



Chair of Governors Report

Autumn 2017

Introduction from Chair of Governors

Dear Parents,

After another busy term in the life of Heathwood Lower School, it gives me pleasure to introduce this report from the Governors to the parents.

During the autumn term the Governors have remained busy working in partnership with the school's senior management team on reviewing available school performance data, managing strategic decisions and focusing on the key areas of the School Development Plan. I am extremely pleased to report that the school continues to strive for perfection in all areas, under the excellent leadership of Mrs Dove and fully supported by a highly committed staff team. It is clearly evident that every child is given the opportunity to succeed and reach their potential whilst at Heathwood. Ofsted visited the school before the end of term and we await their report.

I am also pleased to report that the school continues to have strong links with the community. This was demonstrated by the strong level of support from parents, friends and staff attending the school Christmas Fayre. My thanks go to the PTA who continue to support the school financially and socially.

At the end of this term we will say goodbye to Mrs Diane O'Reilly our Finance Assistant and welcome Mrs Michelle Taylor. We wish Diane the very best for the future and thank her for her contribution to Heathwood.

Finally, on behalf of the Governing Body, may I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Paula Bangs

Chair of Governors

Teaching & Learning Committee Update Autumn 2017

School Development Plan

Aspects of school activity and development are incorporated into the School Development Plan. The plan is a very detailed document prepared and updated by the Headteacher in discussion with appropriate staff. In addition to this, a number of targets, both short and long term are set by the Governing Body and these too are incorporated into the Development Plan.

The Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

Governors continue to hold senior leaders stringently to account for all aspects of the school performance at Governing Body meetings and by having regular meetings with the Head Teacher and appropriate staff members.

Governors this term have carried out learning walkways with the Head Teacher, Senior Staff and have met the School Improvement Partner to look at data.

Key targets for year 2017-18

Continue to maximise learning opportunities at Greater Depth in a broad and rich curriculum.

To continue to improve outcomes in Early Years for all groups of learners with particular emphasis on identifying and challenging children at Greater Depth.

To improve outcomes in maths for all groups of learners.

To continue to develop a growth mind-set by asking open ended questions and allowing thinking time.

To continue to improve outcomes at the end of Pre-School.

Pupil Premium: Strategies for improvement:

Whole school ethos of attainment for all.

High quality teaching for all.

Continue to improve children at greater depth.

Data driven and response to evidence.

Staff have been deployed effectively, developing skills and roles. Individual targets reviewed regularly.

Current data shows Pupil Premium children are making good progress.

Sports Premium: Spending allocated to:

Future Games (includes lunchtime and after school clubs)

Yr4 Bikeability

Leighton/Linslade Sports Partnership

Young Leader Training (Class 4)

Staff to accompany competitions.

Replacement of PE resources and equipment.

Sport/Health Week

The Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Formal lesson observations across the school have taken place this term with all lessons being at least good and some outstanding.

Book scrutiny continues to be a fortnightly exercise for the Senior Management Team, concentrating on targets from the School Development Plan.

Learning walkways have been carried out on a regular basis by senior leadership team and Governors. Governors have seen exciting lessons and engaged children.

Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Overall attendance to date is 95.32%. The expectation for attendance is 95%.

No leave of absence is granted unless there are exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher. This information continues to be shared with parents via the school newsletter.

Governors have noted pupils' attitude to all aspects of learning continues to be positive. The wall displays around the school show teachers encourage pupils to have pride and confidence in their work and achievement by demonstrating their work and learning is valued.

The school environment continues to stimulate the children's interests and challenge their knowledge of the world.

Parental Feedback

Following a drive by Governors at Parents' Evening, we now have 64 responses to the Ofsted Parent View Platform. 95% of parents would recommend Heathwood to another parent

Fair Trade, School Council and Sports Council

Elections took place at the beginning of the academic year for representatives to promote Fair Trade, School Council and Sports Council within the school. This year the manifesto's of those wishing to put themselves forward were read independently so children voted for the values given, rather than the person - a much better way of selecting the right candidate.

A recent visit to the Houses of Parliament, gave some of the above representatives an insight into how democracy really works by sitting in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords while they were in session. This was followed by a lesson in how MP's are voted into Parliament and all those who attended took part in the process. This trip was rounded off by our own MP Andrew Selous joining us for a question and answer session, which was enjoyed by all.

The excitement in the last update regarding the New Sports Council has taken an interesting turn, by additional funding being given to schools to increase the amount of exercise pupils take during the school day. The Sports Council are currently looking at ideas and equipment to make exercise interesting and for children to want to take part in this initiative.

Rights Respecting School Award

Never a school to sit on our laurels, we have embarked on the journey of a Rights Respecting School. This was launched in an assembly on 2nd November by Mrs Wright, since then children and adults were asked to fill in a questionnaire in preparation for our application to join the process. I am happy to say that we have been accepted at the first level and look forward to working on improving our status. I'm sure you will hear lots more about it from your own children over the coming months.

Bedford Faith Tour / Baptist Church Life Exhibition and Dell Farm Nativity

This term has seen many of the children involved in one or other of the above trips. We were lucky enough to go to Bedford on the Faith Tour, which included visiting a mosque, a gurdwara and a church. Feedback from the children who attended this trip was that it was enjoyed by all and gave them an insight into other religions.

The Life Exhibition at the Baptist Church was informative and by using technology made the experience an exciting one. Each child was given a hand held tablet and had to listen through headphones to a number of statements/stories and make their own choices. By the time we had finished the session, written feedback was given regarding the responses of each child to be put in their school record. Additional fun was had at the end of the session as everyone was given voting controls and while the children had a drink and a biscuit statements were placed on the board for them to vote on. Very informative results!

Dell Farm Nativity was attended by our Reception Class and was a very special day for them. It started off with a tour of the animals on the farm, where our children could relax in a safe environment, followed by making Christmas decorations. After lunch, children were picked to play all the major parts of a nativity and we were led to a stable with a donkey and the children then acted out the nativity, with Shepherds arriving, followed by the Three Kings and so on. The day culminated in a Christmas sing-song by a class of tired, but happy children.

Christmas Production

Despite the school being closed last week because of snow and the dress rehearsal having to take place on the morning of the afternoon performance, the children gave it their best as always and blew us away with their talent. Two performances in one day for most of the children was achievement in itself and we are privileged to have staff whose commitment to our children is 100% and helped to make the production the success it was.

Rose Gunter
Vice-Chair of Governors

Management and Resources Committee Update Autumn 2017

To follow on from all the hard work last year on the roof, hall floor, removal of asbestos and new fencing around the school, this year has been just as busy. We have seen works being carried out that are hopefully more visible and pleasing on the eye.

All lighting is presently being upgraded to the latest energy efficient LED lighting; all electrical wiring, fuse boards and large areas of water piping are in the process of being brought up to date with the latest specifications. These are big projects which can be completed during school holidays. We are happy to say they are on course for completion by the end of the school year, if not sooner.

Already completed are the key Health and Safety conscious areas of security cameras with the ability to monitor during the day and with infra-red for night time monitoring. An updated fire alarm system which alerts the fire station as soon as it is triggered has been installed and emergency lighting is being replaced with new batteries and LED lights.

We are proud of what the school has managed to achieve in this short period of time and are ahead of the curve when it comes to Health and Safety and peace of mind.

Jonathan Young
Chair of Management and Resources Committee