

Governor News September 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome back, or for new parents a very warm welcome to our school, which even in these very unusual circumstances is very safe, peaceful yet still undeniably fun.

We, as Governors, are very impressed with the way Mr Stapley and all school staff have worked extremely hard in preparing for the full return of the children and their teachers and support staff. They are still delivering the broader curriculum despite all the current constraints. It has been wonderful to see how well the children have settled into the new routines, like ducks to water!

Normally as governors we would have a strategic plan agreed with the school at this point in the year – improvement ideas to implement, targets to achieve, each member of staff clear about priorities. Clearly this has all taken a back seat in favour of operational challenges for the time being. However, targets set last year that went on hold as lockdown hit will soon be dusted off and we'll start to plan a way forward. Some areas of improvement will be very hard to deliver short term – trips out to enrich the curriculum, for example – but others have continued – you may catch a glimpse of lots of new playground activities.

Governors are also responsible for the finances of the school. Since the vast majority of our budget – about 80% - pays for salaries and associated staffing costs, financially the lockdown has not made a huge amount of difference to the financial status. We had been trying to raise money alongside the PTA for a new cabin in the playground and we hope we may soon be close to this target despite the loss of so many PTA events along the way. We have received a couple of significant donations during the last few months which have helped close the gap but we still have a little way to go. Any thoughts about companies or charities that may be willing to donate would be gratefully received!

Our governing board consists of eleven governors, with different categories depending on who they represent. Maggie Smith left the board just before the summer holidays, having shared her experience and enthusiasm with us for the last three years. She will be much missed but her time is divided amongst many causes and we've very grateful for all she has done over that time. Since my youngest child has now left Brabourne, the governing board has appointed me as Maggie's replacement as a co-opted governor, leaving us with a vacancy for a new parent governor.

So, our governing board is currently as follows:

Governor	Category	Role on Governing Board
Hester Fenwick	Co-opted	Chair of GB, member of Finance, Ethics & Culture & HT performance committees
Roger Shaw	Co-opted	Vice-chair of GB, Chair of Finance committee
Lucie Edmed	Local Authority	Member of Teaching & Learning and HT performance committees, Early Years governor
Rev.Chris Denyer	Foundation Ex-Officio	Chair of Ethics & Culture committee
Ruthie Gilbert	Foundation	Member of Ethics & Culture and HT Performance committees
Sarah Hopker	Parent	SEND and Safeguarding governor, Member of Teaching & Learning committee
Sarah Vant	Parent	Health & Safety governor, Member of Finance

		committee
Becks Massie	Parent	Member of Ethics & Culture committee
Vacancy	Parent	
Andrew Stapley	HT Ex-Officio	Member of Teaching & Learning and Ethics & Culture committees
Natasha Miller	Staff	Member of Teaching & Learning committee

The governing board also has a professional clerk, Kerry Percival-Smith, who is responsible for ensuring the board meets their legal commitments, keeping up to date with legislation changes and recording board minutes. To find out more about each governor, the clerk or more about the role of the board as a whole, please look at the governor section on the school website.

If you would be interested in becoming a parent governor, I'd be more than happy to have more of a chat about the role before you decide whether to put yourself forward or not so please feel free to contact me. There is no requirement for previous experience or any specific skills because training is available for all. However, there is a time commitment involved – time to prepare for and attend board and committee meetings and to make other visits into school. Mr. Stapley manages the nomination process for new parent governors so he will send out more details shortly. If there is more than one candidate, there may be the need for an election in which case all parents are entitled to vote. However, this very rarely happens at Brabourne – we're never inundated with candidates although we'd love to be – so please don't let this deter you finding out more.

Many thanks,

Hester Fenwick (contactable at hesterfenwick@hotmail.com or 01303 814432)