

Fen Ditton Community Primary School Local Governing Body (LGB) Update – March 2021

Dear Parents,

This past month we have held a couple of LGB meetings. The first was a training evening looking at the role of Governors and how we can be effective, and then earlier this week we held our latest LGB meeting, and here is a bit of an update of what we discussed and what we are working on. Can I remind you that minutes of our meetings, once approved, are available on the LGB section of the School website, so if you want more information, please have a read, and if you have any questions, do get in touch. We remain committed to being open and transparent, as we are able, with parents and the school community. It was good to hold a Parent Forum on Thursday 11th March, the notes of which are on the school website. We plan to hold another in the Summer Term.

Governor Recruitment

This month we have welcomed 3 new Governors to join the LGB at Fen Ditton.

Firstly, we welcomed an old friend back. **Liz Harrison** once served as a Governor and as Chair of Governors while her girls were at the school. She has agreed to come back and join us, bringing her experience to help us as we support a relatively new LGB.

Another new Governor is also no stranger to the school. **Henry James** did some work experience at FDPS a few years ago, you may recognise the name – indeed Henry is Miss James' brother. Henry works for Hill and is heading up the Marleigh development for them and therefore brings not only his professional skills to the LGB, but the connection with that development which will be really useful in the coming months and years.

Following the resignation of Sabina Niemier that I reported last time, we have recruited one of her colleagues from PwC who lives in Abbey, **Xavier Castelino**. Xav will have a role to help us keep an eye on the finances.

We now have 11 Governors, and we have some very gifted people serving the school for which we are truly grateful. The Anglian Learning Trust have also been doing some rethinking about the work undertaken by LGB's and from September some of the responsibilities that we have carried since joining the Trust will change which will enable us to be more strategic.

Heads Report

Mr Askew presented his termly report, which we discussed. It was encouraging to hear of the good work that was going on and the way that the children had started back at school on 8th March.

In the light of the discussions at the January LGB meeting, Mr Askew updated us on staff recruitment. It was also noted how well the staff team had responded and were working well together to support the children attending Fen Ditton.

We were made aware of the increasing range of needs within the school community and the challenges and opportunities this presents. It was encouraging to hear how the staff were responding and proactively engaging with thinking about future provision.

It was a little concerning to hear that some parents were not following the Government guidance regarding face masks, social distancing, etc. The Governors offered Mr Askew and the staff their full support in reinforcing the need to remain committed to keeping everyone in the School community safe. We are acutely aware that in a small school, one case can require a significant proportion of the school to self-isolate, as happened before half-term. Please can we urge you to continue to follow the guidelines set out by the Government, and the specific instructions at the school, in order that we can protect one another.

It was really encouraging to hear (and see the photo) of the number of pupils cycling or scooting to school – it seems we may soon have a storage issue to deal with! It was also encouraging to hear that generally, the use of the layby that we have requested, was being honoured, although disappointing to hear that one or two parents are still insisting on using the layby to drop off and collect their children, despite our requests to keep this area clear for those with blue badges, or those who have contacted the school office to request specific permission due to their circumstances. Can we urge parents not to use this layby unless you fall into one of these two categories. While we understand that we have no policing powers to enforce this, we have requested this for the benefit of the whole school community. Please think about others.

And while we are on the matter of parking, a gentle reminder to think about where you park away from the school and to do so with regards to the local community. It may mean leaving home 5 minutes earlier, but we need to do our bit for the local community, who have given very generously to the school in recent months to help with purchasing new equipment. Again – please can I urge you to think of others.

Two Governors and Mr Askew had attended a recent meeting about the proposed relocation of the waste water treatment plant to Honey Hill. Our two major concerns are the impact of the odour on pupils, especially SEND children, and the impact on safety travelling to school from Horningsea. The LGB asked these Governors to keep them informed about relevant developments through their links with the local Save Honey Hill campaigning group (<https://www.savehoneyhill.org/>)

We again asked Mr Askew to thank the staff for all their hard work. We continue to strive to be the best school we can be, providing the best educational experience we can for your children.

As always, if there is anything I can help with, or you wish to contact me about anything, my details are below.

Rev Stuart Wood (chair@fendittonprimary.org / 07770 792371)

Chair of Governors (on behalf of the LGB)

March 2021