

Malmesbury Park Primary School

Governors' Annual Newsletter to Parents



October 2017

We have had a fantastic start to the new academic year and offer a particularly warm welcome to parents and carers who are new members of the Malmesbury Park community.

We would like to use this Governors newsletter to explain who the school governors are and what we do. We will share information on key school achievements from last year (2016-17) and future plans for the year ahead (2017-18).

It's also an opportunity for us, on behalf of all the governors, to say a big thank you to Mrs Jackie Green (the headteacher), the senior leadership team and all the teaching and support staff for everything they do to make Malmesbury Park such an excellent, supportive and harmonious primary school.

Vicky Lewis, Co-opted Governor
Sara Dawson, Parent Governor

1. Who are the school governors?

There are fifteen school governors from a wide range of backgrounds. There are brief profiles of each governor on the ['Meet the Governors' page](#) of the school website (in the Community section). Some of us are parents with children at the school, some are staff members and others are members of the wider community. The headteacher is also a governor.

What we all have in common is a desire to support and guide the school so that it offers the best possible education and social development to the children who attend it, preparing every child effectively for the move to secondary school.

2. What do the governors do?

Did you know that there are around 350,000 school governors in England, making it one of the largest volunteer forces in the country? While the headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation and management of the school, governors provide strategic leadership and accountability.

Individual governors work together as a team known as 'the governing body'. The role of the governing body is to set aims and objectives for the school and to monitor and evaluate progress. Governors play an important role in raising school standards by offering both support and challenge to the headteacher.

The full governing body normally meets around six times a year. There are two smaller committees which focus on the school's curriculum and standards and on its finances and other resources. Individual governors also take on specific roles. For example, there is a governor to oversee safeguarding processes.

Governors regularly come into the school to meet with children and staff, observe how the school runs and ask questions that will help them understand where improvements are needed

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and where good work is taking place. This can lead to new developments. For example, governor interviews with children whose first language was not English led to the creation of the New Entrant Teacher role. This has made a big difference in helping children from a range of backgrounds to settle into the school and improve their English during their first few weeks.

3. Highlights of 2016-17

We had a very successful year last year building on our previous achievements. As a school we have much to be proud of and continue to improve and achieve. Our children and staff have worked extremely hard to achieve KS2 SATs results which are once again above national average. KS2 SATS are statutory national tests when children are in year 6.

There are many other things that have made us proud of the school over the last year. As well as excellent progress in core subjects such as maths, there has been a growing focus on the broader curriculum, ensuring that pupils receive a proper grounding in a range of subjects.

Four successful and enjoyable residential trips were held with Year 2 going to Swanage, Year 4 to Hooke Court, Year 6 to Shrewsbury and also a LEAPS residential trip. (LEAPS are a small class of mixed age children who find the larger classroom environment difficult to manage and require targeted support.) We had a variety of visitors into school and numerous trips out of school to support the curriculum and make learning inspirational for the children. Class assemblies are always entertaining and it is a delight to see the children grow in confidence.

The school's extra-curricular activities and clubs are also one of its real strengths. Many clubs are so popular that they are over-subscribed. As a school we have also attended a large number of PE (physical education) and sporting events.

Parents have had the opportunity to attend open mornings and afternoons across the school. We have also held a variety of parent focus groups to seek your views. Members of the school community have really pulled together to raise an enormous amount of money for our school library bus by partaking in fundraising activities such as bag packing in Asda.

Particular highlights from last year include the incredible Year 5 and 6 performances of The Jungle Book including a special black-tie performance. The costumes and choreography were spectacular and a fantastic experience for all those children involved. Members of the cast also achieved a trophy for best Carnival float in Winton Carnival. MAD (music, art and dance) Week was also hugely successful culminating in a superb end-of-week exhibition.

The school is also on a sound financial footing, with resources being allocated where they will have the most positive impact.

4. Focus for 2017-18

There are some key areas that we will focus on during the coming year in accordance with our school strategic plan. The school strategic plan outlines specific developments to support improvements and help the school to continue its good progress in other areas. School governors are closely involved in monitoring progress. This can involve coming into school and talking to children to obtain their views on a particular area. Our current school strategic plan is broken down into two areas.

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Key Improvement 1

Improve reading outcomes particularly at Key Stage 2 by developing greater competence in using and applying a range of reading skills, ensuring strong phonic knowledge, increasing vocabulary to give greater understanding and promote a love of reading.

This year we will focus on developing reading skills, including phonics (for EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage), Key Stage 1 (years 1 and 2) and bi-lingual learners) and higher order reading skills such as inference (finding the clues in text beyond what is written) and deduction (solving the clues or reading between the lines) across the school to ensure children fully understand what they are reading and are able to comment effectively.

Key Improvement 2

Develop the integrated curriculum to ensure the highest outcomes in all subjects for all children by securing progressive subject learning, greater coherence and relevance, the effective application of maths and English and using rigorous assessment and feedback.

This year we will continue to develop the use of the learning values in our project work to embed key learning skills. Alongside this we will be developing our assessment of the foundation subjects to ensure the children have a good understanding of the key skills related to each subject.

5. Opportunities to provide feedback and get involved

Parents and carers play a hugely important role in making Malmesbury Park the school it is. We welcome your feedback on what we are doing well and what we could do better. If you do have a complaint, the school's message is 'talk to us'. For information on channels for sharing concerns, please see the school's Complaints Policy on the [School Policies \(Statutory\)](#) page of the website (under About Us / Key Information). Our website can be found at www.malmesburypark.com should you require hard copies of our complaints policy please ask at the school office.

Many parents play an active role by volunteering to listen to children read or offering their time and expertise in other areas such as running extra-curricular clubs. If this interests you, do please speak to your child's class teacher.

The FOMPPS (Friends of Malmesbury Park Primary School) is also very active and eager to involve more parents. It makes a great contribution to the school through fundraising activities and events. For more information, please contact Mrs Tess Lipscombe (who works in the school office).

On behalf of the governing body, we offer many thanks for everything that you do to support your own children and the wider school community. We are confident that Malmesbury Park is going to have a successful and stimulating year, building on its existing strengths and reaching even higher levels of achievement.

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