



Stafford Leys Primary Governors Newsletter

INSPIRING CONFIDENCE, COMPASSION, CHARACTER AND FUN.

Feb 2019

Dear Parents,

Progress

Last September, I wrote to update you on the progress Stafford Leys had made since our Ofsted inspection in April 2018. Last term was extremely busy for staff and governors alike, as there were many changes that needed to be made in order to further improve our school. Of course, these changes are ongoing, but I am pleased to report that there have been many positive updates as verified by external advisors. Our leadership and management consultant is working closely with leaders and governors in the school. He has carried out training and one to one mentoring sessions which have been positively received by all.

“Significant changes have been made to the way in which senior leaders and governors carry out their roles resulting...in leadership and governance improving and...leading to an improving picture in teaching, learning and assessment and the progress children are making.” (taken from the Leadership and Management report Jan 2019)

This week, the school underwent a mini audit from an outside agency Bradgate Education Partnership. Whilst we are confident the school is clearly progressing, based on the feedback we have received from our advisors, it is essential that we continue to seek support and evidence from others. The school received positive feedback, with behaviour, progress in writing and reasoning in maths all being highly praised.

“Leaders know their school, and its pupils, very well. Leaders presented the school consistently and with clarity – identifying accurately the key priorities.” (taken from Notes of Visit 4.2.19)

Pupil Premium

In our last newsletter, I informed you that we appointed a lead-governors for pupil premium and SEND. Parent governor James Cross has worked closely with Karren Hardy, who has made rapid progress in this area. A follow up review of Pupil Premium was completed on 29th January and the reviewer was very impressed with the vast improvements that have been made in a short space of time, and the impact this is already having on children. Governors are now effectively monitoring the impact of funding, progress and attainment of Pupil Premium and SEND pupils.

Meet the Governors

Our governing body remains extremely keen and committed to help bring about necessary changes. We have implemented the suggestions made as a result of the external governance review which took place last July, and look forward to showing Matt Miller the impact these changes are having on the school, when he returns in March. For more information on the governors, please take a look at our page on the school [website](#).

As you know, we currently have two parent governor vacancies, and the deadline for you to vote is 12pm on Thursday 14th February. After our last election, we welcomed Mrs Kate Kite and Mr Simon Willcock, both of whom are teachers and are using their skills to enable the governing body to improve their effectiveness in supporting and challenging the Senior Leadership Team.

Our Academy Improvement Board, which meets with Mr Kitchen every 2-4 weeks, enables governors to closely monitor the progress and impact of the School Improvement Plan.

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Governor Training

As a result of the training governors have received, they are now aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have the knowledge and confidence to ask the right questions, hold leaders to account and provide appropriate support in order to ensure the improvements required are met. Other training undertaken by governors last term include Pupil Premium, SEND, Safeguarding, Monitoring Teaching & Learning (with a focus on high ability pupils), Data and Safer Recruitment. All training sessions have ensured that governors are up to date with key issues and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Data Tracking

In September, I informed you of a new data tracking system which was being installed to allow for better tracking of all pupils' progress. Our Chair of the Curriculum Committee, Mark Donne, meets with Miss Bignell regularly in order to monitor its effectiveness. He is pleased to report that the new system is enabling efficient, detailed, up to date and consistent data input for all classes and groups. Ultimately this will enable better tracking, monitoring and intervention as well as supporting the progress/attainment information already provided.

School Visits

One of the best and most effective ways in which a governor can get to know their school is to visit during the school day. This enables governors to be good ambassadors of the school and increases their knowledge base, so they can make wise decisions and provide effective support and challenge at governor meetings. Our visits are an important way for us to measure success and understand the progress of activities and priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan. Last term, myself and Mark Donne met with the leaders for English and Maths and were able to check the progress of their action plans. We were impressed with the new initiatives such as the whole class reading and use of VIPERS in English as well as the new approach of going DEEPER in Maths which is clearly promoting children to explore and develop their reasoning skills further. This term, governors look forward to completing learning walks in these subjects, so we can see evidence of the progress being made in the classrooms. Other visits which took place last term focused on Challenge and Behaviour, SEND and Pupil Premium and also Safeguarding. A report is always completed following a visit, which enables governors to identify Stafford Leys' strengths and areas for development as well as any future actions which need to be completed or checked. These findings are always shared with other governors at relevant committee or full governor meetings.

Have your say!

Finally, remember that our parent forum, which meets termly, is a fantastic opportunity to put your views across to the school. This is a really useful way for both the school to gauge parents' opinions on current topics and for you to raise any general issues that are of importance whilst receiving a direct response from Mr Kitchen. If parents have particular issues, but are unable to attend, we have a parent forum email address parentforum@staffordleys.com where we can raise your concern on your behalf. Each meeting usually lasts around an hour, and tea and coffee is always provided. If you would like to find out more, please see the school website <http://www.staffordleys.com/parent-forum.html> or email us at the above address. Our next parent forum will be held in March.

I look forward to updating you at the start of the summer term on our continued progress.

Kind regards,
Mrs Alli Hammond, Chair of Governors