

Brookfield Primary School

Governors' newsletter
May 2014



We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. Last term the full Governing Body had a really useful presentation from Literacy subject leader Gemma Curtis about Literacy teaching and learning, one of the school's key priorities this year. We were also given an overview about the school's response to the recent mini review conducted by the local authority which graded the school 'Good'. Governors were pleased to note the continued commitment to quality teaching and high academic standards.

Raising standards

The Learning and Achievement Committee (LAC) is concerned with the teaching and curriculum at Brookfield and the progress of the pupils. The committee met twice in the Spring term. Much of the focus was on pupil progress. We examined the progress of every class in reading, writing and maths during the Autumn term against the high targets set by the school. We were pleased to note that most classes were making expected or better than expected progress. The school has a number of interventions in place to support those classes where progress is slower, for example, subject leader support, 1-1 sessions with pupils, local authority specialist support.

We also looked at the specific progress of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and at the school's assessment of the impact of the various interventions they have in place for them. The progress in most classes in writing, reading and maths for the Autumn term was higher than that expected, and those children and classes who make slower progress continue to receive focused support. Pupils with Special Educational Needs also made good progress in the Autumn term with most making the same as or higher than the class progress. Again, interventions are in place where need has been identified.

Michelle Nelis, Assistant Head and Early Years' lead, gave the committee a detailed analysis of last year's disappointing results in Reception – 37% of our children achieved a 'good' compared to 52% nationally. Actions now in place to improve results include an improved tracking system of pupil progress (to more quickly identify any pupil falling behind in a particular area), more frequent moderation of

teacher assessment and introducing guided reading earlier in the year. While the committee was disappointed with last year's results and expect an improvement, we acknowledged the good progress pupils make throughout their school journey and the solid foundations that continue to be laid in the Early Years. We also support the school in maintaining a balance between meeting the rising academic bar and ensuring younger pupils continue to learn through play. The committee was pleased to see the strong progress reflected in the Early Years pupil progress reports in the Autumn term and noted the positive feedback about the school's Early Year's provision in the recent Local Authority school inspection. We also looked in some detail at the specific progress of last year's Reception classes, now in Year 1. This cohort made good progress in the Autumn term, interventions are ongoing and the school is confident that this year group are on track for the end of year.

The committee also had a detailed presentation from Rob Fellows, the maths subject leader. He reported on the current progress across the school in maths against this year's school improvement plan target of 80% of pupils progressing 2+ sublevels and raising attainment in Years 1, 2 and 3 for those pupils performing below expectations. Measures to achieve this include staff training both in school and from Eleanor Palmer (now a teaching school), modelling from the subject leader and local authority support. The school is also working hard to identify and support any pupils with gaps in the 'building blocks' of their maths knowledge. The committee also reviewed various policies including the Sex and Relationship Education Policy, the Ethnic Minority and English as a Second Language Achievement Policy and the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Policy. Several members also spent a morning at school visiting many of the classrooms to see how the school differentiates its teaching to support pupils of differing abilities within the class. This term our work schedule will include reviewing pupil progress from the Spring term, school provision for SEND pupils and the new SEND guidelines, looking at how the school is preparing for the new curriculum and looking at new priorities for the next academic year.

Engagement with parents and carers

We hope you find our new Governor drop in sessions useful. We have found them useful in identifying what is on parents' minds. Parents have recently raised issues about after hours child care and bike storage facilities. Following on from issues raised at the previous Governor drop in session a new policy to address requests for more Halal options has been adopted by the Governing body. Minutes of the Governor drop in sessions and updates on the issues raised are to be included on the Governor web page. Last term also saw the launch of the Ambassador programme and seven parents and carers have taken up the role of Brookfield ambassadors with a view to their reaching out to hard to reach sections of our community, they have

been involved in supporting the launch of the survey "Encouraging Parental Engagement", the results of which will be reported back this term. Don't forget you can also see Governing Body minutes and school policies on the school's website.

The school building and environment

The Premises Committee makes decisions about the school building and environment. Revised plans for the redevelopment of the Junior Playground were last term drawn up and submitted for competitive tender. The football pitch will be renewed with astro turf and higher fencing, the Croftdown entrance will be redeveloped with access for wheelchairs. and that section of the playground made wider. Time constraints over the Easter holidays made it necessary to schedule the improvement works for summer break. The scheme to enlarge to the main school entrance and provide a much larger waiting area for visitors is currently at the planning stage. AAB Architects are in the process of drawing up the detailed plans and we are hopeful that the project can go forward subject to finances. Drinking water taps have been installed in every classroom. We looked again at the possibility of installing safe cycle racks for pupils.

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 committee also reviews the staffing structure of the school. After careful discussion the committee has recommended an additional senior post of assistant headteacher to increase capacity in the leadership team. The committee reviews all incidents of bullying, whether confirmed or at the monitoring stage, and carefully investigates the most effective action. We are also mindful that not all parents are clear about school procedure and may therefore be reluctant to report any worries they may have. The committee supports the staff in their efficient monitoring systems and the skill with which they intervene but decided that further work needs to be done and to rewrite the anti bullying policy to make it more accessible. A joint consultation group was therefore set up last term consisting of equal numbers of parents, staff and governors. It has met three times, with further meetings planned. A new policy is in early draft form and should go to the next Governing body meeting for approval. This is proving to be an effective way of working in partnership across the school community which may be more widely adopted.

Finally

The governors congratulate the school for many achievements this term including several notable sporting successes including at cross country and swimming, and an excellent performance at the Camden music festival at Royal Albert Hall. The

governors have also enjoyed the centenary celebrations and look forward to the whole school performance.

We say goodbye and thanks to Rokib who steps down from the Governing Body. The governors also want to thank Mary Lucy and Rosy and the PTA team. 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.

Oliver Lewis

Chair of the Governing Body

Brookfield Primary School

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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.