

Governors' Newsletter

Autumn Term 2021



Happiness at the heart of learning



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of 2021, I would like to thank all members of the Whitehall Junior School community for their contributions to keeping our children safe and supporting them to continue to learn and flourish as individuals despite all the challenges of the year. As parents, you have encouraged your children to come to school and make the most of the learning opportunities made available to them both in and out of the classroom. The teachers and support staff have all worked extremely hard to make school interesting and enjoyable and to build back confidence after so much disruption for the pupils. In addition, our excellent administration and site staff have made sure our fantastic site and buildings are safe and well maintained. Making sure all of this has happened as smoothly as possible is Mrs Moloi and the senior leadership team who have worked tirelessly, planning and replanning in response to the ever-changing situation over the year. As Governors, we are hugely proud of everyone in the Whitehall community – thank you!

In this edition of the newsletter, we will share some of the work we have been doing as Governors this term. We all attend one of the two main Governing Board Committees: Pupils' Committee or Resources' Committee and we are also linked to aspects of the school and a subject on the curriculum. Our overall aim is to ensure that we achieve our vision and strategic 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 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

Angela Doherty, Co-opted Governor, Chair of Governors

Thank you and happy retirement to Mrs Brooks!

The Governors send their very best wishes to Mrs Brooks who is retiring from the school at the end of this term. Mrs Brooks was a staff governor for a number of years and brought her breadth of experience at the school to the Governing Board, particularly in the area of safeguarding. Wishing you a long and happy retirement from us all!



Curriculum visits: To improve achievement across the curriculum

Several Governors have met with teachers who lead on different subjects across the curriculum. We have included extracts from the discussions on the pages below. I hope that you enjoy reading them.

Reading: Angela Doherty, Co-opted Governor

At the Pupils' Committee in November, we learned about the training that has taken place in the school on reading and about the new reading scheme that the school has purchased as a result of additional money allocated by the Resources' Committee. It is very satisfying to see the funding translated into hundreds of books that are now available for pupils to read at school or at home, all carefully graded to the appropriate reading level. In a meeting with Mrs Kelly and Mrs Norman, they explained how excited the children are to have so many new books from which to choose.

One of the consequences of the lockdown for younger children is that they have



missed regular practice when learning to read. Mary met with Mrs Huse and Mrs Sohanpal to discuss the work that they are doing in teaching phonics to groups of pupils in years 3, 4 and 5 who need to develop their basic reading skills.



Mary Clancy, SEN Governor and Chair of the Pupils' Committee

After my recent conversation with the school's SENDCo, and speaking with staff at a recent Governors meeting, I was so impressed with the immense efforts that the teaching staff are making to ensure that every child at Whitehall Junior achieves their personal best. This term, the SENDCo and other members of staff have focused on reading, as it is an undeniable fact that reading is a child's passport to learning. Therefore, each child's reading has been assessed and if the child needs intervention, they are placed on an appropriate programme. This process of intervention and progress will be assessed throughout the school year. COVID-19 continues to place extra work on all teachers and I would like to thank the Headteacher and her staff for their extraordinary efforts this year.

Science: Sally Davies, Co-opted Governor, Resources' Committee

Sally met with Mr Mitchell to find out more about learning in science this term.



Our young botanists in Years 4 and 6 have been busy planting more than 30 trees in the school grounds this term for the [Queen's Green Canopy Project](#). This brought a welcome return to practical and group work in science since the pandemic began. The trees will help reduce the impact of climate change and also earn the school an achievement award as part of the Queen's 75th Year Jubilee Celebrations in 2022.

Science lead, Mr Mitchell's structured reflection this term on the science curriculum, has produced a valuable reference document for teachers to see at a glance what skills and knowledge to emphasise and focus on with pupils. In such a huge subject, it will help to ensure that pupils have strong foundations at each stage to progress. This work has also inspired planning for even more fun and interactive ways to capture children's natural curiosity about themselves and the world around them and to encourage their scientific thinking and practice. Great assets for their future lives!

PE: Kelly Barter, Co-opted Governor – Pupils' Committee

I had a great meeting with Miss Costa with regard to all things sports related! It was lovely to hear that some of the activities that they were not able to do during COVID-19 have been brought back in.



One of these activities is the Bikeability course for pupils in Year 6. This was very well received by the children and we had a very high pass rate and some excellent feedback from the instructors about the behaviour and attitude of the children.

All Year 5 have completed their first week of the swimming programme and plans are being made for the New Year to complete week 2.

The new sports activity team brought in this term called Super Star Sport have started positively with the offering of the after-school clubs which have been well received and enjoyed by the children across all years.



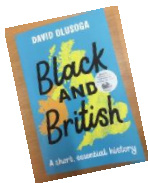
It was also great to hear that team sports were back this term! Netball and football matches have taken place against local schools and the children have enjoyed taking part in these along with the weekly training sessions. Good luck to all budding sports stars in the next term too!

History James Cantwell, Co-opted Governor – Pupils' Committee

James met with Ms Sandanadan to talk about learning history at Whitehall Junior School.

Learning history tells pupils about themselves and encourages them to be excited to tell their own family history. After missing school for a long time, the children are enjoying learning new concepts and vocabulary such as democracy, sovereign and invasion.

Year 5 have enjoyed learning about pharaohs, hieroglyphics, mummification and much more as part of the ancient Egypt topic.



New resources about black history in Britain and black Britons are now available on the school website. This additional resource is available to dip into and has inspired discussions in class about history for example about minority contributions to the second world war. Resources on political black activists and civil rights leaders are also available on the school website for pupils to be inspired.

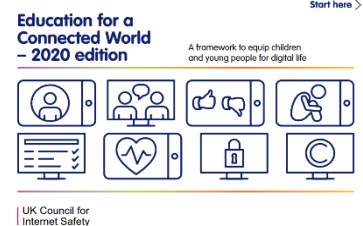
Computing & Online Safety Kieran Bassan, Parent governor, Chair of the Resources' Committee

Kieran met Miss Hyland to discuss computing and online safety.



The school has acquired membership of the National Online Safety (NOS) service. NOS provide support for Keeping

Children Safe in Education (Education for a Connected World) lesson planning, and training and resources for teachers and governors. They also offer engaging information on current online safety issues that can be downloaded and shared with parents to support the current communication strategy. [National Online Safety | Keeping Children Safe Online in Education.](#)



Current curriculum time is around an hour per week and there are eight suggested topic areas so consideration needs to be given on how to plan lessons across the four year groups.

Art & Design Technology Anu Short, Parent Governor- Pupils' Committee and Vice-Chair

Once again, I had the pleasure of meeting with Miss Lusher and Miss Brown to discuss Art and DT this term. Miss Lusher has been busy reforming Art as a whole with great progress being made in introducing assessment grids. These have meant that the children can monitor how they are doing with regular feedback. This has and will encourage all pupils to be their best selves in this subject and help their confidence. Also, do look out for and talk to your children about the Artist of the Week. This will be introduced next term either in assembly or in other

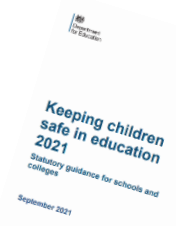


communication. Something that will most definitely help inspire all children creatively and introduce them to a more diverse range of artists.

It was also great to peruse some of the work that Year 5 have been doing alongside Miss Brown, a 'Mouldable Materials' project, making Egyptian Death Masks. This was part of their learning about the Ancient Egyptians in history. They have built on their knowledge of mouldable materials from making volcanoes in Year 4 and have used papier-mâché around a balloon to create the mask shape. They then used bits of paper to create facial features. Whilst completing this project, they have documented every step using their D.T booklet outlining every bit of the process 'research, design, make and evaluate'. It is clear from their evaluation that pupils have really developed their skills since last year which is brilliant to see.

Safeguarding visits: To ensure the safety and well-being of all our school community *Angela Doherty and Matthew Ralph, Safeguarding Link Governors*

Keeping children safe is the key priority of schools and governors. Every year the government updates the document, [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and all staff and governors in school are expected to be aware of the changes with some specialist staff members known as Designated Safeguarding leads receiving extra training. As Safeguarding Governors, we also attend training provided by Hillingdon Borough.



This term we have also completed two safeguarding visits to the school, one in September to go through the new Hillingdon Safeguarding audit with Mrs Moloi and one in December to check the Single Central Record. This document, which is a legal requirement for all schools, is evidence that all staff and visitors to the school have received the correct safety checks. From the previous article on online safety, we will be following up on developments in this area and other changes to Ofsted's 'Inspecting Safeguarding' guidance in our visits in the next two terms.

Resources' Committee: To use our resources effectively to meet our goals

Kieran Bassan, Chair of the Resources' Committee

In addition to monitoring general spending across the budget, the Resources' Committee also receives reports on changes to staffing and pupil numbers, updates on the many contracts that are needed to keep the school running, details of work being completed on the school site and any health and safety visits that have taken place. We also receive reports on grants that the school receives that must be used in a specific way. These include Pupil Premium, Sports Premium and a new Recovery Premium. Some of the activities mentioned in this newsletter have been funded from these grants. Full details of how the grants are spent can be found on the school website. [School Funding | Whitehall Junior School](http://www.whitehalljunior.org)

Spending	Actuals	Budget	Variance
Staff	1,234,567	1,234,567	0.0%
Materials	123,456	123,456	0.0%
Travel	56,789	56,789	0.0%
Utilities	98,765	98,765	0.0%
Printing	34,567	34,567	0.0%
Postage	23,456	23,456	0.0%
Telephone	12,345	12,345	0.0%
IT	78,901	78,901	0.0%
Other	45,678	45,678	0.0%
Total	1,687,456	1,687,456	0.0%

Wishing you and your families a safe and happy Christmas holiday.



More information about the governors can be found on the school website: <https://www.whitehalljunior.org/school-governors/>