



News from Edmondsley Governors

Dear Parents and Carers

In this term's newsletter, we give you a snapshot of what the governors have been working on and report on changes to the Governing Body. The summer holidays are just around the corner so I would like to thank very much Mrs Rees and all the staff at Edmondsley Primary and Nursery School for all their incredibly hard work this year, the parents and carers for all their support and last, but not least, our wonderful Edmondsley children, without whom our school just wouldn't be brilliant Edmondsley!

Have a lovely and restful summer! **Stuart Hogarth, Chair of Governors**

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Changes to the Governing Body

Since our last governor newsletter, two governors have stepped down from their roles due to other commitments; **Mrs Maria Dawson**, parent governor and **Mrs Beverley Bravey**, Staff Governor. We thank both of them for the time they devoted to the governing body.

We currently have vacancies for 2 parent governors and 1 co-opted governors.

What to expect from a Parent Governor

A representative, but not a delegate

As parents, you may share your opinions and views on the way the school is run to a Parent Governor. However, it is not a parent governors' responsibility to change the day to day running of a school. Governors have a **strategic** role and not a day to day operational role.

Majority Rules

Do not expect Parent Governors to have overall responsibility. We have a **Governing Body**. Strategic decisions are made after discussion and a vote.

Not the place for individual complaints

Please do not take individual concerns you have about your own children to Parent Governors. Parent Governors do not have the responsibility to respond to individual issues. Parent Governors' role with the Governing Body is to make sure policies are fit for purpose and these are communicated well to everyone.

Confidentiality

Parent Governors will not disclose to parents any confidential matters. Please do not place parent governors in this position

GDPR

You may well have been contacted by many organisations which hold your personal data. As a Durham Local Authority School, we also hold data. For example, we ask for parent/ carer contact information so that in emergencies we are able to contact you. Our Privacy Notice has been edited in line with new GDPR requirements. It provides an overview of what data you have given us and how it is stored. This can be viewed via our School Website. <http://www.edmondsley.durham.sch.uk/about-us/school-policies/> .

Attendance

Edmondsley has been focusing on attendance and punctuality over the past term and we would remind you that we expect children's attendance to be at 96% - this is in line with national expectations. Currently, we remain just below this and need your continuing support to ensure we hit this important mark. Over the past few weeks, the school has been posting weekly class attendance figures in the newsletters. The overall averages for the whole academic year, for each class is:

Butterfly/Reception 94.5%

Hedgehog/Year 1 95.2%

[A BIG Well Done to Deer and Stag Class!](#)

Squirrel/Year 2 94.3%

Rabbits/Year 3/4 95.3%

Deer/Year 4/5 96.4%

Stag/Year 5/6 96.1%

Overall School attendance 95.4%

THANK YOU SO MUCH to those families who have been working hard to ensure children's punctuality and attendance is high. THANK YOU for getting these important habits established early on in your child's life as it will make a difference in their futures. We really do appreciate that you get to school on time so that children can begin learning on time and so that other children's learning isn't affected by late comers. Attendance remains an important issue for the school. Please bear in mind that if your child is not in school they are not keeping pace with their peers. Gaps in their knowledge and understanding are likely to develop and this may hinder their future learning at both primary and secondary school. The school will continue to work closely with parents and carers to improve their child's attendance. However, we will also use the full range of options available to us, including the issuing of penalty notices, to address any current situation if this is considered necessary.

Parent Survey

Another busy year has passed at Edmondsley. Governors and staff have worked tirelessly to ensure we provide the absolute best for everyone. We love to hear what you appreciate and what you feel works well for your child in our school but we are obviously interested in your opinions of how we can improve aspects of school life for all children. We would like to thank all those parents who took the time to complete our online parent survey this year and we will let you know the results in our next issue.

Governor Monitoring and School Improvement

The Governing Body closely monitors progress against the school improvement priorities. We are pleased to report that significant progress has been made in all identified areas.

Governors have once again been very busy carrying out monitoring visits linked to the current School Improvement Plan. Link Governors have met with subject leaders in English, Maths, Early Years and Special Educational Needs focussing this term, on outcomes for ALL children. Governors have also been evaluating the effective deployment of Pupil Premium and Sports Premium funding. Individual governors have then provided written reports to the full governing body as evidence that governors are actively monitoring school improvement in the identified areas.

The following sub-committees, which manage the detailed work so that the full governing body, when it meets as a whole can concentrate on strategy have met this past term:

Curriculum Standards and Wellbeing Committee

As part of the Curriculum, Standards and Wellbeing committee, we reviewed our Uniform and School Attendance Policies. The updated and adopted policies are now available from our School Website. Please contact our school office if you require a paper copy. The main changes relate to the wearing of false nails and make-up. As a timely reminder, if you do wish for your child's ears to be pierced, please do this during the summer break. On health and safety grounds we do not allow children to wear jewellery in our school. The exceptions to this rule are small objects of religious significance and children's medical identification needs. To enable children to fully access the broad curriculum we provide at Edmondsley, we do not allow children to wear false finger nails. Pupils are not allowed to wear make-up as this can become a distraction to learning.

Finance Committee

In finance committee this term we have looked at the proposed budget for Edmondsley so that we can plan future expenditure over the next year. While the current financial situation facing schools across the country is challenging we are projecting that Edmondsley will have a small surplus over the next year.

We also approved funding for a number of schemes across the school. The most exciting of which is the construction of a water garden in the nursery area. The other items approved (which are perhaps less exciting but still important for the infrastructure of our school) are new sinks in the staff bathroom and a new section of fencing for the tennis courts

Premises, Health and Safety

The committee has instigated a review of the condition of the buildings of the school and any remedial work required by DCC. This will allow decisions, on any building work, to be made in the future with a sound basis of the existing state of the school. A risk assessment has been carried out for the entrance path and is with DCC H&S department, we are awaiting feedback. Accident data was reviewed and escalated to the full governing body as required. **(S Hogarth, Chair of Committee)**

Personnel Committee

Committee members met to discuss and agree the proposed staffing structure of teachers and TAs for 2018/19 to ensure the best outcomes for all children. Additional support for some children was considered to help improve individual children's outcomes. As a result, an additional Lunchtime Supervisor has successfully been appointed to commence September to enhance our existing team. Committee members also reviewed staff work/life balance, working conditions and wellbeing. **(T. Cummings, Chair of Committee)**

SATs

As we say "Goodbye" to our Year 6 children we wish them "Good Luck" in their new schools. We hope they are very proud of what they have achieved during their time with us. May they take many happy memories of Edmondsley Primary and Nursery School with them, as they move to the next stage of their learning journey.

Governor Development Plan

Over the past school year, governors have been evaluating our own development to ensure we deliver effective governance within our school by ensuring we are knowledgeable, engaged and visible governors who challenge and hold the school to account. Strong governance is essential for good schools. With our school constantly striving for outstanding performance, the importance of ensuring that our working practices are as efficient and effectual as they can be is critical to ensuring that the governors' time and effort is being used in the best way possible to ensure the best outcome for the school, staff and children.

Governors carried out an annual self-review to evaluate the effectiveness of the board and identify strengths and areas for development to help improve leadership and management of the school. As a result, professional development for governors was identified and appropriate training was undertaken. A full record of training carried out by governors can be viewed on our school website.

In order to perform at the level we would like, our Chair of Governors has begun a development course on leading governance and chair development, through the National Association of Governors. This will involve a review of the Chair's performance and a major project.

As a result of governor vacancies at Edmondsley, induction featured on our own development plan. Procedures and an induction handbook were reviewed and updated for new governors joining the board as well as appointing a mentor for each new governor. We also introduced Mentoring procedures to develop existing governors to take on this role.

Succession Planning also formed part of our development plan to ensure that all governors were given opportunities to consider taking on different roles within the governing board. Roles descriptions were created outlining the responsibilities and requirements for each link governor and leadership role. Leadership (sub-committee chairing) has been distributed across the governing body.

Governors identified a need to further improve effectiveness of leadership and management by exploring other mechanisms to listen, understand and respond to the voices of parents/carers, pupils and staff. We reviewed and appointed subject action plan link governors in key areas to evaluate and monitor school progress from a variety of senior leaders. Governors sought presentations from senior leadership on key curriculum areas at full governing bodies – in Spring term we received a presentation on an overview of Religious Education (RE) provision at Edmondsley by the subject leader. The Governors' Newsletter was introduced to parents/carers and staff to offer transparency about the work governors do in school.

Governors' attendance at school events has increased to help improve communication with parents/carers and staff. A governor has been appointed on the School Council to increase opportunities to listen and be informed by pupils' opinions. After consultation with staff, children and parents/carers, we have listened to what values you place on our school and have created a new School Vision to serve our school community.

To enable the board to interpret data to create robust accountability for pupil performance, identified governors accessed training in the updated school performance system.

We continue to strive for governance excellence and intended to successfully complete the Governor Mark Award this year, However, due to other school priorities and changes in governors, this will feature on our Governor Development Plan for 2018/19.

Our School Vision

Following on from our Spring newsletter, we are now proud to share the new School Vision, after consultation with staff, children and parents/carers. This School Vision articulates the vision and values that underpin our school community. With the pupils at the heart of Edmondsley Primary and Nursery School, we support each individual to feel safe, have confidence and resilience to be ready for everyday life. We want every child to be the person that they want to be. We support each pupil to realise their full potential in all aspects of life – academic, creative, physical and social – everyone to always do their best.

Our vision from 2018/19 is:

'To be a family orientated school with a firm ethos of everyone working together.

To continue to be recognised as a challenging, nurturing, high quality teaching and learning school, where every pupil will make good progress. Everyone will be encouraged and inspired to achieve beyond their academic and personal potential, ensuring our children are responsible and resilient citizens ready for 21st Century life.

We will continue to develop and increase community partnerships at school, local, national and international level.

We all look forward to further improvements in our unique outdoor environment where everyone wants to be.'

Community members

Staff, children and Governors at Edmondsley would like to thank all parents/carers who have helped out at school over the past year in various capacities. Your support enriches our children's education. Governors would like to take this opportunity to recognise and celebrate members of our wider community who have made exceptional contribution to the school. With that in mind, we would like to extend a HUGE 'Thank You' to:

Mrs Dickinson (a grandmother) who has listened to children read three times a week all year in Reception Class. She has helped in Year 1 for every school trip.

Mrs Elliott has volunteered at Edmondsley for several years; from costume making for Nativities to reading.

