

## GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER: EASTER 2019

Dear parents and carers

We wanted as a governing body to take the opportunity of this (intermittent) newsletter to update you on some of the work that we have been doing since the start of the school year and to alert you to some important things ahead in the coming term.

It is vital that the governors know the school and its work well. We receive data and information on a whole range of areas from the school and from other sources. Vicky does an excellent job on showing us the financial situation, and this goes to the Resources Committee and the whole governing body. We have complete access to all the national and local statistics on standards and performance as well as the regular monitoring that the school carries out on its own priorities. I attend the annual conversation between Camden local authority (now called Camden Learning) and the school about the achievements of the previous year and the priorities for the next.

More than this, though, the governors make sure that they are seeing for themselves some of the aspects of the school's work. Regularly every term there will be, for example, governors listening to pupil focus groups, or talking to staff about their experiences or monitoring that the safeguarding processes are as they are described in the policy. On numerous occasions, governors have stepped in to help on particular issues - the building of the science block springs to mind! I am very proud of the time and dedication that all our governors show in this.

Importantly, we hear directly from you through the regular parents' survey and we discuss the findings – and all your comments – at length at our summer governing body meeting and they inform the priorities for the next year. We wanted to share with you one or two of the many examples of this in practice. We heard from the survey that there were some particular concerns about safety and well-being for pupils. So the school commissioned two external audits (on provision for special educational needs and safeguarding) to check that the practice was as good as it could be. Both reports found the provision to be outstanding. The One O'clock club is responding to the observation that some pupils benefit from a more structured session at playtime. The school has undertaken a completely innovative project to investigate the use of the playground working in groups to observe key areas and interactions. The insights are already being taken forward through staff meeting and small changes agreed so as to ensure happy playtimes for everyone.

All this is part of what the governors do in guiding the school in line with its ethos and values. Of course, one of the most important responsibilities of the governors is agreeing the school budget. No doubt you will have heard about the school funding situation and may have heard from other schools about the challenges they are facing in terms of rising costs and limited resources. Eleanor Palmer is no different from other schools. We have the benefit of an immensely skilled, dedicated and resourceful staff and governors who have steered the school well over the years. But it is the case that the situation is, for many reasons, becoming more difficult. We have been discussing this, as a matter of priority at our recent meetings and want to talk with you about this next term.

The governors wish you a very happy holiday. We are hoping that if there is some good weather you'll be able to enjoy the longer days and the return of the sun!

Jen Allan (Chair of Governors)