

Governors' Newsletter for Parents and Staff Autumn Term 2023

The Governing Board would like to thank all our members of staff, so many of whom go above and beyond in their contribution to the whole school such that LEPS continues to be the joyful, nurturing school that we are all so proud of.

We wish you all a joyous festive season and a happy and healthy New Year and we look forward to working with the whole school community to deliver the next stages of our 5-year strategic plan.

Changes to the Governing Board

Firstly, I would like to thank Katie Stone who has been a Parent Governor for the past four years. Katie has been very active as Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee and in her role as Link Governor for Literacy and SEND. We will miss Katie's knowledge of education and literacy and her insightful questions which have helped us with our collective decision making and our monitoring of school performance. Katie has gone the extra mile in fulfilling her role and will be a hard act to follow. I would also like to thank Resham Baruah, Sharde Hurd, Saba Bhopal and Tarek Akkari for putting themselves forward for election as Parent Governor.

We welcome Resham Baruah, who was re-elected for a second term of office in her current roles as Vice Chair of Governors and Chair of the Pay Committee, and Sharde Hurd who joins us for the first time and will be joining our Teaching and Learning Committee.

Update on Recruitment for our new Headteacher

The recruitment panel have met five times already and everyone has played their part in ensuring that the advert went live on 8th December as planned. We are determined to give ourselves the best possible field of candidates and we want to particularly thank Marco Crisari, an ex -Parent of LEPS, who has used his graphic design skills to help us produce an excellent brochure, that we feel really reflects our school community, as part of the Recruitment Pack. Thank you all for contributing to our survey on what you want from our new Headteacher, your contributions together with those of our pupils and staff, feature as word clouds in our brochure. We also commissioned two short videos to support our search, both feature our pupils talking about what they love about Little Ealing Primary School and their expectations of the new Headteacher. There are Vimeo links to these included in the brochure.

We have advertised the post in the TES and on the school and Ealing Vacancies websites. We are looking forward to receiving lots of applications by the closing date on 15th January. Our application form has been developed to promote a fair and unbiased shortlisting process and we have also devised a very thorough assessment process prior to formal interview with the help of our Local Authority advisors.

Saying Goodbye

We want to wish Miss Orchant, Assistant Headteacher and her family, all the very best for the future, as she leaves us at the end of this term to embark on a new adventure in Canada. Miss Orchant has worked closely with the Governing Board on many issues, most recently on further developing the LEPS parental engagement strategy. She has been an inspirational leader for the school community, and we will miss her humour and insight at our meetings. Good luck and Bon Voyage!

Congratulations

We congratulate Mrs Trigg who was successful in her application to become our new Assistant Headteacher, following a thorough assessment and interview process for six potential candidates, both internal and external, that were shortlisted. She has a wealth of experience at Little Ealing as a class teacher and a middle leader and we are all looking forward to working with her in her new senior leadership role. Well done!

Shirley Kenworthy-Wright, Chair of Governors

Resources Update

Whilst for the school year we are only in the first term, for the financial year (which starts in April) we have now past the halfway point. I'm pleased to report that we remain on course to operate within our budget, something that continues to be a key priority for the committee. In addition to our regular funds, we have funding from the government each year for capital expenditure and an environmental grant. We have been ensuring that we that we fully spend our allowances, and on the appropriate type of activity. Therefore this term we have approved a couple of significant facilities projects: the first to enable the redevelopment of the food tech room to provide a more flexible learning space; and the other to the improve the level of insulation for the school, which is a priority for us, as although our current energy deal has shielded us to a significant degree from fuel cost increases, this is something that will eventually impact us (as well as the environmental benefits of increasing our energy efficiency of course).

Alex Vines, Chair of Resources

Teaching and Learning Report Autumn 2023

Children settled into school smoothly following the established routine of the Hamilton Trust wellbeing scheme. Following the successful first year of the Read Write Inc phonics programme, the focus is on embedding it and implementing the comprehension strand into Year 2. Implementing discreet reading domain lessons across school is helping children to acquire transferable skills and strategies to support comprehension.

The school is excited to embark on the Voice 21 oracy programme. The ethos of this programme is a great fit with the values of Little Ealing. It will teach pupils to become more effective speakers and listeners empowering them to better understand themselves, each other, and the world around them.

We are investing in further professional development to support subject leads' work on the curriculum to sequence vocabulary to match the knowledge from Early Years to Year 6 and to develop the Art curriculum. This is to continue to provide a high-quality, inclusive education for our children and to address Ofsted recommendations.

The Teaching and Learning Committee has a laser focus on attendance as every day in school counts. The year-group leaders' structure is working well as the leaders really know the children, have productive conversations, and intervene quickly to make sure each child is supported.

Many wonderful extra-curricular activities and excursions have taken place this term, including the Year 6 residential to Conover Hall, cinema and theatre trips, Parliament visits, musical and sporting events and the French ambassador club.

We appreciate the ongoing support of parents, caregivers, and staff in contributing to the fantastic learning opportunities within our school community.

Katie Stone, Chair of Teaching and Learning

Pay Committee

In addition to our annual pay review committee meeting, we have also had a couple of extraordinary pay committee meetings, not only to reflect changes in our SLT but to ensure every member of staff at LEPS feels valued and is remunerated fairly. Staff wellbeing is critical to staff retention, and we have tried to make sure the staff annual appraisal is collaborative and focuses on coaching and development, acknowledging overall personal opportunities and wellbeing.

Resham Baruah, Vice Chair of Governors, Chair of Pay Committee.

Safeguarding Update

The September term always brings with it updated guidance from the DfE around creating a safe, inclusive learning environment in schools, which governors and staff commit to reading, understanding, and putting into practice. For 2023-2024 that has included significantly updated controls to ensure that all internet traffic into and out of the school network is appropriate for learning, and anything that may not be is flagged for prompt follow-up; we are supporting Halina, Varinder, and others to ensure LEPS is providing internet access to children that keeps them safe and supports their learning.

In addition to the usual termly safeguarding inspections and visits, we commissioned an extensive external audit of the school's safeguarding approach, postponed from last term due to the Ofsted review. It was a forensic exploration of the school's safeguarding systems, governance, and behaviours. While the imminent report will suggest actions, the inspectors were impressed with LEPS' safeguarding approach, governance and leadership, and there are no serious issues to address. Thank you to Caroline, Halina, the safeguarding team and LEPS' staff in general for continuing to actively ensure a safe, inclusive learning environment for pupils and staff.

Andrew Wood, Safeguarding Link Governor.