

GREAT TEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welcome to the second issue of the Governor Bulletin, the aim of which is to provide a direct communication channel from governors to parents. Providing updates and insight to our key initiatives, the Bulletin will inform you about the school's development priorities and long-term strategic plans. The first issue received positive feedback, thank you for reading it and we hope you find this one just as useful. New parents can find the first issue of the Bulletin on the [Governing Body webpages](#).

From the Chair of Governors...As we reach the half way mark in the 2017/18 school year it is good to reflect on progress since the June issue, bring to your attention current strategic priorities, and, following the publication of schools' results data by the Department of Education, consider the school's academic achievements.

One of the key strategic development priorities in 2016/17 was improving communication with the school's stakeholders and the relaunch of the Supporters' Club, as the hugely successful Cornbury "Teas for Tew" and associated fundraising efforts came to an end after eight years and over £180,000 raised to build the Year 1/2 classrooms. The response to a call for increased parental support was, quite simply, extraordinary. The school community pulled together to create and support a number of outstanding fundraising events. There was the standard setting Summer Fete, then the Christmas Fete brought Santa and camels to school, the very popular themed discos proved excellent fundraisers and the children excelled themselves at the Macmillan Café. It was really heartening to see how many former pupils came to the Summer and Christmas Fetes – clearly delighted to back among friends and staff. These two events alone raised £14,000 – a magnificent effort. Let the office know if you would like to get involved with the Supporters' Club.

Other development priorities, monitored by governors throughout the year, included the continued improvement of teaching and learning in all aspects of maths and English; strengthening of the effectiveness of school leadership; articulation of a set of school values that underpin all that the school does; and, the development of a buildings strategy within a very tight budget.

There is not space here to fully describe the efforts and progress made in each of these areas – here are some highlights:

- different methodologies and teaching and learning strategies were introduced to meet the evolving demands of the national curriculum and individual needs of the children;
- the house captain elections were an excellent example of democracy in action and developing the children as responsible citizens;

'Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire.' W.B Yeats



Issue 02 Spring Term - 2018

Next Full Governing Body Meeting: 26th March 2018

Who are the Governors?

Chair: Jane Zibarras, Co-opted Governor

Vice Chair: Naomi Roberts, Parent Governor

Lucy Miles, Headteacher

Peter Collins, Parent Governor (previous Chair)

Viv Bennet, Local Authority Governor (previous Chair)

Hugo Brown, Parent Governor

Una Tibbetts, Co-opted Governor

Lauren Nimmo, Staff Governor

Matt Bull, Associate Member

Angela Murrey, Clerk

Contact governors via the School Office: office.2104@great-tew.oxon.sch.uk

The role of governors:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the head teacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Page 1 of 3

- the school's values were discussed and defined by staff and children, a Growth Mindset and resilience, such vital building blocks in learning, have become deeply embedded in school culture;
- finally, the buildings strategy focused on improving the learning environment within the main school building, you will see the impact of this this year and will have an opportunity to get involved!

The School Development Plan is a living document involving staff, governors and children. Building on last year's progress, this year's key areas are:

1. To further improve outcomes in maths and writing
2. To develop processes for assessment, tracking and monitoring of the progress of every child in the school
3. To develop structures and processes for strategic planning and communication with the whole school community
4. To further develop a broad and culturally rich enquiry-based curriculum.

Key area 4 'To further develop a broad and culturally rich enquiry-based curriculum' is at the heart of our school. The school's leaders believe it is vitally important that we offer our children an education beyond the (albeit important, see p.2) tests and that the whole child develops during their time at Tew. It is very much a part of the school's ethos that the Year 6 children leave with broad horizons, high aspirations, a love of learning and respect for others. Thank you, to the staff, parents and governors, who give their time, effort, knowledge and experience, to help our small school meet these ambitious goals.

The governing body is constantly developing and faces around the table change. In November 2017 Sam Reid's term as Staff Governor came to an end – thank you to Sam for her contribution. In December 2017, Sarah Lainchbury, who focused on financial governance, also stepped down. Sarah supported the school for many years, initially as bursar and subsequently as a governor, and will be missed. The search is now on for a new Finance Governor (*see right*). We are delighted to have welcomed two new governors, Hugo Brown (Parent Governor) and Lauren Nimmo (Staff Governor), and to have welcomed back two governors of longstanding, Peter Collins and Viv Bennett, following their re-election as a Parent Governor and Local Authority Governor respectively. There was an excellent turnout at the polls for the parent governor elections - another example of parental engagement and communication with the school – thank you.

In the coming weeks governors will be focused on setting the school's budget and assessing the impact of the government's new National Funding Formula. We will, with staff and the Supporters' Group, look to develop a fundraising strategy. The identification of priorities for spending is particularly important in light of increasingly tight budgets.

We are also currently readying the school for major changes to Data Protection laws which come into effect in May this year – as a 'data controller' the school must be compliant with data protection legislation. This will place new administrative and procedural responsibilities on the school's staff. Governors are working to ensure that all necessary updates are made to policies and processes, and will be informing you of changes as necessary.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this Bulletin and for your on-going support of the school. *Jane Zibarras* cont.,

WANTED:

FINANCE GOVERNOR

Enthusiasm and a commitment to school improvement are the key qualities required in a governor. On occasion the governing body seeks to recruit a new member with a particular skillset and expertise. As mentioned *on left*, we are currently seeking to recruit a governor with financial expertise.

Experience of school finances would be ideal but someone with experience of financial planning and accountability, budget setting and monitoring would be a great addition to the governing body.

The parent body is currently very well represented among governors so ideally, in order to broaden the range of stakeholders at the table, we would like to hear from candidates who do not currently have children at the school. Maybe you know someone?

A full role description is available from the school office and governors would be happy to discuss what the role involves. Chair.2104@great-tew.oxon.sch.uk

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Page 2 of 3

School life is about very much more than success in the national tests. Nevertheless, we are proud of Great Tew's academic performance and the school is frequently highlighted in national league tables. In May 2016, for example, we were in the top 1% of primary schools in England based upon our Year 6 reading results.

Like all small schools we find that an individual pupil's results can have a dramatic effect on overall school statistics and in a small year group, where one pupil can represent over 10% of the overall score, it is easy to see how it only takes one or two children with extra learning needs to cause the overall school result to dip dramatically. Similarly, the school results can be boosted where just one or two children are extreme high-flyers.

The governors keep a close eye on school performance statistics. In addition to looking at annual results, we also examine three year averages as this gives a more realistic sample size in order to judge overall school performance and trends. Even then we are often looking at group sizes of only around 30-40 pupils which (unless our results are extreme) is rarely a reliable statistical sample from which to be able to draw firm conclusions, i.e. results can be skewed, in either direction, by relatively few pupils.

In 2017 the Year 6 class only contained 8 children. The government have decided this is too small a sample size to release the data publicly because doing so could identify individual children and thereby compromise privacy. Our Key Stage 2 results this year will not therefore feature in any national tables.

In simple terms the following table summarises how Great Tew key stage 2 results over the last three years have compared with national results. The shaded column gives the school's percentile rank position for the particular measure e.g. the school was in the top 9% of schools for the proportion of pupils who reached at least the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined over these three years.

		School result	National result	Percentile rank
Reading, Writing and Maths combined	% at least reaching expected standard	87	57	9
	% reaching the higher standard	19	7	32
	Scaled score	106.0	103.5	30
Reading	% at least reaching expected standard	92	68	16
	% reaching the higher standard	43	21	10
	Scaled score	107.9	103.3	9
Writing	% at least reaching expected standard	87	79	28
	% reaching the higher standard	47	23	11
	Scaled score*	107.3	104.8	26
Maths	% at least reaching expected standard	87	72	25
	% reaching the higher standard	28	19	29
	Scaled score	104.7	103.6	43

Combined results for 2015-2017 based on 33 children.

* The scaled score (based on the raw, actual test, score) for the Grammar, punctuation & spelling test is given as the writing assessment does not provide a full range of scaled scores.