

Governors' Newsletter

Autumn Term 2014

Key Priorities

The school priorities for this year reflect feedback from last term's Ofsted report, analysis of last term's SAT results at KS1 and KS2 and ongoing school concerns. They are:

- to make further improvements to the quality of provision within the EYFS;
- to establish the new national curriculum in KS1 and KS2.
- to develop the role of phase leaders to support high quality of teaching and learning and ensure outstanding practice is disseminated;
- to continue to develop effective strategies to increase parental engagement especially hard to reach and underperforming groups:
- to increase the number of pupils eligible for pupil premium performing above expectations in reading, writing and maths;
- to narrow the gap between boys and girls in writing;
- to work towards accreditation for Rights Respecting Schools Level 1;
- to improve movement around the school and calm play in the playgrounds,

Progress towards these priorities and other school issues are monitored by governors at committee level and by regular reports to the full Governing Body at their meetings each half term. The newsletter next term will update you on how some of these school priorities are progressing.

Articulating whole school values or 'ethos'

A key event this year, will be the creation of a 'shared vision' on our next inset day – Monday January 5th. Staff, governors and a cross section of the parent community will take part in a session to develop a shared set of values or an 'ethos' that will drive and inform the work of the school. Parents are invited for the first session of the day when the values will be discussed and voted on. Teaching staff will spend the rest of the day looking at how these values might be reflected in teaching and learning, in and out of the classroom. If implemented properly, we believe the shared vision will articulate what it is we most value as a school community and contribute to continued school improvement. If you are interested in taking part on January 5th and have yet to contact us please let the school office know asap and/or email Mike Yule mikeyule360@gmail.com

Learning and Achievement Committee

The detailed results of last summer's SATs have now been published. Pupils sit these tests in Year 2 (known as Key Stage 1 SATs) and in Year 6 (Key Stage 2 SATs). The results provide a very positive picture both in terms of overall attainment (the levels they reach) and progress. Particular strengths in KS1 last year include:

- reading and writing both at expected and higher levels;
- increased number of pupils reaching higher level maths;
- improvement in special educational needs attainment.

In KS2 strengths included:

- attainment in all subjects at expected and higher levels;
- a narrowing of the gap between pupil premium pupils and their peers at expected levels of attainment in reading, writing and maths;
- the progress our pupils make as they go through the school.

Areas to develop include:

- Attainment of children with English as an additional language in KS1 (maths) and KS2 (higher level reading);
- Attainment of Black African children in all subjects at KS1 and in higher level attainment and progress through the school;
- Closing the gap between pupil premium pupils and their peers at the higher levels of attainment in KS1 and KS2.

We were also pleased to note the big improvements in results in nursery and reception from the previous year. We congratulate the pupils and the staff across the school for all their hard work and effort.

One of the key aims of the learning and achievement committee is to encourage the school to be strategic in its use of resources, to ensure those pupils who are most in need of support actually get it. We are pleased that pupils eligible for additional Pupil Premium funding are closing the gap with their peers in terms of expected levels of attainment. We see it as a key goal of the school that children, irrespective of home circumstances, should progress quickly, attain highly and have the highest expectations of themselves. It is our job to hold the school to account on this basis.

More importantly, perhaps, than the historical data is our scrutiny of the current targets across the school and progress in the Autumn term which allows us to keep on top of any class based issues as they arise. We are pleased to report that classes have started the year well, that issues in need of attention have been identified and that interventions and support are in place where needed.

This term, the Learning and Achievement Committee has also scrutinised the provision of PE across the school and have challenged the school to improve outcomes for swimming, a key life skill which all children should be able to do competently by the time they leave Brookfield. We have also agreed a new Maths calculation policy and have asked the school to look at how to further develop languages provision in future years. We have also been working closely with the senior leadership team (SLT) to develop even more effective professional development for staff. This includes teachers working together and observing one another, phase leaders modeling high quality teaching and giving feedback to their class teachers, visits to other schools and evaluating the impact of these practices.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee this term have focused on ensuring that the plans for the year incorporate all of the elements of expenditure which are important to

delivering the School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities. These include an additional bridge in the Infants playground and developing the EYFS outdoor areas in line with Ofsted recommendations. In addition the Committee also agreed the funding of additional learning resources including further guided reading and library books and twenty ipads.

The School has also agreed with Camden that we will take the cleaning service in house from January 2015. The cost of this is broadly comparable but more importantly we hope that by running it ourselves, this will result in a better level of service. This will also mean we will have an additional 5+ members of staff.

Finally, all of the members of the Finance Committee would like to thank Cee for her continued level of hard work and support.

Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing Committee

This has been another busy term for the Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing committee (PSWB) as rigorous monitoring of many aspects of school life continues. Pupil behaviour has been an area of particular concern with an increase in the number of recorded incidents of unacceptable behaviour and exclusions. Although serious behavioural incidents relate to a very small number of children, we are all aware that the impact on other pupils can be considerable. We have noted a slight increase in the number of racist and/or homophobic incidents. It is not yet clear whether this increase is a result of more rigorous reporting and recording or other issues. It is heartening to note though, that a number of reports have come from other children which reflects other pupils' commitment to Brookfield's values of respect and inclusiveness. All these incidents are carefully recorded and addressed by the staff with early parental involvement and governors continue to monitor.

The committee also addresses a number of staffing issues. We are pleased to note the number of new staff settling well and working effectively with a good uptake of the many opportunities for continuing professional development. This can only enhance the quality of teaching and learning and contribute to the wellbeing of staff and pupils alike.

Premises Committee

The committee voted for the school to explore the opportunity behind the Healthy School Streets scheme, a Transport For London funded programme designed to increase the number of people walking or cycling to school. The school has been informed recently that it has been successful in this application and that a consultation process will begin in January designed to improve the school's accessibility to cyclists and walkers.

Governor Drop In Session

In line with the Governor policy to encourage parental engagement we conducted a Governor Drop in session on the 16th October in this session parent and carers raised issues including mixed classes, EYFS provisions, suggestion boxes and the treatment of racist incidences. Minutes of the meeting and responses to the issues

raised are included in the Governor segment of the website. A suggestions box is available in reception for any comments you may have - positive ones also welcome!

Ambassadors

During this last term, the school has sought to publicise the role of Ambassadors; parents linked to those parts of the Brookfield community that have traditionally been less involved in school activity. We are still very keen to add more Ambassadors. If you would be prepared to volunteer for the role, please contact Carol at the front desk or send an email to govs@brookfield.camden.sch.uk.

Governor leadership

At the beginning of this term, Oliver Lewis stood down as Chair of Governors, a position he held for five years. The school and the governing body paid tribute to Oliver for his tremendously effective and committed leadership. During this time, the governing body has overseen the continued academic improvement at Brookfield. Ofsted's report observed that the governing body "makes an outstanding contribution to the school's work." Vice-chair, Helen Martyn also stood down. She was praised and thanked for her dedication, insight and thoughtfulness; qualities which the school continues to benefit from. Oliver and Helen remain as governors and Helen stays on as chair of the PSWB committee. Parent governors, Rachel Hermer and Mike Yule have taken over as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

Finally

We want to thank all those who have volunteered their time and talents to the school this term. In particular we would like to thank Grace, Polly, Ali, Cee and Derek for their amazing efforts in making the Winter Fair so successful - and in such a short space of time. Events like these are important to the spirit of the school community as well as raising money for our children. We'd like also like to thank and welcome the new P.T.A. executive: Anna Longmuir and Rebecca Taylor (chairs), Karin Radicke (communications) and Marie Kernec who is generously staying on as P.T.A. treasurer.

We would like to wish all the staff, children, parents and carers a very happy holiday and New Year.

Best wishes

Governing Body
Brookfield Primary School
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December 2014

To find out more about the Governing Body please go to the school's website where full Governing Body minutes can be viewed. If you have any comments or suggestions we can be contacted by email at the address above or drop us a note at the office.