



BROOKFIELD SCHOOL

Chester Road
London
N19 5DH

Headteacher: Mark Stubbings
Email: admin@brookfield.camden.sch.uk
Tel: 020 7272 9627
Fax: 020 7561 0056

Governor's Newsletter Autumn Term 2015

Governors meet once every half term for a full governing body meeting. These meetings or 'FGBs' last approximately two to two and a half hours. We generally spend about an hour of this on an in-depth discussion or presentation on a key issue and the rest querying and discussing points of interests in the written reports from the Headteacher and the four governing body committees. Reports are circulated and read in advance of the meeting and we try to use the time as efficiently as possible to discuss and probe relevant issues and to decide on appropriate actions.

The first full governing body meeting of the Autumn term began with a comprehensive presentation from Mark and Laurel on the eight key school improvement priorities for the coming academic year and an outline of how the school intends to meet them. The choice of priorities is informed by areas identified in the previous year as needing more development, ongoing long term projects and the school's vision and values.

The priorities this year are:

- Children eligible for Pupil Premium / identified as vulnerable to make good progress towards their end of year targets in reading, writing and maths Children who are below national expectations in maths make good progress towards their end of year targets In line with our vision and values, to develop children's resilience, risk taking and perseverance
- Adopt new assessment and tracking procedures to support good progress across the school Implement recommendations from the support staff consultation
- Continue to embed the role of phase leaders through weekly planning sessions, time spent in class and lesson study
- Embed a culture of Rights Respecting Behaviour as part of our whole school ethos
- Develop and improve transition arrangements across the school

The governors will monitor progress in these priority areas with a regular report from Mark at each full governing body meeting. Individual committees will also have oversight of the priorities relevant to their brief and, at the final governing body meeting in the summer term, we will have a detailed evaluation from the school on how well it has met the targets set.

Our second meeting this term is not until December 18 where, in place of a one topic discussion, we will be having an update on the journey to develop the school's vision and values, a look at governors' safeguarding responsibilities and discussing the options for reviewing the effectiveness of the governing body itself. We expect and encourage the school and its leadership to reflect on its effectiveness and to continually seek to improve so we think it important the governing body also does the same.

LONDONSCHOOLS GOLD CLUB



All committees have met twice this term and their reports are below:

Learning and Achievement Committee (LAC)

The Learning and Achievement Committee (LAC) continues to hold the school to account in its implementation of the 'vision and values' and the 'Building Learning Power' (BLP) initiative, which seeks to build the foundations for good learning habits, including resilience, perseverance and a sense of independence in all pupils. LAC has reflected on the key lessons to be drawn from the SATS (national tests taken at the end of Y2 and Y6) and in particular how best to raise the attainment of particular groups, including children entitled to Pupil Premium, certain minority ethnic groups and those with special educational needs (SEND). Pupils with SEND performed well in comparison to national results and Laurel has taken on the interim task in Polly's absence of overseeing SEND provision. The new Assistant Head, Katherine, is due to take over this role when she joins the school at the end of January.

This year's biggest challenge for the school is to enable children to achieve higher end of year expectations in literacy and maths and the introduction of a completely new assessment system in all subjects. It is too early to determine how effective the new assessment regime will be, but the school is collaborating with other Camden Primary schools to work out best practice and governors will undergo training in the New Year in the mechanics of the new assessment provisions. LAC is challenging the school to make the most of the school's parent body and local resources to supplement and inspire a love of science in our children. Governors observed French being taught throughout the school and there has also been a focus on Early Years provision this term. LAC has in addition reviewed the Homework policy and the outcomes of the parent, staff and pupil questionnaires, challenging the school to respond to these in a timely and constructive way.

Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing Committee (PSWB)

Autumn is always a busy term for PSWB. In addition to our two committee meetings we also convene as the school's pay committee. In this capacity we are tasked with ensuring the school's recommendations and decisions regarding pay progression are in line with the school's pay policy and supported by a strong performance management system. Several of our members are also responsible for the performance management of the head teacher, reviewing performance and agreeing new targets for the coming year.

At each meeting the committee reviews pupil behaviour, exclusions, incidents of bullying and safeguarding and termly we review staff attendance and training. We have been pleased to note a decline in red slips since this time last year. Reported incidents of bullying remain low but the committee noted that responses in the pupil questionnaires suggest pupils have a different perception. We have asked the school to revisit and reflect on the children's responses and to identify if any particular action is needed. We are aware that work around bullying remains high on the school's agenda and that several teachers are being trained by Kidscape in bullying intervention. Kidscape will also be running a workshop for parents on January 26th at 9am and parents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

This term we have reviewed the Behaviour Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy and have agreed an Acceptable Behaviour Policy for visitors, parents and carers which is now on the school's website. We are currently reviewing an Intimate Care Policy for the Early Years (nursery and reception).



Finance Committee

We are now nine months into the school's financial year, and the finance committee have been focused on ensuring that this year's budget comes in line with / marginally better than the forecast. This is especially important in light of the potentially difficult funding environment that all schools may be facing over the next three-five years. We are still digesting the Spending Review outcome and what it might mean for education and local authority budgets in this time period. Next term we will consider in more detail the potential impact for Brookfield.

It is however important that we continue to invest in areas that are aligned with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and so have allocated capital this year to the nursery garden, junior playground and to building a sensory room.

Finally, we are thinking through with Mark and the team what we can do as a school to increase our revenue and will be re-convening the fundraising committee in Jan 2016

Premises Committee

This has been a busy period for the Committee with some significant progress in ongoing building projects:

- The first stage of preventive stabilization works to a boundary wall with the Chester Estate has been completed. At our request Camden have redesigned all further second stage structural work so that it will be carried out from the other side avoiding any closures of the playground. This will take place Jan/Feb 2016.
- The re-design and construction of the nursery garden has now finished, improving the provision for imaginative outdoor play. The committee thanks in particular the excellent input of Derek in carrying out much of the work.
- The outline designs for a quiet sensory room for children with SEND have now been finalized, enabling building work, including a new therapy room and cloakroom, to start early next year.
- Design work and quotations are now under way for replacing the playground 'umbrella' in the infant playground with permanent roof structure.

The committee is also overseeing essential repairs to boiler and pipeworks which will take place in February last year. We are also involved in ongoing discussions with Camden, seeking clarity of responsibility and assurance of assistance with major and possible emergency repairs.

Governor Drop In

The Autumn term's Governor Drop-in was held on Friday 11th December. Governors fed back on actions taken since the previous meeting in relation to, amongst other items - support available for bilingual families, improved playground supervision, anti-bullying procedures, after school provision, a vote on the occasional inclusion of halal meat on the school menu, the need for advance school-parent communication ahead of topics such as sex education, diverse families etc. These responses are included in full on the school's website. New concerns raised included; ongoing issues with the way bullying is tackled within the school, the outsourcing of PE, the need for improvements to the Reception area playground, cycle/scooter storage and the need for clarification of the charges relating to Breakfast club for low income families. Minutes and responses will be published on the website in due course. The next Governor drop-in will be scheduled for the second half of the winter term.

LONDONSCHOOLSGOLDCLUB



Governors

A blow for the governing body and the school has been the illness since the beginning of term of Helen Martyn, Chair of the PSWB. Helen has been a governor at Brookfield for many years, including periods as Chair and Vice Chair. She is a great supporter of the school and has a deep knowledge of how it works. This, combined with her professional background in social work and her insight, compassion, commitment and the high standards to which she holds the school to account have meant her absence has been keenly felt by both governors and the school. We wish her well as she takes time out to recuperate.

This term we have welcomed two new governors, both of whom have joined PSWB to bolster its strength in Helen's absence. Elizabeth Dormandy joined as a co-opted governor. She has a background in science and has also joined the Learning and Achievement Committees. She has also taken on the role of Safeguarding governor while Helen is away.

Joanna Cooke won the recent parent governor election. She has a background in marketing in both the charity and commercial sectors and her experience in managing large teams will be of great value to the committee.

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 the PTA and all those involved in making such a successful Winter fair.

We would also like to thank the staff throughout the school for their continued hard work and commitment towards the school's vision and values and to congratulate them on this term's academic, sporting and artistic success

We wish you all a Happy Christmas, a great festive break and a Happy 2016.

Best wishes

Governing Body
Brookfield Primary School
govs@brookfield.camden.sch.uk
December 2015

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.



LONDONSCHOOLSGOLDCLUB

