



SPEEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and carers,

A warm welcome to you all, in particular to the new families who have joined us at Speen School in year N, R and year 2. We hope your children will thrive with us and be very happy during their time spent here.

The purpose of our Governor's newsletter is to keep you informed about who we are, to give you some understanding of what the Governors do and although it may seem that we hold a lot of meetings (which we do!), they are all intended to contribute to our overall aim - to support, enrich and add value to the life and work of Speen School and the children that attend it. We hope that our work provides an environment that gives the best start pupils can have to their education.

Governor Responsibilities

The Governing body is made up of volunteers drawn from parents, staff and members of the local church and community. Our duties make us accountable to you and the wider community for the performance of all aspects of the school. Within the last year we have been joined by Reverend Tony Bundock from St John's Church, Lacey Green and Simon Floyd whose telecommunications expertise has become invaluable as we aim to improve our IT facilities within the school.

Our main duties include:

Planning the school's future strategic direction and helping to determine the schools aims.

Making sure the latest curriculum is taught within the school and promoting effective ways of teaching and learning through the school aims and policies.

Deciding how the school can encourage pupil's spiritual, moral and social development.

Making sure the school provides for all its pupils, including those with special needs.

As Governors we also have an increasing number of statutory responsibilities, such as approving and reviewing, on an ongoing basis, the school's annual budget. We are responsible for appointing the head teacher. However, we do not become involved in the day-to-day management of the school – this is the head teacher's responsibility, but we do hold the head teacher to account for all the performance aspects within the school.

The Full Governing Body (FGB) meets approximately once per term and considers a wide range of issues related to the management of the school. These can include discussions about the long term school development plan, policies to review and adopt, budgets, school admissions, reports on monitoring visits, risk management, and also reviewing the regular reports from the head teacher. The FGB closely monitors the details of the latest school performance data.

This leads me to urge you to view the latest OFSTED data dashboard information which is published through a link on our website – <http://www.speen-cofe.bucks.sch.uk> Once again we maintain our position within the top 20% of schools nationwide for KS1. As governors we are extremely proud of this and the staff and the children are to be commended for their hard work resulting in such achievement.

In order that all the various aspects of the school are dealt with a number of sub committees have been established. These committees allow the FGB to be made aware of the main issues from each area of the school and to make key

decisions and policy revisions as a whole when required. These committees generally also meet twice termly.

Here is a brief summary of what each sub-committee has been working on this term:

Finance Committee – Eamonn Barrett, Al Scott, Mrs Nayna

Robustly discussing and approving various premises related expenditure such as the new signs which are now installed and we hope you agree are a vast improvement and together with a repainted entrance really enhance the overall look of the school. Staffing costs, improvements to ICT learning resources, which are currently hampered by our inconsistent internet speed provided by Bucks CC, were also on our agenda.

Curriculum committee – Debbie O'Brien, Mrs Nayna, Helen Lidington, Julie Cooper, Christine Rooney

Vigorous discussions took place whilst examining the data of the current cohort of children and their expected progress at the end of this academic year and how the achievements are to be met and any support measures in place to facilitate this. It was agreed that all current FS children in Mrs Hayman's class are independent learners and are making good if not better than expected levels of progress. New policies were adopted where required.

The teaching groups this term will be:

- Years 1 and 2 together with a teaching assistant
- Years R and N together.

We have a **General Purposes committee** comprising all governors and our primary focus has been to scrutinise the school development plan and the SIAMS inspection report to see how any recommendations are to be implemented.

Communications Committee – Katherine Matthews, Amanda Cleaver, Debbie O'Brien, Simon Floyd, Mrs Nayna.

Our website continues to be a focus and we have an idea to launch a pupil led 'introduction to our school' promotional video clip to upload. Our children are the best ambassadors and the idea of them carrying out a 'walking tour of my school' has our approval; we hope you will like it too. We are particularly keen to hear from any parents who have skills in this area to do the filming as we think if carried out by a familiar face the children will be more comfortable. **Please contact Katherine Matthews if you are able to help or for further information.**

Simon has been busy trying to resolve our school internet speed issues and presented various ideas to achieve this. Bucks CC is to be involved as teaching staff endeavour to use new IT programmes within the curriculum and the varying broadband speed often affects this.

We were delighted to learn that the annually successful PTA fundraiser, Safari Supper has become famous outside of Speen. A national PTA magazine is running an article after hearing about it and as a consequence bringing some good publicity for our school. Many thanks to the PTA for organising such excellent events and raising invaluable funds for our school.

Parents may also be interested to know that the compare schools link is available via the website.

Admissions Committee – Amanda Cleaver, Debbie O'Brien, Mrs Nayna

Have met to discuss the applications for new places and the admission arrangements policy. We are pleased to report a healthy number of new applicants for the new academic year.

Finally, we thought as we have been talking about attainment it is timely to draw your attention to a recently published report from the DFE, which promotes a link between early academic achievements at primary schools and later successes at GCSE stage. The report underlined the value for schools of promoting health and wellbeing as an integral part of a school effectiveness strategy.

The following are key points, which may seem obvious but it is worth noting the evidence from which they are derived:

- Pupils with better health and well-being are likely to achieve better academically. A recent report of statistics released by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) highlighted the proportion of obese children in reception year at primary schools, which increased in 2013-14, with nearly one in 10 four to five-year-olds classed as obese. A worrying trend.
- Effective social and emotional competencies are associated with greater health and wellbeing, and better achievement.
- The culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn.
- A positive association exists between academic attainment and physical activity levels of pupils. Aerobically fit children have higher academic scores.
- OFSTED identify strong correlations between schools that achieve a high grade for PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, Economic education) and those that were graded outstanding for their overall effectiveness.

- Academic success in itself has a strong positive impact on children's sense of how good their life satisfaction is. This in turn is linked to higher levels of wellbeing in adulthood. In turn children's overall level of wellbeing impacts on their behaviour and engagement in school and their ability to acquire academic competence at the outset.
- The study found that pupils with better emotional wellbeing at age 7 equated to more than one term's progress than pupils with poor emotional wellbeing.
- Having a sense of belonging to a school and having good teacher-pupil relationships contribute to pupils enjoying school and securing greater attainment.
- Physical activity has been linked to improved classroom behaviour across the whole school. Participation in after school clubs also has a positive effect on attainment. The variety available at Speen School we think is to be admired.
- A whole-school approach to healthy school meals has shown improvements in academic attainment at KS1 and 2.
- Whole school approaches to health and wellbeing have a positive impact on outcomes including BMI (Body mass index), physical activity, physical fitness, fruit and vegetable intake and a general improvement in children's diets and food choices. This is evident here in Speen in our partnerships with families and the community with whom the school proactively engages in a variety of roles.

The school staff and governors are always keen to seek your opinions and also for your views of the hot lunches provided by the hub at Princes Risborough Upper school. The menu is available on our website and a mix of children choose this option or take a packed lunch. Is there a reason why they are not choosing the hot lunch? Please let us know.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and we hope you have found it informative. We welcome any suggestions for its content and any questions you would like answered within it. A reminder of our dedicated email address: governors@speen-cofe.bucks.sch.uk

With very best wishes,
On behalf of Speen School Governors

Eamonn Barrett
Chairman