

# Brookfield Primary School

## Governors' newsletter Spring term 2013



Welcome to the governors' newsletter for the Spring term 2013. We hope you will find some interesting and useful news and information in this newsletter.

This term the full Governing Body had a useful presentation from Rob about maths teaching and learning, one of the school's key priorities this year. We were also given an overview about the development of a new Teaching and Learning policy. We were pleased to note the continued commitment to high academic standards and high quality teaching. The governors congratulate the school for many other achievements this term including the presentation of Camden's Award for Inclusion, the victory in the inaugural Camden Maths Challenge, the several notable sporting successes including the girls' triumph in the CSSA basketball league, and an excellent performance at the Camden choir festival. The governors have also enjoyed the children's excellent work following this term's FAB illustration project. We know that children from Years 5 and 6 enjoyed the recent Big Bang Science event and that children across the school have enjoyed some Mandarin lessons this term.

## Raising standards

The Learning and Achievement Committee is concerned with the teaching and curriculum at Brookfield and the progress of the pupils. The committee gets regular reports on attainment and progress, on the performance of various groups of pupils and on the school's performance in national assessments. This term the committee has looked at the way the school acquires baseline data for children at the "Foundation Stage", i.e. Reception and Year 1. We also had a very interesting review of literacy teaching and learning from Gemma, including a discussion of handwriting, how spelling, punctuation and grammar are integrating into teaching in Year 6, and several other projects and interventions. We are working with Mark and the teachers to produce a new Teaching and Learning policy for the school, which should capture and promote what we do well and encourage us to improve the things that need developing.

Parents and carers may have seen that OFSTED have recently produced a data dashboard which allows schools to compare themselves against other similar schools nationally, based on their 2012 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs results. The site can be accessed at: <http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk/dash.php?urn=100011>. Governors were pleased to note the very good levels of progress made at Key Stage 2, particularly for disadvantaged children.

## Engagement with parents and carers

Various ideas arising from the governor's communication and engagement survey have been introduced. Newsletters and some other school information have moved to an electronic format and the website school calendar is up and running. Parents have also been given better notice of open mornings, assemblies and other events. Mark gave the second of his head-teacher's updates this term covering progress towards this year's school priorities and an update on Brookfield's centenary/history project, governors are running a half termly drop-in session and teachers have continued to run well received open mornings. Parents are encouraged to participate in all these initiatives. Don't forget you can also see Governing Body minutes and school policies on the school's website.

## The school's finances

This term the focus of the Finance Committee has been to make sure that our spending for this financial year is on track and to start planning for the following financial year. Although the school's funding for next year shows a reduction of 1.5% on the current year, this is unlikely to have a significant impact on the school despite increased costs thanks to prudent management of income and reserves. The committee has also been looking at the way the school allocates its spending from the Pupil Premium funding. The Pupil Premium is funding linked to free school meals for schools to support and help raise attainment of eligible pupils across all ability ranges. A breakdown of how the school allocated the funding this year is shown below:

Teacher in-class support:	£	6,110
Teacher interventions:	£	23,500
Teacher Assistants interventions:	£	25,145
Skills for Life:	£	12,555
Specialised teaching:	£	12,000
General resources:	£	<u>1,890</u>
Total	£	91,200

A new temporary TA (Joseph) has been appointed to support pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium for 3 days a week. Governors will be closely monitoring the outcome of these initiatives.

You may be aware that Camden has reinstated full-time funding for all nursery children for next school year. In the circumstances the Governing Body has decided to offer free full time places to those of our current nursery children not entitled to full-time places for the remainder of the year.

## The school building and environment

The Premises Committee makes decisions about the school building and environment. This term a sub-committee consisting of community and parent governors and staff have been looking at how best to use the outdoor and playground space across the school and looking at whether space in the junior playground could be reconfigured to provide better open spaces for break times and school sports sessions, possibly involving moving the football

cage. The committee has engaged an experienced playground design advisor, from an organisation Learning Through Landscapes, who will visit the school, look at the possibilities and consult with the school to see if there is a way to achieve a move without detriment to users of the playground and the nursery open space. The sub-committee is due to report early next term with a view to any agreed work being done over the summer and any plans will be available to look at before then. Meanwhile the Nursery floor will be replaced over the Easter break and some other planned maintenance has been carried out across the school. The premises committee has also been in discussions with the council and library about the use of the former mobile library storage space next to the infant playground and it is hoped that the school will have some use of the space as part of a wider community based usage. Governors are pleased to report that after much lobbying the council has at last drawn up plans to create safer crossings around the school. There will be a consultation with residents before the anticipated work over the summer.

## **Personnel and wellbeing**

The Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing Committee has responsibility for monitoring aspects of pupil wellbeing such as safeguarding, bullying, exclusions and behaviour as well as staff terms and conditions of work and continuing professional development. The work of this committee includes responsibility for a number of policies and most recently the safeguarding policy and the physical contact policy have been ratified by the full Governing Body. All policies are posted on the website. As the next school year approaches the committee will be assisting and advising Mark as he plans the staffing structure for the coming year.

## **Finally**

We say goodbye and thanks to Pinal who steps down from the Governing Body, and hello and welcome to Talia who has been co-opted as an associate member. The governors also want to thank Rebecca, Richard and Jo and the PTA team for organising great events this term including the revue and the jumble sale. Their hard work is an important contribution to both fundraising and to the community spirit of the school. To all the children, teachers and staff and to all the parents, carers and members of the community who volunteer their time and talents, the governors would like to say many thanks to all of you.

### **Governing Body**

#### **Brookfield Primary School**

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#### **March 2013**

The Governing Body at Brookfield takes a strategic overview of the running of the school. We work closely with the school management team in developing the school's priorities and direction. Governors set standards and objectives, review policies and approve the school's budget. We support, challenge and advise the school. Governors work within four committees to deal with different areas of the school's work.

You can find out more about the governors and who we are at the school's website where full Governing Body minutes can also be viewed: <http://www.brookfield.camden.sch.uk/page/?title=Governors&pid=7>. If you have any comments or suggestions we can be contacted by e-mail at the address above or drop us a note. If you want to become involved in the Governing Body or if you have any areas of expertise that might be useful to any of the areas discussed above do get in touch. Our aim is that our governors are broadly representative of the community.