

Edmondsley Governors

Welcome!

Welcome to our first Governors' newsletter. Here we cover governing priorities and school performance news, which we will publish for parents and staff each school term to keep you up to date with strategic school developments and any changes in the school's governance structures.

Let us know what you think!

Why Does a School Need a Governing Body?

The governing body is a school's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing body aims to ensure that children are attending a caring and successful school, which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

Who We Are...

- Mr Stuart Hogarth – Chair and Parent Representative
- Mrs Tracy Cummings – Vice Chair and Community Representative
- Ms Nicola Hawkins – Parent Representative
- Mrs Helen Johnson – Local Authority Representative
- Mrs Catherine Kettley – Community Representative
- Mr Paul Finley – Co-opted Governor
- Mrs Anna Christie – Parent Representative
- Mrs Maria Dawson – Parent Representative
- Mrs Angela Rees – Headteacher and Staff Representative
- Mrs Chris Baker – Staff Representative

For more information about all of us, please visit the Governors' Page on the school website at www.edmondsley.durham.sch.uk



In this Issue:

Welcome

Why Does a School Need a Governing Body?

New Governor Appointments

Governor Visits

Standards at Edmondsley

School Improvement

Pupil Premium

Good Communication

Important Announcement

Ben Mander, our Year 5/6 teacher has been recently appointed our new Science Leader to help drive forward our planning and assessment in this subject. Please watch for further news!

Important News

New Governor Appointments

I'm delighted to announce that **Maria Dawson** has been appointed as a new Parent Governor. Maria, who is mother to Katie in Year 3, works in Higher Education as a Graduate Employability Lecturer, Degrees Developer & Career Development Mentor, experience which we think will prove invaluable as a Governor at Edmondsley!

Furthermore, we are delighted to welcome **Paul Finley** as Co-opted Governor. Paul's working background is in teaching mathematics in secondary education and he currently works as an IT Trainer at university. Again, we believe his knowledge and experience will prove important as an Edmondsley Governor.

Due to the early retirement of Pauline Ruddick, we are thrilled to welcome **Chris Baker** as the new Staff Representative Governor. Chris has been with the school for 17 years, teaches in Reception and is our Sports Leader and OPAL leader.

Governor Visits

Governors arrange termly monitoring visits to school to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
- Oversee the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Some visits which have taken place this term:

I had the pleasure to be invited as a judge to the whole school 'Would you Rather' debate. Each class read the text, prepared persuasive arguments and presented their work to show their opinions. Children enjoyed the stimulus and the opportunity to listen to and vote for their favourite choice. Children and teachers alike had great fun and enjoyment at this whole-school speaking and listening activity. As a judge, it was very difficult to choose; all the children came up with very persuasive arguments!

Tracy Cummings

As a regular visitor to the Early Years classroom I have seen and experienced many of the fun and engaging activities in which the children take part. Today was no exception. The children were preparing for the Chinese New Year celebrations and they were involved in several very creative art and craft activities- making lanterns, streamers and money purses. The classroom was colourfully decorated for tomorrow's celebration and I heard rumours that there was to be a Chinese Banquet where the Reception children could all taste some traditional Chinese food and even eat with chopsticks!

Catherine Kettley



In Brief

Over £1000 was raised for new books for our reading scheme. Books were purchased to update Year 1 to Year 4 libraries. Thank you!

Parent workshops for spelling, punctuation and grammar were well attended and enjoyed by Key Stage 2 children and parents alike. More workshops to follow.

As an Eco-Lead School, staff and children saved £2430 in gas and electricity use from the previous year. It just goes to show that it's the small things such as turning lights off when rooms aren't in use which make a huge difference in money saving terms. Great work staff and children!

Monies from the School Fund were used to purchase new Wheeled OPAL resources. These have proven to be a big hit with children.

Standards at Edmondsley

An important part of the governors' role is to monitor the academic standards our children are achieving. The governors were delighted to see that last academic year, we again achieved excellent standards at Edmondsley. At the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6), 85% of pupils achieved the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths; significantly higher than the national figure of 53%. In addition, 10% of pupils achieved a higher than expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths, again significantly above the national figure of 5%. Governors also look at the amount of progress pupils make and were delighted to see that the number of children making expected or better progress by the time they leave Edmondsley was well above the national levels in ALL areas. Governors also analyse information about the standards achieved in every year group and were pleased to see that in all classes, children are achieving highly and made expected or better progress during the academic year. It is fantastic to see our children are achieving such high standards!

School Improvement

Like all schools, we have an Improvement Plan every year, in which we identify areas of our work we are currently focussing on. We have five goals; areas in which we want to strengthen our current practice. This year, our improvement plan goals are:

1. Strengthen the teaching, learning and assessment of reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling. We are making some changes to the aspects of Reading, Writing, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling taught in each year group, so that we can be sure there is a clear progression in children's learning and that all our pupils reach a good standard in these important areas by the end of each school year and by the time they move onto secondary school.

2. Further improve home/school communication, for example running parent/child workshops in key areas (phonics, delivery of grammar, punctuation and spelling, Standard Assessment Tests (SATS)), regular newsletters, and celebration assemblies. We know this is important so that families are more informed about their children's work and time at school.

3. Strengthen and improve our children's financial awareness and understanding so they can make sense of money, by providing opportunities within school. Children were instrumental in the purchase of new OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) equipment for lunchtime and playtimes.

4. As a result of staff changes/retirements, 'induction' of new staff features on our School Improvement Plan. Teaching takes into account the interests of our children and our unique environment, therefore it is important that all new staff follow our ethos and vision for pupils and deliver outstanding practice.

5. Track and sustain good progress of vulnerable groups in English and Maths We know that nationally there are some groups of pupils who do less well than others in school, such as children who speak English as an additional language and children from lower income families. We are carefully tracking the progress of pupils who are in these or other 'vulnerable groups' and making sure that where needed, they are supported to be just as successful as all our children.

What is the Pupil Premium and why is it linked to Free School Meals?

The Pupil Premium is Government funding given to schools so they can give extra support to disadvantaged pupils. The Pupil Premium is paid direct to schools based on the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals (or have been eligible for Free School Meals at any time in the last 6 years) from Reception to Year 6. The money makes a huge difference to the school, enabling it to give the children extra support, for example, to give children who need it extra tuition or to help pay for children to take part in clubs or trips.

Many children are entitled to free school meals, for example, if one parent is receiving income support, job-seekers' allowance or working tax credits, then this would enable the child to qualify for free school meals. If your child qualifies for free school meals but does not like hot dinners and prefers a pack lunch, the school can still claim the pupil premium. The office staff will be happy to answer any questions or help any parent who thinks they may be eligible.

An important part of the governors' role is to monitor the use and the impact of Pupil Premium funding at Edmondsley. The governors were pleased to see a great improvement in the standards achieved by children supported by Pupil Premium.

Good communication

Good communication is vital to our school and we have tried to make it as easy as possible to stay in touch:

In person: If you just need a quick word, please feel free to approach your class teacher at the start or end of each school day. If you would like a bit more time to discuss something in particular you may like to book some time with your teacher to suit you both.

If you would like to meet with our head teacher, Angela Rees you can pop into the school office and make an appointment.

Email: This is a great way for you to contact the school office, your teacher or the head teacher. Staff in the office will always forward your emails confidentially to the intended recipient.

edmondsley@durhamlearning.net

By phone: One of the office staff will always be available to answer your query, pass on a message or arrange a good time for your teacher to call you back. 0191 3710443

Text: Tell us your mobile number and we'll keep you informed of all urgent or important messages by text.

Website: We've got a great website that is kept right up to date. Please visit it regularly to see the latest pictures of school trips, term dates, newsletters and class work. There's opportunity for you to feedback on there too.

www.edmondsley.durham.sch.uk

Post: Our address is: Edmondsley Primary and Nursery, Congburn Bank, Edmondsley, Durham, DH7 6DU. School closure notices: During extreme snowy weather you will be notified of our school closure by one, or all of these: local radio announcements, a message on the school website or a text message.

Editor: Tracy Cummings, Vice Chair