive the best education is very much a partnership approach between the school and home. I would urge you all to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time.

Finally, a huge thank you to the governors who give up their spare time with such enthusiasm and good spirit!

Vicki Popplewell

In case you were wondering - what do Governors do?

Long gone are the days where governors would spend their time discussing school uniform colours and logos, or raising funds. Governing Boards now have a serious job to do. We have: 'a statutory obligation for ensuring the school is operating effectively and in line with legislative and educational requirements'.

This means doing three things:

- acting strategically;
- being accountable to stakeholders (that's you); and
- ensuring financial probity.

As school governors we are responsible for setting the vision and strategic direction of Yenton Primary. We hold Mr Smith to account for how well pupils achieve and progress educationally, and for the quality of teaching. We also oversee how the school spends its money, making sure the school stays in budget and receives value for money. I would stress that although we have been doing our best to manage resources to ensure that Yenton stays in budget, school costs are rising faster than any budget increases we receive. We need to ensure that we manage the money coming into school against our outgoings and this may mean making some hard decisions in future years. We will keep you posted.

Our duties also include overseeing the welfare of the children and managing the buildings. Most decisions are taken at Full Governing Board meetings (held four times per year) but some of the work is delegated to two subcommittees:

Curriculum and Standards Committee (Chaired by Ruth Dillon) meets four times per year and its responsibilities include the curriculum, reviewing assessment data, quality of teaching, Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs.

Finance and Resources Committee (Chaired by Madeline Woodcock) meets four times per year and its responsibilities are for finance, premises, health and safety and personnel.

In addition to being committee members, governors take on roles linked to specific subjects or school functions and are expected to come into school each term to monitor progress. For this academic year these include:

- Safeguarding
- Governors Skills and Training
- Parental Engagement
- Pupil Premium
- SEND
- Curriculum
- British Values and Diversity

Each governor is a volunteer and is expected to dedicate between 10 and 20 days per year to the running of the school. Yenton Primary has been particularly successful in recruiting a team of dedicated governors. We provide support and advice where possible, but at the same time leave Mr Smith and his team to get on with the day-to-day running of the school.

Our School Vision

A Yenton child will be a successful, caring and creative citizen; who will know how to make sensible choices, to stay safe and healthy; have respect for themselves and others; be a confident, and inquisitive learner; who will strive to achieve high standards and always aspire to be their 'best self' in all they do.

To enable us to fulfil our Vision for a Yenton child, we will ensure:

- Every child feels valued and receives the same opportunities to succeed.
- We install self-belief in all children, so that they know they are capable of doing amazing things.
- We promote an enjoyment of learning across the whole school, so every child can fulfil their academic potential.
- We will help our children to develop the independent learning and the self-reliance skills they will need in secondary education and to ensure lifelong success.
- We foster self-confidence and aim to give children achievable aspirations for life.
- We promote good attendance at school.
- We provide a safe, caring and happy environment.
- That each child takes pride in their own achievements and those of others.
- We create a strong partnership between home, school and the wider community.

Our motto: "Our best always"

Last year we updated our school vision and this was presented at the Parent Presentations last June. Our vision is the school's collective understanding of what we want to achieve for our all of children. This reflects not just their academic achievement but teaching our children how to stay safe, to respect one another and preparing them for life beyond primary school.

We have recently published our Governing Board Impact Statement which sets out how we have fulfilled our responsibilities. This enables us to demonstrate our accountability to families involved in the school. You can download a copy of the Impact Statement on the school's website

<http://www.yenton.bham.sch.uk/pdfs/governor-impact.pdf>

During this autumn term the Governing Board will focus on the implementation of the plans that were approved in the summer term and ensure that the priorities in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) are being carried out, making sure that the staff's objectives and interventions are set and aligned with those priorities. We will also be setting out the school's strategic plan for the next 3-5 years.

To ensure that priorities and actions identified in the school improvement plans are implemented, governors will be in school throughout the year to monitor and evaluate their impacts. At the first Full Governing Board meeting of the new academic year we discussed and set out four new areas for impact. The focus for this is based on what has happened over the previous school year.

For the academic year 2017/18 the areas for focus are:

- Monitoring of Pupil Premium spend and pupil outcomes – to ensure effective use of Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning
- Monitoring of targeted interventions for SEND pupils across the school to check progress and impact.
- Monitoring the implementation and impact of new curriculum initiatives e.g. Cornerstones, Talk for Writing and cursive writing.
- Monitor the implementation of British Values and diversity through the school and curriculum – including teaching, resources and pupils' work.

As a Governing Board we will continue to undertake a continuous process of review, covering pupil progress, attendance, staff development, school finances and of our own performance.

Building Works Update

All building works to expand the school to 3 form entry have been completed and new classrooms are ready for when the current Key Stage 1 children move into Key Stage 2. Our school is 60 years old and we are constantly working to improve the school's building and its environment. Over recent years we have installed double glazed windows, redecorated the corridors, reception and most classrooms, installed new flooring and lighting and astro turf to the KS1 playground. The whole school was insulated and re-roofed last summer.

We would love to do more – particularly to our main playground – but unfortunately our finances restrict this. We will continue to look at how we can improve the school's environment and its building by exploring other funding sources.

If you require any further information on the Governing Board, please visit the school's website
<http://www.yenton.bham.sch.uk/governors.htm>

And finally.....

Parent Engagement

Governors welcome your feedback and comments.

Elaine Jackson is our Parent Engagement Governor and will be attending Parents' Evening on 1st November so please feel free to have a chat with her. She usually stands in the main reception by a whiteboard, with post-it notes for your written comments.

We will be conducting a Parent Survey and the school will be sending out details via school text message before half term—please complete the survey. All comments will be fed back to the Governing Board at its meeting on 15th November.

Whilst we welcome your comments and feedback, please remember that we do not get involved in the day-to-day running of the school. If you have a question about your child or about day-to-day issues in school, please speak to your child's teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team who are always on the school gates.

Parent Elections

We will be seeking elections for a Parent Governor from January 2018. A letter will be sent out with full details in late November.

School Funding

As you are no doubt aware from the press over the past few months, schools are facing real-terms cuts to their budgets. Some 361 out of 376 Birmingham schools are affected, including Yenton.

The following web site allows you to look at the effect of funding proposals on individual schools :

<http://www.schoolcuts.org.uk>



email: enquiry@yenton.bham.sch.uk



web: www.yenton.bham.sch.uk



twitter: [www.twitter.com/Yenton Primary](https://www.twitter.com/Yenton_Primary)