

Brookfield Primary School

Governors' newsletter Autumn term 2011



Welcome to our Autumn term newsletter. We hope you have enjoyed this term and that you are looking forward to the Christmas holidays. We would like to congratulate the school and pupils on a successful term. The Science Week and evening and the Photographic exhibition are among several memorable highlights. The governors would like particularly to thank the teachers and staff without whose energy and dedication these successes would not be possible. In this newsletter we have set out some information and news which we hope you will find interesting and useful.

Learning and Achievement

At the last governing Body meeting Mark and Laurel gave a presentation to governors about achievement at the school. The latest sets of results and attainment levels are reproduced below:

Early Years

EYFS	% achieving good level	National
2008/9	47%	52%
2009/10	37%	56%
2010/11	42%	N/A

NB in order to achieve a good level, children have to secure 6+ points in all areas of personal and social education / communication, language and literacy and 78 points across all 6 key areas.

- Last year, the percentage of children achieving a good level increased by 5% to 42%.
- From the children's attainment on entry they make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- For the last three years our % level of 'good' has been below the National average. This is due in part to children not achieving all 6 points attributed to writing.
- Provision is good however and children go on to make excellent progress in Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1

KS1	Reading level 2 and above	N A T I O N A L	Reading level 3	N A T I O N A L	Writing level 2 and above	N A T I O N A L	Writing level 3	N A T I O N A L	Maths level 2 and above	N A T I O N A L	Maths level 3	N A T I O N A L	Science level 2 and above	Science level 3
2008/9	94%	84%	47%	26%	91%	81%	17%	12%	94%	90%	23%	21%	94%	36%
2009/10	90%	85%	28%	26%	88%	81%	13%	12%	95%	89%	13%	20%	92%	17%
2010/11	92%	85%	37%	26%	95%	81%	24%	13%	93%	90%	22%	20%	90%	89%

- Children make excellent progress during Key Stage 1.
- Over the last 3 years, our results have been consistently above national expectations for level 2+ and level 3+.
- Compared to national figures, children's attainment in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 is a particular strength.

Key Stage 2

KS2	English level 4 and above	NATIONAL	English level 5	NATIONAL	Maths level 4 and above	NATIONAL	Maths level 5	NATIONAL	Science level 4 and above	NATIONAL	Science level 5	NATIONAL
2008/09	85%	80%	35%	29%	80%	79%	38%	34%	95%	86%	45%	38%
2009/10	85%	80%	46%	32%	80%	80%	37%	34%	87%	85%	37%	37%
2010/11	80%	81%	43%	29%	80%	80%	43%	35%	89%	85%	48%	35%

- In 2011 children attained broadly in line with national expectations in English, Maths and Science at level 4+. This forms a consistent picture over the past 3 years.
- Our attainment at level 5 in all subjects is well above national, with gains made in maths and Science this year.
- Our 'value added' score shows that overall children make more than expected progress between years 2 and 6.
- Girls make significantly better progress than girls nationally whilst boys progress in line with other boys nationally.

School improvement plan priorities: ways we intend to drive up standards.

- Continue to improve writing within the Foundation Stage.
- Improve attainment at level 4+ in English and Maths.
- Improve rates of progress across Key Stage 2 for children who were just below national expectations at KS1.
- Reduce the gap between the attainment of boys and girls through focus groups, mentoring and curriculum development.
- Through the best use of resources ensure that any underperforming group of children is achieving to their best possible potential.

Learning and Achievement Committee

The Curriculum Committee has been renamed the "Learning and Achievement" committee. We were happy to welcome back Laurel, who is the member of this committee for the school management team, and Melanie has also joined as staff governor along with new parent governor Rachel Hermer. This year we have discussed the pupil progress reviews from early in the term, and also the school's SATs results from last year in detail (also discussed by the full governing body). While the SATs were quite good in general, some areas for improvement were identified and ways of addressing them were discussed. One of the challenges schools face is managing resources in order to provide support for children who, for whatever reason, start to fall behind. We discussed ways in which we can bolster support for children, and in particular, we thought it essential that we provide extra support at an earlier age. Given the current economic climate we are looking at imaginative ways to provide that support. The committee is keen to see an increased involvement of parent volunteers in the school's teaching, so look out for opportunities here.

We discussed ways of better communicating with parents about what the children are learning each term - we hope to put some improvements in place early next year. We are also keeping an eye on how the new homework policy is working out in practice. Three subject visits for governors

are planned this year, in ICT, Literacy and Science. The Learning and Achievement Committee, which meets twice a term, will continue to monitor and evaluate the school's performance.

The School's Finances

The Finance Committee meets twice a term to review school finances and agree the school budget. The Finance Committee has spent this term focusing on the new arrangements for Nursery. Camden announced earlier this year that children in Camden would no longer be automatically entitled to a free full time place in nursery. Instead all children will be entitled to a part time place (up to 15 hours a week). Some children, from households where sole or both parents are in work or studying with a household income of less than £35000, or those entitled to free school meals, will be able to apply for a free full time nursery place. Financial eligibility for a funded full time place will be established by Camden Housing Team.

The Nursery has always been very popular locally. Last year, we received many more applications than we had places. We are proud of the service it provides and the level of care offered to very young children often leaving the home environment for the first time. We are very keen that the Nursery should continue in this fashion serving the local community so well. The governors this term discussed whether to offer families additional hours where a child qualifies for the minimum 15 hours only. The Governing Body agreed to offer families the option of extending the existing free entitlement to a full school day by paying for additional hours. As a result parents of children attending nursery on a part time basis will be able to pay to attend full time. There have been extensive discussions at the Finance Committee and the Governing Body about these new arrangements and the appropriate charge for parents seeking to top up to a full time place. We have considered carefully the advice we have received from Camden. We have decided that parents topping up from a part time to a full time place will be charged £97.50 a week for the additional 17.5 hours a week inclusive of lunch. We think this charge, which equates broadly to the amount of money we receive from Camden for children attending nursery, represents good value to those looking for full time places. Application forms and information on these new arrangements and how they will work in practice are available from the school office.

Camden will next year withdraw the play service which runs Brookfield's after school play provision. Governors have decided that we would continue the provision of after school play and we are currently looking at various options to ensure that after school service continues in September 2012.

The school building and environment

The Premises Committee meets twice a term to discuss the school building and environment. During the summer vacation a refurbishment programme was carried out to the exterior of the school building. Windows were overhauled and the large window in the second floor gym was replaced with double glazed units. The flat roof of the gym had further insulation added to it. The main roof was checked and tiles replaced and secured where necessary and chimneys and flashings checked. This work was scheduled to be completed during September but late delivery of the new gym window caused a delay. The work will be finished and the last items of scaffolding will be removed by the end of term. Also during the summer the nursery utility room was improved with new storage and support facilities for the staff.

The school is part of the Camden Carbon Emission Reduction pilot programme. The aim is to make significant reductions in energy use. There is a basic programme of making sure electricity is not wasted by switching equipment and lights off when not in use to be followed by a programme of

installing equipment such as voltage optimisation to ensure efficient use of energy. The school also signed up to the Eco-Schools programme of installing Solar Panels which promised to make savings on the school's electricity bills. The government recently changed subsidy arrangements and although we expected the panels to be installed before the final date of 11th December a shortage of supplies meant our installation did not go ahead. We will continue to keep the plans under review.

Personnel and Wellbeing

The Personnel, Salaries and Wellbeing Committee meets twice a term, to discuss all matters to do with staffing and the wellbeing of all members of the school community. The committee reviews attendance of staff and pupils, pupil exclusions, any incidents of bullying, any safeguarding issues and receives detailed reports on all incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour. The committee welcomed the good rating given to the school in the recent safeguarding inspection and noted the recommendations for improvement in respect of personnel issues.

At the beginning of term we welcomed new teachers Barnaby, Sarah and Emma. Matthew was appointed as a Year 3 teacher at half term to replace Helen who has left London and Seren as she starts her maternity leave. Lisa, Faye, Sarah, Lucy, Kirandeep, Tom and Martin have also been appointed to the support staff.

Finally

The governors are happy to welcome onto the Governing Body new parent governors Rachel Hermer and Pinal Patel. We also welcome our new teacher governor, Melanie, as well as new associate member, parent Nigel Bannerman. See our webpage for governor profiles. We say goodbye and thank you to Allison Rowe and Amanda Dyal who stepped down as parent governors at the end of last year.

The governors also want to congratulate and thank the PTA for another fantastic Winter Fair and for their important work in contributing to both fundraising and to the community spirit of the school. To all the children and staff and to all the parents, carers and members of the community who volunteer their time and talent, the governors would like to say many thanks to all of you.

Best wishes

Governing Body

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About Brookfield Governors

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 development plans. 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. Governing Body minutes can be viewed online on the governors' page on the website or you can ask to see a copy at reception. 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 do

get in touch. Our aim is that our governors are broadly representative of the community. If you are interested please contact one of us to find out more about the role or e-mail us at the address above.

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