



# Camestone Lower School Governing Body

Spring Term Newsletter 2017

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

Please find below an update on some of the activities that have taken place in school during the last term which contribute to the achievement of our current school priorities:

- In January we had the pleasure of welcoming Miss Wilson to the school as Deputy Head Teacher. The new role ensures we have an effective leadership structure as the school grows.
- A targeted programme of training/coaching is in place to develop subject leadership across the school. This includes preparation for year 5/6 curriculum requirements and expectations for Year 6 SATs.
- Rewards for good lunchtime behaviour have been reviewed and the Golden Table has been introduced to further encourage high standards of behaviour throughout the school day.
- The Inclusion Team have monitored interventions used across the school and are working with staff to share best practice in order to continue to raise the standards and progress of vulnerable pupils.
- Progress reports presented to governors indicate that pupils are progressing well in all year groups. It was evident from our discussions that the Inclusion Team have a good knowledge of the pupils and teaching staff have identified those who require extra support and implemented strategies to help them progress.
- Governor visits have taken place this week focussing on Special Educational Needs, Safeguarding and Monitoring of Teaching and Learning in all Year Groups.

## **Parent Questionnaire**

You may recall we issued a parent questionnaire to gather your views. 146 responses were received and analysed. As a result of your views and comments we agreed to:

1. Review our approach to home learning.

Home learning has been reviewed to ensure consistency across all year groups and to check that the expectations are appropriate for each age group with regard to volume, frequency, complexity and current curriculum requirements.

Children across the year groups receive a combination of numeracy, literacy and topic based homework to complement their school based learning. The work set reinforces the learning that has taken place in the classroom but varies in style. For example, in mathematics this may involve learning number facts, completing written work, playing games or completing mental arithmetic or reasoning questions, The content, format and frequency is appropriately curriculum and age related.

In addition, we continue to encourage children in all year groups to regularly read at home.

Children who regularly read at home, whether it be books, magazines or online, significantly improve their reading. Bug Club is very popular with children in school and encourages reading through a safe internet site [www.activelearnprimary.co.uk](http://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk). For those who have access to the internet at home usernames and passwords are in the cover of reading records.

We understand the challenges that face some families with regard to home learning but would encourage you to discuss any problems you experience with the class teacher who may have some ideas and strategies to help you support your child.

2. Redesign our school website to provide ongoing information about the curriculum.

The interactive school website was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> March following a presentation to parents on 27<sup>th</sup> February. All parents are now able to access the year group page(s) for their child(ren) via the school website <http://www.camestoneschool.co.uk>. Each year group is password protected for the online safety of the pupils and will be changed annually. The new year group pages enable parents to:

- See photographs and read anecdotes about daily life within the year group
- Find information, including copies of letters home.
- View curriculum and topic information - to keep you informed about what your child is being taught
- Keep updated with school activities and events
- Access links to support your child's learning e.g. active learning
- Contact a member of school staff through e-mail

We encourage all parents take advantage of these new features. If you have any queries then please speak to Mr Jones (Computing Subject Leader and Year 4 teacher).

A 2017 Parent Questionnaire will be distributed shortly. We welcome your views.

## **Update on Conversion to Primary School**

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all parents/carers for their patience and understanding while the building works are ongoing. Every effort is being made to ensure that access to the school for parents and pupils is as safe and efficient as possible during drop off and pick up times.

During the day the focus has been on keeping disruption to a minimum. Building work is progressing well and the trackway that crossed the playground was removed 3 days earlier than originally expected enabling normal playtime and lunchtime activities to resume.

Many of the children have enjoyed integrating construction into their learning.

It is anticipated work on the building will continue until early June.

## **Parking**

We continue to hear concerns from local residents and parents regards inconsiderate parking and driving at drop off and collection time. Incidents reported include blocking driveways, damage to vehicles, parking and driving on the pavement and concerns over access for emergency vehicles.

The safety of pupils and their families is paramount and therefore we encourage all parents/carers who use Jowitt Avenue and neighbouring roads to drop off/pick up to consider any changes that can be made to their current journey. (E.g. Alternative parking places, parking

further away with a short walk, car share, walking, cycling). We also ask that you park with consideration to pedestrians, other road users and our neighbours. Thank you

## **Governing Body Business**

In January 2017 Mrs Julia Surman was reappointed as Parent Governor and on 1<sup>st</sup> February Mrs Surman was re-elected as Chair of Governors.

Mr Richard Hyde left the Governing Body on 1<sup>st</sup> February. We thank Richard for his commitment to Camestone during the past 7 years.

We currently have a vacancy on the Governing Body. You are not required to be a parent to take up the vacancy, although parents are welcome to apply. If you think any of your friends, family or colleagues may be interested please encourage them to talk informally to Mr Stanyard or Mrs Surman in the first instance. An appointment may be organised through the school office. Interested applicants will then need to complete a letter of application to demonstrate they have skills and attributes required of the role.

### **Governor Vacancy**

We are seeking to appoint a governor who has the following skills, knowledge and experience:

- The ability to work as part of a team
- A readiness to accept responsibility
- The ability to communicate effectively.
- The confidence to ask questions
- The ability to listen and to assimilate information
- An interest and an enthusiasm for continuous improvement
- To realise the importance of confidentiality.
- To have Good Literacy/ Numeracy and Basic IT skills
- An ability and willingness to learn and develop new skills

In addition, there are skills that you may be able to bring with you from experiences at home and work, which will enhance the effectiveness of the Governing Body You do not have to be an expert in education to be a Governor but it would be very desirable for the candidate to have current or recent experience in one or more of the following:

- Community involvement or a volunteer role
- Financial Management/Planning

As a governor you will be required to show:

- Commitment to improving the education for ALL our pupils
- Commitment to the schools vision and ethos

You will be willing and able to give about 20 hours per term to attend meetings and training.

At Camestone we follow all Safer Recruitment guidelines for all staff and volunteers.  
A full DBS and 2 references will be required for School Governors.

Further details of the role of a Camestone School Governor can be found overleaf.

Please give this your serious consideration. Should you feel that you have the skills, time and commitment to contribute to Camestone we would like to hear from you.

**We wish you and your families an enjoyable Easter break**

## **Camestone Governing Body**

### **What is the Role of the Governing Body and Governors?**

The main role of the Governing Body is to help raise the standards and performance of the school by supporting the work of the Head teacher and the staff. Governors will support and, at the same time, challenge the Head teacher by gathering views, asking questions and deciding what is best for the school. Governors make important decisions on policy and strategy and are answerable to parents and the wider community.

Some essential criteria are that governors must:

- Respect confidentiality.
- Listen to and respect the views of others.
- Express their own views clearly and succinctly.
- Take their fair share of work/positions of responsibility.
- Know, understand and work within the prescribed regulatory framework (Training is provided in this respect).
- Report any evidence of fraud, corruption or misconduct to an appropriate person or Authority.

The Governing Body becomes involved in many aspects of school life and makes decisions collectively on a range of issues including:

- Curriculum
- Budget management
- Staffing and recruitment
- Policies
- Health and safety
- School improvement
- Performance management

### **How Does the Governing Body Work?**

The Governing Body conducts most business via a framework of termly meetings, working closely with the Head teacher and Local Authority. Sub-committees are appointed from the full membership. At present there is one main sub-committee to deal with finance, premises, health and safety and personnel and this meets separately. Governors are linked to key areas of the school and meetings are held with the Senior Leadership Team. Meetings can also be called in order to discuss a particular item of business.

Most meetings of the Full Governing Body are held in the evening, whilst the opportunity to meet during the day also exists for sub-committees.

### **What will I gain as a School Governor?**

Governors will gain the opportunity to:

- Make a real difference and the chance to contribute to the good of the community, leading to satisfaction and a sense of achievement.
- Work as part of a team. Working as a school governor will give the opportunity to work with a wide variety of people from a variety of backgrounds.
- Develop new skills and to strengthen existing ones.
- Gain an understanding of the decision making process of school governing bodies and an awareness of the education system as a whole.
- Undertake training provided by the Local Authority on various aspects of the governor role.