



GROWING, LEARNING, ACHIEVING TOGETHER

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COLD HARBOUR
C of E Primary School

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GOVERNORS NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our second edition of the "Governors Newsletter".

Hi, I'm Penni and as the newest governor on the Governing Body I thought I would share my experiences with you of the training and support I have received as I became a governor of Cold Harbour School. As a qualified accountant with many years' experience of school funding I thought that my skill set would be useful as a governor. Also as a member of St Mary's Church congregation I was aware that there was a vacancy for a Foundation Governor, so it seemed to be a good match. I had already looked on the school website to see what information was publicly available, but it was lovely to see around the school and meet some of the staff and children when I came into the school to meet the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The appointment process for a Foundation Governor requires approval from the Governing Body as well as from the Oxford Diocese. Also, all governors are required to be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked so a bit more paperwork to be completed before I was fully compliant.

Attending my first governing body meeting at the end of the summer term was daunting as I did not know what to expect, but the other governors were very welcoming and soon put me at ease. The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors bring their reports to this meeting; this is their opportunity to highlight any items of interest or issues or to cover any requests that information that have been made by the governors. There is also a termly Governors Briefing from the Local Authority that highlights key areas that the Governing Body should be focusing on and any new regulations that might impact on the school. The clerk ensures that it is included on the agenda to ensure we are compliant with any regulations or local authority requirements. The clerk as well as taking the minutes can advise on a wide range of governance issues to support the Governing Body.

As well as attending the full Governing Board meetings three times a year, I am also a member of the Finance Personnel and Premises Committee. This Committee meets several times a term as required. In the autumn term we met to discuss and approve policies that required renewing including the first aid policy and the lettings policy. There was also a whole meeting dedicated to reviewing the budget now that we are half way through the financial year.

Now a fully-fledged governor I found that there is a wealth of information available to me. Much information including meeting agendas, reports and policy documents for the school are available via an

on-line portal called Governor Hub. Governors of Cold Harbour can upload and share documents as well as hold discussions on items of interest. Articles of national interest are available in the section of the portal that is available to all governors of all schools. There are also a wide range of training courses available and one Saturday at the start of the autumn term I attended a governor induction training course, where I met new governors from across all schools in Milton Keynes. We learnt what our role as a governor was and had plenty of opportunity to discuss and share ideas about how we could best support our school. We learnt that a key part of our governor role was to be a 'critical friend'; to challenge and provide strategic (not operational) support. The following week I attended the annual governors' conference, where I heard a range of topical issues from outside speakers as well as information from the local authority on education standards within Milton Keynes. In November I attended training on Understanding ASP (Analyse School Performance) to provide me with a clear holistic view on the performance outcomes of pupils in the school. It also enabled me to provide support and challenge to the Head Teacher in bringing about school improvement.

All publicly funded schools are inspected by Ofsted, but as Cold Harbour is also a Church of England school, it is subject to a further inspection known as SIAMS or Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. I am supporting Rev. Matt Beer, one of the other governors who is taking a lead in this area. Initially we have met with Vikki Borner, who is the lead in the school to see what is already happening to help draw up an action plan of the key areas we would like to strengthen. As a governor we are encouraged to visit the school and talk to staff to help further our understanding of the specific area we are focusing on and to provide strategic support.

Governors Tea Party:

Each month the school focuses on a different Christian value. Two children from each class are selected when they have been able to demonstrate the chosen value. They are rewarded by being invited to the Governors tea party. Governors take it in turns to host the tea party bringing fruit and sweet treats for the children to share and to congratulate the children on demonstrating one of the values.

Membership of the Governing Body:

As Governors of Cold Harbour School, we are regular people who want to ensure the best opportunities and outcomes for the pupils of the school. We all have different reasons for becoming a governor and we all have different skill sets (you don't have to be an accountant). There is currently a vacancy on the governing body for a parent representative. Do you want to make a difference in your child's school? If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact the school office. This position will be filled by holding an election if more than one parent is interested. Feel free to contact any of the governors for an informal discussion about the role.

How to contact the Governors:

We are often in school visiting children and staff or attending events and celebrations and are always happy to hear from you. We can be contacted via the school office or email at: sharon.power@coldharbour.milton-keynes.sch.uk

Kind Regards,
Penni Powers
Foundation Governor