

Governors' Newsletter Autumn Term 2022

We are pleased to share with you our brief reports on the work of the Governing Board this term. We were delighted to join so many of you at the Year Ahead meeting in September, where we were able to outline our 5year strategy and how this has fed into the priorities in the school development plan for this year. We are now busy supporting the school leadership team to achieve this plan. If you would like to find out more about what we do and our strategy please look at the Governors Section of the school website.

Changes to Governing Body Membership.

We are pleased to welcome 2 new Co-Opted governors who joined us in October following our interview process. Inara Khan, who has previous governor experience in an inner- city secondary school and years of project management experience and Yasmin Vakil who has recently retired from her role in structural change with a corporate bank. They will both be joining the Resources Committee.

Sadly, we are saying goodbye to 2 Governors this term as their terms of office have come to an end. Firstly, Jaisheree Vyavaharkar, a Parent Governor who has been our link governor for parental engagement and pupil premium for the past 4 years. Jaisheree has sat on both Resources and Teaching and Learning Committees and has been enthusiastic and committed to her role and contributed very effectively to our collective decision making. Secondly, Mrs Louise Burgess who is a Co-Opted Governor as well as a class teacher in year 2. Louise has brought her professional insight and experience of teaching in LEPS to the board and to the Teaching and Learning Committee and contributed greatly to our discussions. I want to take this opportunity to thank them both and wish them and their families well for the future.

We have held an election for a new parent governor and I am delighted to welcome Ben Lever to the Board. We will be recruiting another Co-Opted governor in the New Year.

Have a good break

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTFA and all their supporters for putting on our first Christmas Fair since December 2019. It was a huge success raising funds for school projects. They have also helped to get many parents more involved in the life of our school community through the class reps and welcome evenings.

We would also like to thank all our parents and carers for the support you give to our school. We hope that you will continue to join in the workshops and events designed to support you with helping your child at home with their learning. We wish you all have a great Christmas break.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the staff at Little Ealing Primary School for their commitment and dedication to providing a safe, secure and welcoming learning environment and for being willing to try new ways of working to continue to develop our broad and balanced curriculum and the outcomes for our pupils. We really appreciate all that you do for the school and wish you and your families a happy and healthy break.

Shirley Kenworthy-Wright, Chair of Governors

Teaching and Learning

The big push on early reading in Reception and KS1 continues with the implementation of the synthetic phonics programme, Read Write Inc. Miss Orchant has been instrumental in leading the

scheme, staff have been trained to deliver the programme, and parents and carers attended a phonics evening and have access to the phonics videos. Teachers have benefited from a development day with a phonics consultant and are already seeing a positive impact on children's reading with good progress towards the end of year phonics target. I was delighted to see phonics lessons in action across multiple classes to see the consistency of phonics practice, how well the children are responding to the structure and pace of lessons and engaging with Fred the phonics frog who helps them to sound out words.

Now that the new way of teaching phonics is well established, the focus will be on implementing an oracy-rich approach to teaching and learning across the curriculum. Drawing on the work of Oracy21, this will encourage more emphasis on and high expectations around speaking and listening skills. This will build the children's confidence and have a positive effect on their writing as they are able to express themselves more clearly and use a wider variety of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are now following 'Maths Mastery' which will help to improve their understanding of number, which will provide a strong foundation for the rest of their maths learning. This will be used to supplement White Rose Maths resources, apart from in Reception.

The full range of subjects continues to be taught and enjoyed across the school, with plenty of opportunities for enrichment with school trips, sporting events, musical activities and much more taking place during the term.

Katie Stone, Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

Resources

I'm sure most of you have seen the extensive media coverage of the issue of school finances, and the concerns expressed by many head teachers and school leaders across the country. The central cause of this is that government funding for schools has not kept pace with the salary increases awarded to teaching and support staff, when salaries make up approximately 75% of a school's expenditure. This is on top of the increases in energy costs and other inflationary pressures. Therefore, in Resources we have been addressing how LEPS will respond to this situation. We have produced a revised set of long-term financial modelling to take account of these pressures, which was reviewed in this term's committee meeting. Whilst the situation for LEPS is not as immediately dire as some schools are reporting, due to our contingency funds which provide a good cushion for this sort of event, we have set in motion a thorough review of costs to ensure that we have a medium-term plan to help ease the school into this future financial landscape. At the time of writing the government has just announced more education funding for next year, which should help to a degree, although we have no communication as yet on what the national level of funding would translate into for LEPS.

Alex Vines, Chair of Resources Committee

Pay Committee

It was an immense privilege to chair the teachers' pay committee meeting at the beginning of October. We had the opportunity to scrutinise anonymised appraisals and career development aspirations and plans, for teachers throughout the organisation.

The committee was struck by the commitment and sense of community within the teaching body, and we heard of numerous examples of staff contributing over and above what's expected, in so many different ways, throughout the school. We heard how aspirational staff are; personally, for the whole school, I as well as for students and how the school is endeavouring to ensure truly individualised staff appraisals with a focus on coaching and development.

This, of course, feeds into my role as Wellbeing Governor and at a recent training day, held by Ealing Education, it was clear that the evidence shows that schools with staff members that have high wellbeing, have students with high wellbeing, and happy students are more able to learn. Mental and emotional wellbeing is clearly integral to the LEPS learning environment and I am also pleased to report that the school has recently conducted a wellbeing staff survey and is already acting on the results, for example by improving the staff room. In addition, the school is instituting tea and talk sessions for the staff members.

Of course, wellbeing is profoundly impacted by financial hardship and we know that times are tough, with school budgets under significant strain. Only recently we hear that one in ten teachers, nationally being forced to take on additional jobs in the face of rising living costs. We continue to follow our school pay policy and appraisal policy in order that we comply with the national agreements on cost of living pay increases and the pay for performance for our teachers, together with our focus on staff and pupil wellbeing, we aim to ensure the highest educational standards for our children.

Dr Resham Baruah, Chair of Pay Committee and Wellbeing Governor

Safeguarding

Andrew Wood (Safeguarding governor) and I performed two safeguarding school visits this term. On Friday 18th we visited the school to see anti-bullying week, which is based around the theme of "Reach Out". We engaged with the children as they were creating anti-bullying posters, and they were able to tell us all about the meaning behind Odd Socks (respecting diversity) and Reach Out (speaking to a teacher, trusted adult or friend if bullied). We then returned to the school a week later to run several focus groups with children and teachers. We found that teachers had excellent recall of the safeguarding policies, knew the processes required to keep children safe, and gave us examples of where they had followed those procedures. The focus groups with Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children revealed that they felt very safe in LEPS. They had good recall of the teaching on safeguarding that they had received through one-off events (like anti-bullying week), but also through the regular PSHE and computing curriculum. It was very reassuring to hear their examples of where they had turned to teachers when worried, and to hear that in all examples the teacher had resolved the situation.

Alex Vines, Deputy Safeguarding Governor