



Governor News

Autumn 2024

Hello from the Governors

Welcome to the first Governor News of this academic year, and to our youngest children and their families who joined us in September. Here's your chance to find out more about who our governors are and the work that we do behind the scenes.

It's been another busy term for everyone at Brookside, with children moving up to new classes and getting to know their new teachers, learning growing more challenging as they reach each stage and plenty of excitement at the Year 6 Robinwood Residential and every playtime with all that Opal Play has to offer. We've had sporting successes in girls' and boys' football and we had some winners of the Streetwise Art Competition. Many congratulations to you all!

There have also been some joyful Christmas celebrations and an exciting build up to Christmas!

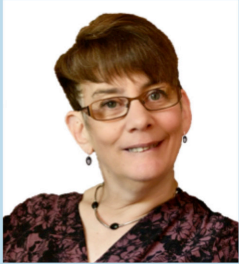
As always, we are incredibly thankful for the support we receive from businesses within our local community, and the children work hard to give back by doing litter picks to keep East Leake tidy and supporting charities such as Framework and Vets in the Community. The school is aiming to achieve the SuperKind Award this year and the children are embracing this massively. Because, let's face it, Brookside children really are super kind!

The governors have been working hard too and, of course, OFSTED came to call in November. More on that later.



Meet the Governors

We are a group of volunteers made up of staff, parents and members of the local community.



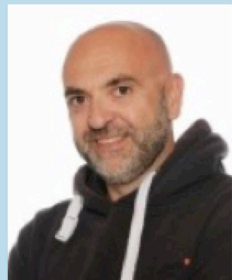
Reesha Armstead
Chair
Trust Governor



Gary Kenny
Headteacher
Staff Governor



Jason Billin
Vice Chair
Trust Governor



Andy Beharall
Staff Governor



Sarah Evans
Staff Governor



Tim Green
Trust Governor



Lewis James
Trust Governor



Helen Stevenson
Parent Governor



Vanessa Bailey
Parent Governor

The Role of School Governors

Governors are often asked what our role is within a school and people are usually surprised at just how much we do. Governors form the largest body of volunteers in the UK and we give our time freely.

Brookside School is an academy and belongs to Equals Trust. The Governing Body is directly accountable to them, as well as to the Department for Education and Ofsted. As a board, we sit between the Trust and the school and ensure that it runs effectively, whilst upholding our values and ethos.

We are responsible for managing the strategic direction that the school takes, while the Headteacher and the Leadership Team look after the operational day to day running of things. Our role is to support Mr Kenny, hold the school to account and monitor performance and every aspect of school life.

Every governor is assigned a Link Role and takes responsibility for a specific area such as the curriculum and pupil performance, safeguarding and child protection and health and safety. We carry out regular monitoring visits with relevant members of staff and submit our reports to Equals Trust.

We meet six times per year, receive reports from the Headteacher and from the Trust to gain an overview of what is happening in school. Meetings are attended by our clerk who is provided by Nottingham City Council, and she supports the Chair, takes the minutes of meetings and offers advice on matters relating to governance.

Interested in Joining Us?

We currently have a vacancy for a Parent Governor and one for a Trust Governor. It's been such a busy term that we haven't had chance to carry out a Parent Governor Election yet, however this will take place in the new year.

All new governors receive full induction and ongoing training and are assigned a mentor to support them in getting to grips with the role. Full Governor Meetings take place once each half term on a Wednesday evening and alternate between being held online and in person at school.

Being a school governor is extremely rewarding and the children are at the centre of everything we do. Please contact the school office if you are interested in contributing to Brookside's continued success.



Governor Update

Introducing Lewis James



It was with great pleasure that I joined the Board of Governors in September as a Trust Governor and I hope to make a positive impact on the school through this position. My family and I moved to the village nearly ten years ago, and I have three children who attend the school (from Year 5, down to Foundation). Thus, it is important to me to help ensure the school maintains the high-quality educational experience it offers, whilst continuing to find ways to innovate and drive further success over the coming years.

I work as an academic at Loughborough University, where my research and teaching focuses on the interaction between nutrition and exercise, to promote human health and increase the physical performance of athletes. As someone who has had a life-long love for sport, I am particularly passionate about how exercise, physical activity and active play can promote learning in and outside the classroom.

I am, therefore, keen to explore ways that the school can offer additional opportunities for its children in sport and physical activity, as well as more broadly how other extracurricular offerings may benefit the children / school. OPAL Play has been a fantastic introduction to the school over the past year and continuing to develop and optimise this offering is a key part of this for me.

My children have had a fantastic experience at Brookside so far and it is my intention to be part of the board for many years to come, acting as a critical friend to the school to ensure all our children can continue to get the most out of their education.

Termly Focus

Each new academic year begins with the requirement for every governor to update their training on safeguarding and child protection. There are various short courses for us to complete through an online platform and records are kept centrally, along with all our certificates.

All of our Link Governor Monitoring Visits for this academic year have been scheduled. Several have already taken place, including those concerned with school development, an audit of official documentation and that which appears on the website, pupil groups and safeguarding.

School Attendance

Children being in school is vital for their development and wellbeing, as well as their academic achievement. Research shows that it can have a positive impact on future social, educational, and economic outcomes. Preparing young people for a successful transition into adulthood is also key in determining their participation in society later on.

Did you know...?

90% attendance = 19 days lost = 100 missed lessons

85% attendance = 29 days lost = 150 missed lessons

75% attendance = 48 days lost = 250 missed lessons

Absence from school = lost opportunities for children

It is the responsibility of all parents and carers to ensure that children get the full time education that they are entitled to although there are many reasons why some children find going to school difficult. There are, of course, valid reasons for not being in school on the odd occasion, such as children being too ill to go to school, a leave of absence may have been sought in exceptional circumstances (holidays are not classed as an exceptional circumstance and cannot be authorised) or there may be reasons related to religious observations. Any such occurrence should be communicated to the school as early as possible.

Here at Brookside, we put a great deal of time and resources into working with families to resolve issues where they exist and offer support to enable children to be in school. Records of attendance are kept meticulously and it is mandatory that this is shared with the Department for Education. Governors are responsible for monitoring this.

We are extremely pleased that improvements have been made in increased attendance and we are grateful to families for working alongside the school in encouraging children to engage.



An OFSTED Inspector Calls

After a wait of around three years for an OFSTED Inspection, and it finally arrived at the end of November. There are two different types of inspection and we received a Section 8 ungraded inspection, which means that we are not given a overall grade, Instead, the aim is to ascertain whether the school is still at the same standard or better than it was at the last OFSTED in 2018.

Being notified of an imminent visit sets everyone on high alert and can be quite nerve wracking, however because Brookside has been in its OFSTED window for a considerable amount of time, we have had to be fully prepared for the whole duration. We were graced with a really nice Inspector who made the whole process feel very relaxed and it was clear that he was incredibly impressed with the school, its staff and the governors. He also said that he was ‘blown away’ by so many instances where he interacted with the children, their exemplary behaviour and all that we have going on in school.

Myself, Jason Billin, Sarah Evans and Tim Green met with him, along with Peter Foales (Chair of EQT). We were asked a whole range of questions in relation to our role as governors and our effectiveness in evaluating school improvement, leadership, pupil learning and behaviour and safeguarding and child protection. Apparently after the meeting, he spoke highly of our knowledge, skills and commitment in overseeing all that we do.

The school was supported throughout the whole process by representatives from Equals Trust and having now been through three OFSTED Inspections, I can honestly say what what a major difference that made. Mr Kenny, Mr Beharall and the whole staff team pulled together to showcase every aspect of school life.

I am extremely proud that the outcome is that we are still a ‘Good’ school and there has been huge improvements since our last inspection. Of course, there is always work to be done but these were no surprises in that regard and we remain as vigilant and committed as ever to improving standards along with continuing to support the school in developing the huge array of enrichment opportunities that we offer. With OFSTED not due for another four years, Mr Kenny won’t need to be waiting by the phone at 9.30am every Monday morning for a while!

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to every single person who makes Brookside all that it is. It is a privilege to sit here as your Chair!

Reesha Armstead

Finally...

All that remains is to say a huge thank you to the whole staff team, our fabulous children and to all our families for making Brookside a truly fabulous place to learn and be curious, to be active and considerate and to play and have fun!

Warm wishes to you all for a restful break and a very Happy New Year!

