



St Nicholas' School

Governors' Newsletter

May 2016

We hope everyone enjoyed their Easter break and have settled into the Spring term. Finally, the sun has made an appearance and fingers crossed it is here to stay!

This newsletter includes an update of the Parent Governor Elections, New Parent Governor's profile, Governor of the month and the new assessments.

But first... a thank you! The Governing Body would like to take an opportunity to thank all those parents, carers and members of the school community that volunteer their time for the benefit of the school.

Also your support in attending various school occasions: Book at Bedtime/Meeting on New Assessments, the wonderful Breakfast before morning drop-off, brainstorming on New Values for the School, Stay and Learn for Maths and Cooking with Parents (every Wednesday after school drop off) is all really appreciated.

Parent Governor Election(s)

The recent Parent Governor election for two Governor vacancies has been successfully concluded, with Lyndsey Middleton, having put her name forward for nomination, being re-elected. Lyndsey has three children in the school, Lachlan in Year 5, Cameron in Year 3, and Douglas in Reception and over her first term as Governor gave more than generously of her time, not least in the preparation of Governors' newsletters. The

Governing Body is delighted to welcome Lyndsey back!

Parent Governor Ayesha Siddika and family are moving to Geneva at the end of May, where Ayesha's husband is taking up a post with the World Health Organisation, for a year initially. Ayesha's son, Ariyan, is currently in Year 3. Over her three years as a Governor, Ayesha has served on the Resources and Community committees, on the Humanities SDG, and has been the After School Club link Governor. The Governing Body is very grateful for all Ayesha's hard work as a Parent Governor and wish her and her family a happy move to Geneva.

Ayesha is to be succeeded by Karen Williams. We thank her very much for putting her name forward for nomination and look forward to seeing her at FGB on June 30, if not before.

There were two nominees for two vacancies, so, as set out in election rules, no ballot was required and both Lyndsey and Karen were elected unopposed.

Bruce Ross-Smith (Returning Officer)

New Parent Governor - Karen Williams

Mother of 3 children:

- Rachel – now year 7 in The Cherwell, was formerly in St. Nicks
- Thomas – in Year 5 with Mrs Fletcher and Mr Nicholls
- Francesca – in Year 4 with Mrs Hill

I moved to Oxford in December 2012 when I started a new job with Oxford University Press. I currently work there as a Business Systems Analyst looking after various systems and running projects. I work full time from 8:15am to 4pm 5 days a week. My role involves a lot of trouble-shooting, organisational skills, training, analytical skills and management of expectations for all different levels and types of user.

When not in work the children keep me very busy with their various activities and interests. I also get involved as much as I can with FOSNS and am currently the Secretary. In between sorting out the children, running the home, keeping hold of my job and various FOSNS activities, I'm currently training for the Blenheim Palace Triathlon in June! Apparently that means 750m swim, 20k bike, 5k run!

Governor of The Month

We agreed, as St. Nicks Governors, that it would be nice if the parents/carers and children would have an opportunity to meet/see us and in turn we could have some real time in the school setting. This is being done by the way of a meet and greet at the school gates in the morning and then visiting various classrooms, attending assembly and the option for school dinners too!

Governor of the Month - Visit to School Wednesday 24 Feb 2016 (Ayesha Siddika, Parent Governor)

9:00 - 9:50: After arrival at the school, Governor hat on, ready for the day! Mrs Crouch took me to the parents' cooking class which is run by parents for parents. Atmosphere was friendly, informal and I had a chance to talk some of parents. I was very excited to learn that the group is putting together a cultural cook book with recipes from the parents. I am really looking forward to trying some of the recipes when they are available as a book. I found that the cooking class provides another platform for parents to share their food and discuss school matters with others parents and sometimes Mrs Crouch or a teacher.

9:10 (KS2 assembly): I observed an assembly on the value 'Independence ' by Ms Jo Hacker. She was talking about Grenada and their Independence from the UK. As the school has visitors from

Grenada, it helps them to relate to the country. There were varied question and answer sessions where the children were able to express their opinion about what they can celebrate as British.

9:50 (Early Years): I spent sometime in the Early Years playground and met some of the staff. Children were out in the playground enjoying and playing with their friends and teachers. All the staff were friendly and playful, and also supporting the needs of the individual child, and making sure children are playing safely.

10:10 (KS1 assembly): I observed an assembly on the value 'Independence' for KS1 children by Mrs Cath Codd. Children were very calm and took part in a question and answer session. The teacher encouraged a discussion about 'what Independence means' to them, and what they think. Children were encouraged to talk about it and also about the coming event like 'World Book Day'.

Staff room (10:30): The staff room was one of the busiest places in the break time. I had a chance to catch up with one of the Schools Direct trainees, very pleased to hear her views about the school.

11:00 Class Visit (Year 6 SPAG): Very pleased to see the classes, the way children were learning about SPAG, and how the teacher makes it interesting.

11:10 (Year 5): I observed their rehearsal for an oncoming assembly, and learnt a few interesting facts of history. Children were learning history through play - what a brilliant way to help them understand, and go through the events of history.

11:20 Year 4 (Maths and Music): Children were learning their times tables in a different way so that they can recall instantly and use it to solve different problems. I enjoyed the music lesson too!

11:30 Year 3 ('*Kenning*'): '*Kenning*' s a type of poetry which employs figurative language, and is strongly associated with Old Norse and later Icelandic and Anglo-Saxon poetry. Children were learning about '*Kennings*'; how they can describe an object through '*Kenning*', and how the '*Kenning*' came about. Children were engaged in the session through question and discussion.

11:40 Year 2 (Guided reading and times tables): Again, I was impressed to see the fun way to learn times tables.

11:50 Year 1 (Fractions): Children were taking part in understanding fractions.

12:00 (Lunch with POW): The busiest time is during the lunch hour where so many children were getting nourished and ready to play. My sincere thanks to the lunch team to carry out this job in such an organised way! Also thanks to the catering team for a lovely lunch.

I enjoyed the visit thoroughly. I was amazed to see how busy and vibrant the school is and so much going on in a typical day. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all teachers and teaching assistants for making time for this visit, and thanks to the Headteacher for enabling this for Governors.

My visit finished at 12:45pm.

Next Visit: Sue Townsend and Sean Collins

New Assessments

The Governors have been informed of and presented with the new requirements regarding assessment. We understand that this has been a challenging time for the staff and they have been working extremely hard to find what fits best within our school. The Governors have noted the new assessment grid of procedures for the measurement of progress and attainment, with particular focus on the Big Write, the Big Read, Integris for Maths. St. Nicholas' School had selected as its assessment measure the following descriptors:

Emerging/Developing/Expected/Mastery

A meeting has been held with the Parents explaining the new assessment and a crib sheet will be provided to you soon for future reference.

Achievements & Future Events

Also we are proud to be Awarded with a 'Highly Commended' category for Anti-bullying programme: congratulations to the school staff especially Vicki Davison as Lead here.

The staff and children compiled an Anti-Bullying Rap which was enjoyed by all that were involved.

A reminder that the school will be holding a Community Respect Walk which will be held on Wednesday 25th May (11am-12pm) this will be focusing on respecting people of faith and people of non-faith as well as respecting our bodies, Earth and community.

Save the date: Saturday 18th June, for the School's Big Iftar – the aim for this event is to raise awareness about Ramadan and to bring together parents, children and the local community to break the fast together real time!