



Highwood Primary School

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Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential

Cathy Cox – Head Teacher

Friday 15 December 2017

Highwood Governors' Newsletter Autumn Term 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we draw to the end of the Autumn Term, the pupils and staff have now settled into the newly repaired school building. Unfortunately, not all the outside areas are ready to be released back to the school and various plans have had to be put in place to ensure that the pupils are able to access as much physical exercise as is safely possible. What is encouraging to see, is how flexible the staff and pupils at Highwood are. Our thanks goes to them for cheerfully and stoically dealing with each changing situation they face.

Governors

Two governors stepped down at the end of the Summer Term. We would like to thank both Mrs Jan Stevens and Mrs Donna Fuell for their considerable contributions to the governing body particularly during the challenges of 2016 – 2017. Mrs Stevens (Deputy Head at Parmiter's School) brought a wealth of educational experience to the Development Committee and Mrs Fuell's financial background was a great support to the members of the Resources Committee, who are responsible for managing the school budget.

We have been fortunate in being able to appoint three new governors to the Governing Body with skills that will be beneficial to our team. Mrs Danielle Harte and Mrs Lisa Pratchett, who both have experience in working within a school environment, and Mr Darren Freeman, who has a financial background and previous experience of being a governor at another local school.

We have also had the support of Miss Jo Djora as an Associate Governor, who is a Head Teacher at a school in Barnet and is also currently supporting two other local Hertfordshire Schools as Executive Head Teacher. Miss Djora has provided the Governing Body and all the staff with a great deal of support during the transition period, after the loss of our Head Teacher, Mrs Allen. Her experience was welcome in advertising for a Substantive Head Teacher and in the preparation for and during the recent Ofsted Inspection.

Appointment of Head Teacher

After the due procedure of advertising, selection of applicants and the interview process, the governors were happy to appoint Mrs Cathy Cox as our Substantive Head Teacher.

During the months since February, Mrs Cox has shown her ability to lead the school through some very difficult times, whilst supporting and encouraging staff to deliver strong teaching practice together with career development and progress. We have every confidence that she will move the school forward and the Ofsted result shows that Highwood will continue to flourish under her leadership.



Governors' Day

Governors' Day was held in June and most governors were able to attend and observe a working day at the school. On this occasion the governors observed in pairs, with a more experienced governor accompanying a newer governor, therefore being able to explain in more detail how the school is run. The teachers expressed their pleasure at being able to show the governors their teaching as well as the children's learning. As well as observing classes, some of the governors were shown how daily maintenance of the school is carried out, supervised by Mr Krzysztof Matyskiewicz, the Site Manager. The daily maintenance includes ensuring the safety of the site, especially during the outside repair works. The support staff also shared their work schedules which contribute to the smooth day to day running of the school.

Governors' Meetings

In order to expand our knowledge and deepen our insight into what is happening in school, the governors regularly invite members of the staff team to present reports and host discussions about their specific areas of responsibility. The changes and improvements to the delivery and teaching of mathematics, and an in-depth look at the work of the Inclusion Team, were both highly beneficial for the Governing Body during the spring and summer meetings.

Friends of Highwood

The governors would like to extend a special mention to the Friends of Highwood, most particularly to their amazing Chair, Mrs Lucy Bellam, for continuing to give up their time and energy in order to arrange exciting and engaging ways to raise funds for the school. On several occasions they have had to adjust their plans because of the restrictions in place regarding accessing certain areas of the school. This term the children's discos, Christmas Fair and the Secret Shopping Room have all been fantastic and highly successful events. Your support for these occasions is greatly appreciated and it is your children who will benefit from the money raised.

Thanks

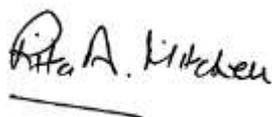
Our appreciation and thanks goes to whole staff team at Highwood who work tirelessly to provide an excellent education for your children. The challenges they have faced have been immense and it is very rewarding to read the comments from the recent Ofsted Inspector who recognised this within his report.

The governors also want to express their thanks to all of you. With your continued support for the school and the staff we are able to maintain the standards that have been achieved. It has been our aim to include you all as members of our school community and we will endeavour to ensure that this continues in 2018.

Season's Greetings

As this term comes to an end we, the governors, wish you all a happy and healthy holiday time and look forward to welcoming you back in January.

Best wishes



Rita Mitchell
Chair of Governors of Highwood