

Governors' Newsletter Summer Term 2016

This term sees the end of my many years as a school governor, and a few less as Chair of Governors. I have thoroughly enjoyed this role (in the main part) and working alongside Tracey Jarrett (and before her Regine Kruger), the marvelous staff and governors who strive to make children's experiences at Downs Infant School the best they can be. I shall miss being part of this wonderful community but am confident it is in safe hands under the new Chair Oli Rahman who introduces himself here: "I have been a parent governor for the last 7 years. I have three children, all of whom have made their way through Downs Infant School and the youngest is still here. I have served on the finance committee, am the current named link for child protection and the current vice chair. My day job is that of Paediatric Consultant at the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital, Brighton. I'm also a trustee of the Rockinghorse charity which raises funds for the Children's Hospital."

Back to business!

- Our summer end of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 assessments continue to show that our children do very well academically.
- The school's budget remains balanced but with greater demands and decreasing funding in real terms, this is by no means guaranteed in future years.
- We continue to monitor the school development plan - its main focus this year has been the changes in assessment (which have been a challenge nationwide), review and revise policies, work with external agencies to ensure high standards are maintained across all areas of school life, visit the school in our capacity as governors, host surgeries, mingle with new parents, attend training and do everything else the Local Authority and/or Department for Education throw at us!

At the end of last term we invited all parents/carers attending consultation evenings to complete a survey about our school. Thank you to the 218 of you who took the time to do so. Accompanying this letter is an analysis of the feedback which was, as in previous years, very positive. Credit must go to all the staff for this. We are in the process of finalising the School Development Plan for 2016/17, the results of this survey will feed into that. We have already implemented some of your suggestions for our new Reception intake.

On a personal level, I would like to say a huge thank you to all the school governors who give their time freely and willingly. They will be seeking new governors in September so, if you feel you have something to offer, please consider this role. I hope everyone has an enjoyable summer break. For those children leaving Downs Infant School I wish them all the very best and hope they and you, as parents/carers, will take away some very happy memories.

After 22 years, and with a hint of nostalgia, it's over and out from me,
With very best wishes,

Rachel Attwell
Chair of Governors