

Governors' News



Welcome

Welcome to the first Governor News of this school year! We are pleased to see that our youngest children in Foundation have settled into Brookside so well. This was evident seeing them on stage last week, along with the slightly older KS1 children, delivering their Christmas performances so bravely and beautifully. Congratulations to them and to all the staff involved for filling us all with the spirit of Christmas.

Inside this issue

Welcome	1
Brookside Does Good.....	1
Meet the Governors.....	2
Moving Forward.....	3
Long Time Governor Experience....	4
Improving Road Safety.....	5

Brookside Does Good

This term has been a busy one for the Governors. One of our first jobs of the Autumn Term is to put together the Governors' Impact Statement for the previous year. This is a huge piece of work and you should all have received a copy. It can be found on the school website and gives a great overview of our role within the school.

Just a week after our first Full Governors' Meeting of the year, Ofsted came to call. We were well prepared as always, but that doesn't diminish the amount of work needed by the Governors, the Headteacher and school staff to pull together all the information required by the Ofsted Inspector.

The Chair and four other Governors met with the Inspector as we are held to account for the overall running of the school. As well as discussions surrounding school performance and issues such as safeguarding and pupil behaviour, the Governing Body were complimented specifically on our communication with parents, carers and the school community through this newsletter and our support for new Governors who join us.

The inspection went well and we were very pleased to have received recognition that our school continues to be 'Good'. We would like to extend our congratulations and thanks to all our staff and pupils. There is always work to be done to improve our school and this will remain our focus going forward. The full report can be found on the school website.

We are also thrilled to have received a 5 Star Rating from the School Guide. This shows clearly our performance and can be seen at:

<https://www.schoolguide.co.uk/schools/brookside-primary-school-loughborough>

Another huge accolade is that we rank 37th in the top 500 primary schools in The Sunday Times Good Schools Guide. **That's 37th out of 20,925 primary schools in the UK!** Wow!

Meet the Governors

The Governing Body is made up of a group of volunteers which include parents, staff and members of the community. Governors are chosen according to the skills and experience they have to offer.



Anne Brammall
Finance
Co-opted Governor



Reesha Armstead
Chair
Local Authority
Governor



Gary Kenny
Headteacher
Staff Governor



Jason Billin
Vice Chair
Co-opted Governor



Andy Beharall
Staff Governor



Tim Green
Parent Governor



Amy Longworth
Parent Governor



Helga Peatman
Co-opted Governor



Sarah Evans
Co-opted Governor



Kelly Clarke
Co-opted Governor



Mike Clark
Co-opted Governor



Stacey Fitzsimmons
Co-opted Governor



Stephanie Hobbs
Co-opted Governor



Phil Doherty
Associate Governor

Moving Forward

As we move forward into the new school year, we have said 'farewell' to two of our Governors, Rebecca Wood and Jennifer Pulkkinen. Both have been very active on the Governing Body and have made incredibly valuable contributions to the school during their time with us. We would like to thank and send our best wishes to Rebecca and Jennifer who are already missed by us all.

Governors moving on, however, means that we can welcome new ones! Amy Longworth who many of you will know as our crossing patrol warden and is also on the BFG joins us as a Parent Governor. Stephanie Hobbs is a new Co-opted Governor and her role as a secondary school teacher brings with her an interesting perspective in terms of the next stage of education for our pupils. Amy and Stephanie both have children at our school and we look forward to working with them.

Governor Roles

For those who are new to Brookside, the role of the Governing Body is to oversee the strategic direction of the school. We have statutory responsibilities which are set by the Department for Education in terms of managing the school's aims and objectives and making financial decisions. Mr Kenny, the Headteacher, is responsible for the day to day running of things and school performance and is accountable to the Governors.

We monitor many aspects of school life including the curriculum, safeguarding and child protection, health and safety and ensuring that correct policies and procedures are in place. Individual Governors are tasked with taking on Link Roles in specific areas and meet with relevant members of staff throughout the year to discuss progress and any issues and then formally report back to the Governing Body. Some new roles have been allocated this year as we prepare to join Equals Trust as we will also be required to report to them.

Becoming an Academy

Speaking of which, as you know, Brookside is set to join Equals Trust and convert to academy status. We had hoped to have converted by November, however, there have been some delays by the local authority. We are now set for April 2019.

School Expansion

We are delighted with the new classroom block that is currently home to Years 4 and 5. It has been many years in the planning and will make a fabulous learning environment for pupils for many years to come.

Long Time Governor Experience

Most of you will know me as Mrs Evans in the Foundation Unit but sixteen years ago I was approached by our then Headteacher, Rick Dizon, to become a Community Governor (now known as Co-opted Governor). At this point, I had no real experience of school life, other than that my own two children were at Brookside and I was Vice Chair of the BFG. However, as a manager for a large bank I had lots of project experience, HR and finance knowledge and I was assured that these skills could be utilised in some way! I loved the experiences and education that my own boys were getting at Brookside and so agreed, hoping to be able to make a difference in some small way, never thinking that sixteen years later it would have prompted a career change and that I would still be a Governor, long after my children had left Brookside and even one of them having graduated from University!

I spent the first year of Governors' Meetings pretty bewildered and in awe of those sat around the table. I slowly grew in confidence and started to realise that my lack of knowledge didn't necessarily mean I couldn't make a contribution. In fact, being new helps bring a new perspective to discussions. I had to learn pretty early on to 'put my Governor's hat on' and force myself to forget at times I was a parent and, in later years, a member of staff. Difficult decisions sometimes have to be made, which personally I may have found not to my liking, but I know that they are right for the school, and that's what is important.

I have been Chair of Governors, Vice Chair and have chaired all of our sub-committees at various times. I've navigated through four OFSTED inspections, worked on catchment area changes, negotiated with the Local Authority on varying issues, been part of Headteacher and teacher recruitment panels and helped the Governing Body to secure Governor Mark status.

During my time as a Governor I've seen many changes and challenges that schools have had to face. I have always been immensely proud that as a Governing Body, we have managed to rise to these challenges and changes whilst maintaining our ethos as a school. Even now, in these ever increasingly data driven days we are passionate and protective about ensuring that the children that come through our school get a wide range of experiences, opportunities and leave us well rounded and eager to make a difference in the wider world. We're always very excited to read the school newsletters, attend school events and get an update at our meetings about the activities that have been happening in school.

I've learned so many valuable skills as a Governor that have helped me in other parts of my life. In 2019 I'm excited to be getting involved with a Community Board that issues grants to help different groups working with homeless people, a role that would never been open to me without my Governing Body experience.

Next time we are recruiting, I would encourage anyone who is interested in what goes on in the wider school to have a chat with one of our Governors, either in the playground or make contact through the school office, and find out some more. You never know what it might lead to!

Sarah Evans

Improving Road Safety

The walk to school social enterprise, The Happy Crocodile, set up by Governor Anne Brammall, has been beavering away since we introduced the initiative in the Spring Governor News. We have used the information from the surveys you completed to work out traffic volumes, environmental impact and distances travelled to school and recently contributed to the BFG as a token of our appreciation. We now want to setup a pilot walking school bus. So, what's one of those?

- ◆ A 'walking bus' is a group of children walking to or from school under the supervision of at least two trained parent / carer volunteers, usually on a rota basis, one leading the group ('driver') and one at the rear ('conductor').
- ◆ The minimum ratio is one adult to six children.
- ◆ It follows a set route and timetable, starting at one point and making its way to school, with pick up 'bus stops' to collect children along the way.
- ◆ A booking system will operate to allocate a space for your child.
- ◆ The more parents who get involved, the less time each parent needs to spend travelling to school themselves.
- ◆ Routes are risk-assessed, volunteers will be DBS checked and given Road Safety training
- ◆ Even if you drive, you can still be a part of a walking bus by parking at the start or at a convenient pick-up point to join.

The pilot scheme will run one morning and one afternoon a week initially. Volunteers are vital to the success of the scheme – the more volunteers we have, the less time each one needs to commit to the scheme. If you can help out, even just now and again, please contact anne@thehappycrocodile.org



Anne Brammall

