

Governors Newsletter July 2016



Welcome to our second newsletter. In this one we would like to explain a little more about the work of the governing body and its committees, as well as provide you all with an update.

Changes to our membership

- Mr Pete Smithson has been appointed as a governor. Mr Smithson lives in the village, is a business manager, a parent and former attendee of the school.
- Mrs Jackie Ward has also joined as an associate member. Mrs Ward comes with great experience in the education field and is working with members of the Provision and Performance Committee.
- Mr Scott Ward has stepped down as a parent governor and we are currently in the process of conducting a parent election.
- Mr Chris Webster has joined the governing body as a parent governor. Mr Webster works at Witham Academy as a teacher and is a valuable member of our Provision and Performance Committee

Transition Evening: 6 July

A number of our governors will be attending the forthcoming transition evening.

Penny Davies and Chris Webster will provide a drop-in session where you can learn a little more about our work.

Mike Bull, David Warner and Rosemary Lee will be available to answer your questions.

We also hope you will help us. If you have a few spare minutes we would very much welcome your feedback.

Hope to see you then.

Minutes and Agenda Papers

If you ever wish to find out in more detail what is being discussed by the governing body, you can request to see the published minutes of our meetings or the agenda papers. These are available to any member of the public. Please contact the school office or Imogen Lemon, Clerk to Governors

Our Committees

The Chairs of each of our main Committee have outlined below their work and their recent focus.

The Strategy and School Improvement Committee

This Committee, formed just one year ago, has been charged with ensuring that the school has a clear strategy in place, that its school improvement plans are devised and implemented fully, and that the governing body itself is effective.

The governing body set out the school's new vision and aims last autumn and a small working group consisting of committee members and members of staff has been asked to devise a strategic plan setting out priorities over the coming years. This plan will be available once agreed.

The effectiveness of the governing body is very strongly linked to the expertise, knowledge and skills of its members. Governors are given regular training to ensure that they are abreast of recent changes and can learn from best practice. This committee identifies the need for and co-ordinates those learning opportunities.

A key focus coming from Government is the need for governing bodies to demonstrate that they have real impact on the success of their school. This committee is therefore responsible for evaluating impact and identifying where the governing body can improve.

Penny Davies, Committee Chair and Chair of Governors

Provision and Performance Committee

This Committee, which usually meets once a term, currently consists of five members including the Chair of Governors and Headteacher. The chief function of this committee is to work with the school in developing and maintaining a high quality of provision so that all children can perform to the best of their ability. It is this committee's duty to ensure that the statutory curriculum is being taught to all children, and also to monitor, through visits to school, progress towards targets detailed in the School Improvement plan.

The Committee is also responsible for matters concerning the welfare of staff and pupils and ensuring that relevant policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.

Rosemary Lee, Committee chair

Finance and Personnel Committee

Over the last twelve months the role of this committee has been severely handicapped by the lack of management information. In April 2015 Lincolnshire County Council moved to Serco's Agresso accounting system. As many of you will have seen in the local press this has experienced major problems and at the time of writing the governors have not received any independent accounting information for fifteen months, nor been able to sign off the final accounts for 2015/16. This has also put a great deal of extra pressure on our School Business Manager, Julia Brooks, but despite this she has performed brilliantly in keeping the committee fully informed of the school's financial position.

This has enabled us to fund a number of initiatives, including an additional member of staff to help in Years 3 and 4, various classroom improvements including new flooring and new tables and chairs, a new reading scheme for Key Stage 1 and funding an apprentice to help in the office.

We shall be looking to fund a number of similar initiatives over the next twelve months, although the committee is reluctant to commit funds for these until we have a clear picture of our financial position. With the government's austerity programme continuing, the school's finances are undoubtedly getting tighter. Despite having more children on role our initial budget share for 2016/7 is £29,000 lower than last year, whilst we also have to fund increases in both employer national insurance contributions and pension contributions.

Notwithstanding this we shall continue to do our utmost to further improve the standard of education for all children at Saxilby Church of England Primary School.

Mike Bull, Committee Chair

As you can see from the committee news, as a Governing Body we have had a very busy year and hope you will all appreciate how much progress there has been at Saxilby Church of England Primary School. Mrs. Stratton and her staff have worked tirelessly to improve both outcomes and the learning environment for your children. I would therefore like to publicly thank Catherine and all the staff for working so hard, over and above what is required of them, to ensure the very best education for the children of Saxilby School.

We haven't by any means sorted everything out but we are well on the way! I hope your children will be very happy in their new classes and will continue to make us very proud of them!

I hope you all have a wonderful relaxing and sunny summer holiday.

Best wishes and thank you for your support.

Penny Davies