

Westcott Church of England School

Governing Board Newsletter

Nº 4 - March 2023



Hello Everybody

This newsletter is intended to keep members of the school community up to date with activities at school from the perspective of the Governing Board. We intend to issue Newsletters regularly so that you are kept aware of what is happening at school now, and what is planned for the future.

School Leadership

Interim Headship is being provided by Jacquie Coles and Paula Shaw. Both are very experienced and capable headteachers, who come to us from other small village schools. We thank their "main" schools for releasing them to work at Westcott. Jacquie and Paula have been making tremendous efforts to lead the school as it improves, for which we are very thankful. There is agreement in principle for them to work at Westcott into Summer Term, should that be needed, which promises helpful stability of school leadership.

Helen Barrett

The whole school community has been shocked and much saddened to hear of Helen Barrett's sudden passing. Helen served Westcott CofE as Mid-Day Supervisor. She was grandmother of two pupils at the school, but well known to all of our pupils through her presence at lunchtimes. Helen's family are in our thoughts and prayers at this time of loss and sadness.

Staff

A **big thank you to all members of our staff team**, who continue to respond with commitment at a challenging time of recovery for the school. They have shown admirable work in developing themselves and our school to serve our pupils even better.

Mrs Austin has chosen to move on to a new career, having served as teacher at Westcott CofE school for a number of years. We thank Mrs Austin for all her work teaching work and the positive difference she has made for pupils at our school. We wish her well, and hope that she will find her new work fulfilling.

School Improvement.

School Leaders and Governors are working together with Bucks Council and Oxford Diocese Board of Education (ODBE) colleagues to improve the school. The Intertim Heads continue to manage and implement a **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**, which covers in more detail the work to be done this term.

There are regular **TAS (Team Around The School)** meetings to check progress. All those involved in school improvement are held to account for the work that has been done and results achieved thus far. The mood of these meetings has generally been constructive, recognising that there has been significant progress as well as acknowledging that there is still much to do.

Quality of Education and Behaviour

Improvements continue, especially in key areas of the curriculum, such as Literacy and Maths. Governor visits before and after Easter will continue to monitor progress.

On 1st February, the school was visited by the Director of Education from the Oxford Diocese Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST). The informal feedback we received was very positive, namely that:

- Pupils were engaged in their learning tasks
- Behaviour was good
- Pupil books showed good levels of progress

The new **Behaviour policy** implemented last term, is bringing benefits. There is more clarity and consistency on rewards and sanctions. Pupils reported through Pupil Voice that they understand what good behaviour is, and that they are behaving better. A recent governor visit reported good standards of pupil behaviour and engagement in lesson.

Academisation

Work continues with Oxford Diocese Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) and Bucks Council to progress the academisation. We've had to secure our use of the area behind the main school buildings, which is leased from a property trust, rather than being diocese property. Latest estimate is that the academisation will complete in July. We will update you when there is more news.

The academisation is an opportunity to refresh and relaunch the school. To that end, the governing board is beginning to consider options for future school Values, Vision and Mission Statement. In due course, these will be adopted in consultation with the whole school community.

Parent Governors

Please contact the interim headteachers or Jonathan Lewin - email below - if you would like to know more about being a Parent Governor. We really would like the parents to be represented on the Governing Board.

If ever there was a time to feel you were influencing the strategy of the school, surely it is now, as we rebuild from last Summer's Ofsted inspection and prepare for academisation.

Current Governing Board Membership

Rev Caroline Wainman - Vicar of Waddesdon and Westcott. Rev Caroline leads services at our church and collective worship for our school

Jenath Khan - Local Authority Governor. Jen is a Bucks resident who teaches in Milton Keynes and wants also to contribute to education through school governance.

Jonathan Lewin - Foundation Governor, Chair. Jonathan is part of the congregation at St Marys.

Kim Nettleton - Staff Governor. Most of us will know Kim from her role in school administration.

Kirsty Eales - Foundation Governor. Kirsty is part of the congregation at St Michaels, Waddesdon. She is headteacher at another combined school in Bucks.

Lorna Piper - Foundation Governor, Diocese Appointed - has joined us recently. Lorna has experience as a teacher and Maths Advisor, as well as leadership of a school regenerating from Special Measures.

Toby Long - Foundation Governor, Diocese Appointed. Toby has worked with Westcott CofE in the past in his role as School Advisor with Oxford Diocese Board of Education.

In addition, the **Interim Heads** report to Governor meetings.

Thank you for reading this newsletter.

Jonathan Lewin

Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Governing Board, Westcott CofE School

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