



## MIDDLE BARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

### GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER     March 2016

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#### Message from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now at the end of the second term at school and it is time to let you know something of the work of the **Governing Body**. Our main role is to work in partnership with the head teacher and staff to support and challenge the school about its performance and the standards it achieves for the pupils. There are 12 governors, made up of a balance of community, parent, staff and authority governors who bring different skills and perspective to the group. We meet bi-monthly as a whole group, to hear through the reports of the committees and in discussion with the head teacher, how the school is progressing. We are focused upon supporting the school to raise standards and establish high expectations in teaching and learning. We also discuss with the staff how any weaknesses are prioritised and addressed. Every governor is also assigned to a sub-committee which meets six times through the year, so all governors can expect to attend a meeting each month.

We have recently appointed two new parent governors, Teresa Street and Matt Cubley who are currently attending governor training and meetings of the two sub-committees, to experience the various roles and responsibilities undertaken by governors. We are very pleased to have them on board.

**The Standards and Performance Sub- Committee** is focused upon the progress and attainment of the children's learning, the standards in teaching, how different children's needs are supported in their learning, how the policies that the school adopt guides the work of the staff and very importantly at the moment, how the New Curriculum is being addressed and its impact on the children's learning. We know that the expectations of the New Curriculum are much broader than previously and children are expected to learn more at each stage. This is going to make a difference to the attainment they achieve.



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**The Resources Sub- Committee** are responsible for areas to do with the upkeep of the buildings, the arrangements for appointment of staff and their salary, the maintenance of a safe environment for the children and agreeing and monitoring the school budget, which is an important focus at this time of year. We know through the latest news from the Chancellor's budget, that there are further cuts to the allocation for schools which we will try to absorb without affecting the children's education. You may have heard too, that all schools are to become **an Academy**. This will mean we will no longer be affiliated to the local authority which provides much of the support and guidance we use at present, so we will begin to explore immediately what these changes will mean for us.

We decided as a whole governing body, that we would undergo a full review of governance from the Local Authority this term, to evaluate our performance as governors and to make any changes necessary to improve our work. This review has given us pointers for working more effectively with the staff in school so that we are closely involved in planning what needs to be tackled each year (The School Development Plan) then during the year to review and evaluate with the head teacher the success of these actions. The governors want to be the best support to the school as possible.

To help us see how progress is being made, governors are also linked to a subject or to a class. Through visits into school and meeting with subject leaders, we are able to understand the school in action. It is always a privilege to watch the children at work in their classrooms and to see their enthusiasm and positive attitudes to work. Their teachers are instilling in each child a 'can-do' approach which will last them a lifetime. We value and thank the staff because we know they contribute so much to making a happy and hard- working school.

I hope you will enjoy reading and learning a little more about the work of one of our committees and news of one aspect-Safeguarding- which is how we keep the children safe while they are at school. I hope this gives you a flavour of our work.



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#### **Report from 'Standards and Performance Committee'**

The newly renamed 'Standards and Performance Committee' met in January and February this year. As well as our usual policy approval role, we have been looking at some bigger issues.

We have been grappling with the Government's new targets for assessment. These very challenging targets replaced assessment levels from September, so schools cannot use previous data to measure pupil progress. This has caused a lot of uncertainty nationally. Our excellent staff are working very hard to support pupils through the recent assessment week and parents through the Parents' Evening.

We have also focused on how our School supports children who face extra challenges. The new *Inclusion Development Plan* requires improvement in standards of teaching, and focused support for individuals of all abilities.

Mrs Smith has taken on the role of SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), and it has dramatically improved the focus and quality of this work already. The whole staff team has pulled together to support Mrs Smith.

Following an external review, we have introduced a *Pupil Premium Plan*. The School receives extra funds for children who are (or have been) eligible for free school meals or have been in the care of the State. I became the 'Pupil Premium Governor' and attended training to see how other schools use their money. Schools have a duty to show it is being spent in the best possible way. Further information on how we spend our Pupil Premium money is on the school website.

We know that all the work we do to raise standards and performance at our School is supported by yourselves at home. Thank-you.

**Richard Brown**  
**(Parent Governor & Chair of the Standards and Performance Committee)**



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#### **An insight into Safeguarding**

The term 'Safeguarding' summarises so many ways in which we aim to keep pupils safe.

As the Governor responsible for this I meet with Mrs. Tailby each half term to discuss any issues/matters arising and it is always an agenda item for Full Governor meetings. This stresses the high priority given to this subject by all of us involved with school; Ofsted Inspectors too will require evidence of this!

Apart from ensuring the children are safe both when on school premises and in the care of staff in any location, we also monitor attendance, punctuality and the general welfare of pupils.

Another key feature is 'E safety' with a rolling programme in action for this. The children are regularly made aware of any dangers in class discussions suitable to each age group, we are also fortunate that our local Community Police Officer (P C Jones) is prepared to come into school from time to time to address the children in a suitable manner giving them the chance to ask questions. I sometimes attend as well so that I know what he says to them and often learn a lot myself!

**Sheila Tumman (Safeguarding Link Governor)**

***On behalf of the Governing Body may I wish you a restful break and a Happy Easter. Bernie Balfe(Chair of Governors).***