

Orton CofE Primary School

Governors' report to parents, staff and friends, July 2019

I am not quite sure where the past year has gone – it has flown by – but a brief report at this time of year seems to have been useful in the past so I had better put pen to paper.

School Development Plan

One of the roles of the Governing Body (GB) is to work with the Head and staff on the strategic direction of Orton School and a key tool for that is the School Development Plan (or SDP). This is revised each year and then used as the basis for reporting and discussion with the GB at its regular meetings.

The three priorities identified for 2018/2019 say a lot about what's been happening in school and, while they only reflect a tiny fraction of the activities, they do help to show where the governors fit into the picture.

Management of Health and Safety and GDPR – these are important areas but not exactly the glamorous end of school life. During the year, through a lot of work by Mrs Pomfret, other staff, governors (particularly Richard Petty and Julian Thorpe), our H&S advisor and several volunteers, a great deal has been done, not only to make sure that we meet all the regulatory requirements for health, safety and data protection but also to keep everyone in school, especially the children, safe. Through a lot of time and effort, the most recent H&S audit showed a big leap in our scores, especially for documentation and planning, and this is reflected in school safety too. Thank you to everyone who has played a part in this.

Improve attainment and progress for children across the school in maths – last week's SATs results at KS2 were a big boost to morale for all the teaching staff who have put huge effort into this strand of the SDP over recent months (and years). Class 4 children can't do well in their final year unless all the building blocks of maths have been put carefully in place since Foundation Stage so a big thank you goes to everyone involved, including home support on Big Maths challenges and times tables. Maths will be an ongoing priority and special thanks go to Mrs Simpson, who leads on the subject, for her work on building links with other schools and bringing their experiences into Orton.

A sub-committee of the GB focuses on Educational Attainment and we've been looking at children's work from across all ages at our meetings, taking a subject at a time. It is really encouraging to see how the children learn and develop, how their work is marked and they're encouraged and how they're taught to meet new demands. Thanks to Mrs Woodmass and Mrs Mounsey for talking us through this and explaining all the work that goes on behind the scenes of those books.

Review and implement School Vision – we knew at the start of the year that Orton School needed to review its Vision in the changing context of being a Church school in a rural community. Thank you to everyone who got involved in the brainstorming session in school, those who commented on the first drafts and the governors who helped to tweak and fine tune the final wording. It's been lovely to see the new Vision emblazoned on the wall of the

Hall and in Reception and it will be important that the Vision becomes a common thread through the School's approach, attitudes and activities next year.

Celebrating achievements

There have been some great things to celebrate in the past year – certainly too many for me to include a full list – but I've been very proud of Orton School on several occasions:

- Watching as the younger children in school gained confidence and developed their courage and coordination on the new Trim Trail;
- Seeing Lucas win one of the prizes in the Herald's writing competition;
- Climbing Loughrigg with Class 3 on their residential and seeing how they worked and played together, encouraged each other and cheerfully learnt new skills;
- Seeing Bicci win a national award with her artwork and creativity;
- Hearing back from staff on how brilliantly Class 4 behaved in York – having fun, working together and cramming an exhausting amount into a short time;
- Seeing Frankie stun one of the science teachers at Ullswater CC as he remembered key facts and figures about DNA from a year ago;
- Hearing about Young Voices in Manchester and The Big Sing at Kirkby Stephen and knowing that Orton was brilliantly represented by its enthusiastic singers on both occasions;
- And, finally, the many sporting achievements of the past year in gymnastics, running, swimming, quick sticks hockey, tag rugby, tennis and much more.

All of these things are part of life at Orton School and we really want to keep that mix. Thanks go to all the staff, parents, volunteer helpers, drivers, friends and governors for playing their part in making things happen, to the children who grab the opportunities and make the most of them and, last but very much not least, to everyone involved with FoOS. Without their fundraising and financial support, Orton School would struggle to fund a lot of these things so a big THANK YOU goes to them.

Farewells and welcomes

We said Farewell to Mrs Carrick at Easter and welcomed Mrs Lea to teach Class 2 for a term. We also welcomed Mrs Percival into the Office in September and we're saying farewell to Ms Mitchell from the After School Club at the end of the year. The GB said farewell to Rev Sandra Ward and Rona Arkle during the year - we managed to keep Mr Coward for a little longer even though he reached the end of his term and welcomed Mary Jenkin as a new Foundation governor. We are currently looking to appoint a second Parent Governor (to join Glen Watson in this role) and a Local Authority Governor so please contact me or Mrs Percival, our Clerk if you would like to know more about these vacancies. It would be great to have the GB up to full speed for September.

So that more or less sums up another very busy year from the governors' perspective. Very best wishes to the Year 6s who are moving up and on to secondary school and to their families, especially those who will no longer have such a strong connection to Orton School. Thank you to every parent and carer reading this report - for your continued support and for everything that you do in and around school throughout the year. Have a great summer.

Sally Seed on behalf of the Governing Body
16 July 2019