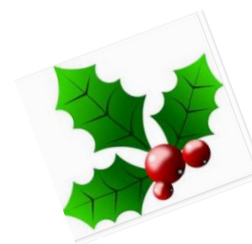


## Governors' Newsletter

Autumn Term 2023



### *Happiness at the heart of learning*

Dear Parents and Carers,

Governors in the school. This is the first edition of the academic year 2023-24. Firstly, the Governors welcome all children and families who have joined our school community this term, whether in Year 3 or other year groups, and new staff members too. It has been good to hear how everyone has been settling in.



Once again, this has been a very busy term. As Governors, we held our first Full Governing Board meeting in school in mid-October. In addition, we have held virtual meetings of the Resources' Committee (to discuss the school's finances and how it is used to support teaching and learning) and Pupils' Committee (to discuss how all children are progressing in all aspects of their schooling). Several Governors have also visited the school to meet with teachers leading on different aspects of the curriculum or key areas of responsibility such as safeguarding. The Strategy Committee has met in school to look at key local and national developments, and to evaluate how we are meeting the expectations of our role. Governors have also come into school to experience some of the special events that take place each year. We reflect on some of these activities in the articles below.

**Angela Doherty, Co-opted Governor, Chair of Governors**

### **Our governors**

**Parent governors (2):** (chosen by the parents): Kieran Bassan (Chair of Resources' Committee), Kelly Barter

**Staff governor (1):** (chosen by the school staff) Mr Jones

**Local Authority (LA) governor (1)** (role required in LA maintained schools) Jennifer Bull

**Co-opted members (7):** (chosen by the GB): Angela Doherty (Chair) Sally Davies, Manish Lath, Ashish Seksaria, Jane Guest (Chair of Pupils' Committee and Vice-Chair), Vacancy

**Headteacher:** Mrs Moloi

We are very pleased to welcome **Jane Guest** as a new Co-Opted Governor. Jane who has also agreed to take on the role of Vice-Chair and Chair of the Pupils' Committee, gives an outline below of her reason for becoming a Governor and her initial impressions of the school. **Mr Jones** is also welcomed as the new staff Governor and **Jennifer Bull** has now been designated as the Local Authority Governor.

**We still have one vacancy on the board. If you would like to find out more about becoming a Governor, please contact Mrs Moloi or email: [governors@whitehalljunior.org](mailto:governors@whitehalljunior.org)**



I have been working in education for over 40 years, initially as a teacher and then in school improvement. For the last 12 years, I have run my own consultancy working in many schools, trusts and local authorities across all phases from nursery to colleges. In the past, I have also been an Ofsted inspector. In recent years, I have been working less and thought that being a school Governor would be a role in which I could utilise my skills and experience. From my first visit to look around the school seeing the pupils and staff at work, I felt that Whitehall Junior School was a special place. Since then, I have attended two very well organised Governor meetings and come into school to meet the Deputy Head, Mrs Upfield, the SENDCo, Mrs Huse, and reading and writing leads, Miss Mattera and Mrs Norman. I have been extremely impressed by everyone's knowledge and commitment and thorough approach to their roles in the school. **Jane Guest, Co-opted Governor, Vice-Chair, Chair of Pupils' Committee**

## Vision, values and strategic goals

We set our strategic goals for three years with the 2020-23 period ending in the Summer Term. Reflecting on our vision, values and strategic goals at the Strategy Committee, we felt that the key themes were still relevant and so will continue for 2023-2026. We give examples below of how we monitor the goals.

### Our vision:

**'Happiness at the heart of learning'**  
**In our welcoming and inclusive school, we strive to be the best in everything we do.**

Our values: **Bravery, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Generosity, Excellence**

### Our strategic goals:

**To improve achievement across the curriculum**  
**To ensure the safety and well-being of all our school community**  
**To use our resources effectively to meet our goals**

## Improving achievement across the curriculum



### Subject visits

All Governors are linked to subject areas. In the Spring Term, we have time allocated to subject visits, but some Governors were in touch with the subject leaders this term, particularly if the Governor or the teacher was new to the role. Visits or online meetings took place for **Maths** (Jen Bull), **PSHE** (Kelly Barter), **Geography** (Manish Lath), **English** (Jane Guest) and **Art and Music** (Angela Doherty). Areas discussed included: recent topics taught, approaches to teaching, special days, new resources and staff training. Examples include:



**PSHE:** Mental Health Day on 10 October and the 'Make Noise about Bullying' initiative that sparked helpful conversations among children;

**Maths:** Looking at the structure and delivery of maths and the data to create the development plan for the year ahead;



**Geography:** discussed resources such as world globes and field trips;

**Art and Music:** Subject leaders will be providing whole-school training to get staff feedback on the subjects and are planning pupil surveys to get their feedback too;



**English:** introductory meeting for the new governor to get an overview of the approaches to reading and writing.

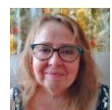
Thank you to all the members of staff who gave up their time to meet with us.

## Ensuring the safety and well-being of our school community



**Attendance:** We have a target of **96% attendance for all pupils**. Coming to school regularly is one of the most important factors in ensuring that children do well at school so we ask all parents to do their best to make sure their children come to school every day. From the regular reports from Mrs Moloi, we were pleased to hear that attendance for all pupils for the term to date is **95.5%** which is close to the target and above the **national average for primary schools of 95.1%**.

**Safeguarding:** At the beginning of term, we met with Mrs Moloi, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and Mrs Huse, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, for our termly safeguarding visit. Areas we discussed included staff training, setting up a review of online safety and developing a safeguarding action plan as requested by the local authority. **Sally Davies and Angela Doherty, Safeguarding Link Governors**



## Christmas at Whitehall! 'Happiness at the heart of learning'

### Christmas Market



The annual Christmas market held jointly with the Infant School launched the Christmas season on the 1 December. As always, the event was hugely popular with lots of children and families attending. Despite being incredibly cold, it was a crisp, dry afternoon for everyone to enjoy.



The food stalls offering a range of fare including burgers, curry and waffles had enormous queues and there was a whole range of fun activities and opportunities to win prizes. The choir sang a fantastic medley of traditional carols and Christmas songs and Mrs Upfield's innovative new system for the tombola was also a great success!

### Year 4 Production

Thank you to all the Year 4 team, pupils and staff for putting on a wonderful production of the Grinch. I was unfortunately unable to attend and was very sorry to hear that I had missed such a great performance!



### Year 3 Christmas Concert



On the last Friday of term, it was wonderful to see so many parents at the Year 3 Christmas concert, the last of the performances by year groups that had taken place during the week.



As families settled down with a cup of tea and a scone, the children sang Christmas favourites with great gusto together as a year group, then followed by Bees, Caterpillars, and Ladybirds, heartily singing their chosen class performance.

The morning ended with an opportunity for parents to read or complete activities with their children. Mrs Upfield reminded parents of the huge benefit of reading at home every day with their child. Copies of the range of books purchased for Year 3 as part of the school's equality and diversity work were available to enjoy.



Thank you to all the staff for the time, effort and creativity that goes into making the festive events and all of the additional activities provided throughout the term at Whitehall Junior School, so magical and memorable.

***Wishing you and your families a safe and happy Christmas holiday and best wishes for 2024.***

