

## GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2013

Dear Parents and Carers,

Usually the Governor Newsletter comes out at the end of the Summer term – where Governors thank Kate and her staff for the year’s achievements; highlight what have been the Governor’s main agenda items; set out the results of the parent questionnaire; what our priorities are for next year; and say hellos and goodbyes as staff join and leave the school. This will all happen next term!

However this term, on the back of our Outstanding OFSTED report, Kate and her team have applied for and been awarded National Teaching School Status. So I wanted to take this opportunity to set out what this is all about and what it might mean for our school. I know that throughout the year, as ever, Kate will update the school community further as necessary but here is the background!

Teaching Schools are part of the government’s drive to give schools more freedom and take increasing responsibility for managing the schools system – it is about schools working together in partnerships and through networks to identify and co-ordinate expertise and use the best teachers and leaders to:

1. Play a greater role in the recruitment and training of **new entrants** to the profession
2. Lead **peer-to-peer** professional and leadership development
3. Identify and develop **leadership potential**
4. Provide **support** for other schools
5. Designate and broker individuals to become Specialist Leaders of Education (**SLEs**) to **support other schools**
6. **Engage in** research and development

We will be supported in our work by our strategic partners namely Torriano Junior School, Kentish Town CE School, Holy Trinity NW1 and Thomas Coram Nursery, all outstanding Camden schools, as well as institutions such as the Institute of Education and NRICH (Cambridge University’s Mathematical Enrichment Group).

The details of how the partnership will be governed is under discussion but the National Teaching School Status comes with a significant start-up core budget to put in place the basic infrastructure to run it. Over time the Teaching School will become self-funding – offering programs of paid-for activity for other schools to use and attend.

What does this mean for Eleanor Palmer?

It of course brings huge prestige and status to our school – but perhaps more importantly, it facilitates incredible development opportunities for our staff which will enable us to recruit and retain the best-of-the-best in leadership and teaching. And the children will of course benefit directly too – the expectation is that our school will be at the forefront of educational innovation and teaching practice, that we will be developing all of teachers to the standard of the best and that we will develop educational leaders of the future.

One of the other direct benefits is that governors have agreed to a new room being built on-site to enable presentations and meetings to take place but also for the use of teachers and pupils in the school. This will be located behind the Nursery, in front of the access gate onto Raveley Street and will be fully eco-friendly, with amongst other things, a grassed roof and air-sourced heat pump! This is being paid for partly by the local authority, partly from money raised this year by running training etc and partly from our capital delegated budget. If anyone would like to look at the plans, Sarah in the office can show you! It is a very exciting project which will provide much needed space for the school.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Kate and her team for gaining this status (only 360 schools in the country have been designated as National Teaching Schools) and for the hard work that has gone in so far – and will continue to as the enterprise develops.

Finally, I am conscious that we as a group of governors may seem elusive or invisible to some – and especially new parents in the school - and wanted to reiterate that our profiles are available on the school website and that we are always contactable through the school office or through me at [shodgetts@googlemail.com](mailto:shodgetts@googlemail.com).

Best wishes for a restful Easter break,

Sarah Hodgetts  
Chair of Governors  
28 March 2013