

Governor update

SpringTerm 2018

Chair of Governors — Vic Parker

I don't know about your kids, but our two are shattered so this Easter break couldn't have come any earlier.



I've really enjoyed this term as a Governor. I've continued my fortnightly meetings with Mrs Laver and it's been wonderful to see her settle so quickly in her new role. Our LLP agreed with this sentiment during his visit at the end of Jan'18, which you will be able to read about later.

Sally Wesley & I also had the opportunity to join the leadership team & staff at Sparsholt's Vision & Values Day, held during the February Inset Day. It was a brilliant reminder how special Sparsholt is, how passionate our staff are and how excited I am about the direction that Mrs Laver will be leading our school in the future. You'll hear more about this after half term.

Governors have been regularly visiting the school and reviewing the school improvement priorities that they are linked with. Governors are also involved in the new Data Protection Regulations as well as reviewing Health & Safety policies... And at our most recent meeting, still made it look interesting!

Personally, I'm really passionate about making progress in Spring & Summer against our Governance Improvement Priorities – the governance priorities the Governing Body has identified to ensure we are as Outstanding as our School.

Wishing you all a wonderful Easter break, *Vic*

Thank you and Good Bye

This term, Sparsholt said goodbye to Mr Lamb and Mrs Vincent.

The governors would like to thank them both for all the passion, energy and inspiration that they gave to the children. They will be hugely missed.

Local Authority Visit – Katy Cobbold

Every year, all schools have a visit from their Local Learning Partner to do a 'health check' or audit on the school. Our LLP, Andy Yeoman conducted his annual visit to Sparsholt in January.

Overall his feedback was very positive, with highlights being :

- The Leadership team **really** know the school and there is no complacency
- The general feel of the school is positive and professional
- There are some very strong outcomes – the overall data shows Sparsholt is above average nationally, county wide and above average in the Winchester district
- The children seem to have a real sense of pride in the school
- Governors have a very good involvement and the monitoring is excellent

Andy also highlighted that the school can work towards increasing greater depth across the curriculum which is in line with the School Improvement Plan that Mrs Laver initiated in the Autumn Term.

Andy will be working with us over the course of the year to ensure that we remain focussed on continuing to be outstanding.

Well done everyone!

Data Protection — Helen Ley

Many of you will be aware of the new EU regulations regarding holding personal data which come into effect on 25th May 2018. The school currently holds and controls a variety of personal data (names, addresses, dates of birth etc) – required and lawfully held under various school governance laws and regulations.

Miss Sheppeck has worked incredibly hard and carried out a thorough review of the types of personal data held to ensure the school adheres to these regulations.

As part of this process, coming out in book bags this week, will be letters to all families, outlining some categories of personal data which is subject to parental consent for the school to retain, and seeking consent to continue to hold it.

Please do not ignore this letter and return the appropriate slip as required. Thank you.

Parent Survey - Matt Stagg

Thanks again to all who completed the parent survey in the Autumn term. Below is an update of further actions that we have taken,

You Said: You needed more information about how parents can support their child's learning through the VLE

Our Response: Miss Sheppeck delivered a VLE training/insight session for parents on 22nd February and is planning on delivering this once a term. All parents welcome.

You Said: You would like more information about how school effectively deals with bullying.

Our Response: The schools anti-bullying and support approach is delivered to the children a minimum of once a week through worship and direct communication with children when required. Mrs Laver will also be delivering an insight into the schools approach to bullying at the start of the Greater Depth in Maths session on 3rd May. All parents welcome.

You Said: You would like your child to be encouraged by school to contribute to the wider community.

Our Response: We had a great visit from Rabbi Zvi on 9th March where the children were introduced to a range of cultural experiences associated with the Jewish faith, ranging from food to laws. We are still planning the visit to St Mary's Southampton and a Hampshire based mosque.

You Said: You want to learn more about your child's progress.

Our Response: Our programme of "strategies for parents" kicked off with a Greater Depth in Reading session on 1st February and was well attended. We will be holding a Greater Depth in Maths session on 3rd May. All parents welcome.

Health and Safety Update – Ceri Baber

Having started the role of Health and Safety Governor in December I have now been to several full governing body meetings. These have been both interesting and illuminating, particularly in highlighting the commitment given by the management team to the school.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rob Ainsworth, the outgoing H&S governor, for his hand over and Miss Sheppeck for guiding me around the school and answering my many questions.

Several major H&S policies have recently come up for review in the policy cycle. Time has been spent using the many resources available to confirm that we are covering all the mandatory information within these policies and that they are being implemented as intended. Again Miss Sheppeck has freely given her time in showing me how these policies are put into place on the ground. It was great to see that the various manuals are in good order. They include a wealth of documents such as staff induction and training, equipment safety and maintenance checks and contact lists.

Certainly what was more impressive was that I felt that these policies had real impact and were not just box ticking exercises.

The hefty fire manual was a good example of this, where it became obvious that each fire drill that the school carries out is used as a learning exercise. Miss Sheppeck thinks carefully about the frequency of fire drills - enough to give the children practice but not enough that they become complacent. She is also careful to hold them at different times of the day in order to catch classes in different situations.

The success of each drill is then noted and changes made to procedure if necessary. I hope that you will find this as reassuring as I have in that our children's safety is being carefully considered.

Ceri

Finance - Dan Parsons

In the December Governor's Newsletter, I provided a short update on the way that primary schools such as ours will get funded through the National Funding Formula, the implementation of which is still planned for later this year. This will bring further pressures to our school's already delicate budget. Despite some very generous recent donations, in the financial year that's just ending the school ran at a deficit, spending £17,000 more than we received from the Department of Education (DoE).

This deficit was largely a result of a significant and unexpected drop in the funding received in from the DoE (the 'budget share') but also some unexpected costs from things like the newly imposed Apprentice Levy and increased use of supply teachers to cover staff training. As a team of experienced Governors, we've worked closely with Mrs Laver and Miss Sheppeck to bring this deficit down considerably over the next couple of years.

Given this financial position, I would like to bring to your attention that at one point this year, almost £4,000 was owed to the school by parents. This was money due in for lunches eaten and uniforms collected, as well as participation in the After School Kids Club and various other after school paid clubs and activities.

Our children are extremely lucky to have all the support and facilities on offer. Thankfully this figure has come down a bit but can I ask any parent or guardian who owes the school money to speak to Mrs Laver or Miss Sheppeck about payment. Failure to receive in the money owed may jeopardise the school's ability to lay on these fantastic facilities and continue to hire the very best staff.

With thanks, Chair of the Finance & Staffing Governor Committee.

Dan