



OVERSTONE COMBINED SCHOOL

GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER April 2018

Welcome to the regular newsletter produced by the Governors at Overstone. This is designed to provide parents and carers with information about our work and current priorities.

Governing Body membership

There are still vacancies for new governors to join the school's Governing Body. This is an opportunity to become involved in the strategic management of our school.

The full Governing Body meets four times a year, usually on a Monday evening. Governors are also expected to participate in the work of at least one of the Governing Body's four committees. Governors may take a particular role in a policy area affecting the school, e.g. Equality and Diversity, or liaise with an academic subject co-ordinator.

An effective governing body is made up of governors from different backgrounds with a variety of skills and experience. There is no need to have previous experience as a governor, or professional experience of education. We would be particularly interested to hear from anyone with experience of premises management, human resource management, marketing or public relations but this is certainly not essential. We would welcome enquiries from anyone with:

- A commitment to improving outcomes for children
- A willingness to question and analyse
- Good interpersonal skills

It is important to emphasise that the role of governors is both to support and to challenge the school, not to be involved in the day-to-day running of the school.

You do not need to be a parent of a current pupil to be a governor. We would be delighted to hear from members of the local community who have no current link to Overstone, so please do pass this on to friends, relatives and colleagues.

We are very pleased to welcome Mr Steven Stray to the Governing Body as a co-opted governor.

Details of the current membership are available on the school website:

<http://www.overstone-wing.bucks.sch.uk/site/governors>

Safeguarding

The welfare of all children at Overstone is the paramount concern for all staff and governors. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Bowskill and the Additional Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mr McArthur and Mrs Bendall. The Safeguarding Governor is Mrs Michelle Sutton, who recently visited the school to review its safeguarding procedures and policy. The 2016 Ofsted inspection report praised the school's safeguarding procedures and Mr Bowskill is reinforcing this by streamlining the reporting process and developing staff capacity to manage safeguarding issues. All staff have received safeguarding training and there are regular opportunities for them to refresh their

knowledge and to receive guidance on issues. The school's safeguarding policy has been updated and is available on the school website, together with a range of valuable resources for both children and parents/carers. If you have any questions about the school's safeguarding procedures or policy, please do not hesitate to speak to Mr Bowskill.

Strategic Planning

Among the core functions of the Governing Body is ensuring the school's strategic direction. The Finance Committee has been working with school staff to develop the school's strategic planning activity and held a strategy meeting last term where members considered a range of areas which could affect future development of the school. These included academy status, pupil numbers, budget sustainability, use and condition of school buildings and facilities for outside activity.

You may have read that most schools are currently managing tight budgets and Overstone is no exception. Finance Committee is working with the Senior Leadership Team both to review expenditure and to consider options for additional income generation.

Bucks County Council has invested in the school's infrastructure this year by funding the replacement of the boilers which should give more effective and efficient operation in future.

Governor Visits

It is important that Governors visit the school regularly to allow the Governing Body to carry out its monitoring and evaluation work effectively. Topics for recent Governor visits have included:

- health and safety
- safeguarding procedures and policy
- provision of support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- provision of mathematics, science and computing teaching

As always, Governors have presented reports on their visits to the Governing Body and any necessary follow-up action has been identified.

Governing Body Meeting March 2018

The most recent meeting of the Governing Body was held on 19 March. An important aspect of the Governing Body's work is holding the Headteacher to account for the school's educational performance. Each term the Headteacher provides the Governing Body with a report which covers all aspects of the school's activities and the meeting is an opportunity for Governors to interrogate this. Examples of areas which Governors questioned at the last meeting are:

- progress and attainment of pupils across the school
- impact of interventions with Pupil Premium children
- raising e-safety awareness among parents/carers
- impact of staff training

Following a recent bulletin from the Bucks Learning Trust, Governors also reflected on the effectiveness of the current governance structure.

Feedback

We hope that you have found this interesting. Do let us have any questions or comments via the school office or the school e-mail address (admin@overstone-wing.bucks.sch.uk).