

Woolenwick Junior School Governing Board

Woolenwick Junior School, Bridge Road West, Stevenage, Herts.

Annual Governance Statement for Academic Year 2015/16

The Governing Board (GB) of Woolenwick Junior School made the decision earlier in the year to issue an annual statement to parents and stakeholders. We hope you find our very first one interesting and informative.

This past year has been a very busy one, but we have been lucky enough to welcome some new governors to the Board. Mark Hessey joined the GB at the beginning of the year; a parent who lives and works locally. Vincent Oram has also joined the Board: some of you may already know Vincent as he is the Vicar at Holy Trinity Church and he knows the school well. Our most recent recruit, James French will join us in September. He is also a parent working and living locally. We have to say a sad farewell to Jess Lancaster who is leaving us at the end of term and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all her support, expertise and overall contribution to the team.

Back in the summer holidays of last year the school sustained extensive flooding. This meant that the school and governors had to work quickly in order to re-open the school for September 2016, and more importantly place pressure on HCC to unblock underground drainage which caused the flood in the first place. Staff had to work many extra hours over the holidays to rescue their classrooms and then reinstate everything once the redecorating and new flooring had been completed.

Several years ago we applied for funding for a new roof for the school and as you know this work was finally approved and completed. Applications for projects like these have to be made by governors and a case has to be made for works to be carried out. The new car park was also laid just before the start of the year, which the school along with the Infants funded, as this was not something we could not apply for a grant for. The car park and surrounding paths were in desperate need of upgrading. One role that is becoming more and more important is prioritising where money is spent as the school's budget decreases. Governors have to make some very hard decisions over where the school should spend its money and a summary can be found on the school website.

You will have read in the press about the Government's agenda to make schools into academies and the future of Woolenwick Juniors has been a regular agenda item at many meetings of the GB this year. The changes in education over the past year have been unprecedented: changes in SATs, changes in how we assess the children and changes to the whole curriculum have been just some of the issues and challenges faced by governors as well as by the school's leaders.

At the beginning of the year we began discussions on the merits of extending the school day and, following consultations with stakeholders, we approved this change recently such that it will take effect from September 2016.

The School has just completed its first full year of being the lead agency for the Stevenage North Group of children's centres. The 3 children's centres that we manage provide services for families with children aged under 5 and will remain open over the school summer holidays. A programme of support and activities is available from Bridge Road Children's Centre and details can also be found on their website.

It is also the responsibility of the GB to engage the views of the children, parents and staff. We carried out an online survey for all the children last term and 89% are happy at school whilst 93% thought the staff did a good job and the most importantly 94% thought they learnt a lot in lessons. Anyone interested in the full report can request a copy from the office. We also asked them 'what would you like to tell governors' and here are just a few of our favourites:

'I love going to school because all the teachers are nice and they try their hardest not to lose their temper. They have loads of fun days. Everyone cares for one and another. When people have a disagreement the teachers try and sort it out as best as they can. Everyone plays nicely. When people feel sad the teachers make them happy again and make us giggle. We all have a happy day at school.'

'Woolenwick Junior School is an extremely good school. The facilities are clean and very good. The work here is very challenging and that is why I like to come to school. Most pupils are kind, friendly and funny but some are very cheeky. The staff here at Woolenwick are very polite and are amazing at their job. They are very thoughtful, kind and funny. Woolenwick Junior School is amazing and we will miss it when we go to Y7.'

A common theme seemed to be that the staff are funny and kind and there were a lot of requests for monkey bars in the playground.

The Governing Board welcomes feedback from the whole school community and is currently collecting the views from parents and carers in an online questionnaire. Please take this opportunity to give us your views of the school and any comments you may have. The Governing Board will use this information to address any concerns and make any improvements in the next academic year. The questionnaire link can be found on the school website.

If you would like to speak to a governor at any time, this can be arranged via the school office.

As we come to the end of a very long and busy year, we would like to wish all the Y6 pupils our very best for the next stage in their education as they transfer to secondary school. We wish all families a happy, restful and hopefully sunny summer holiday.

The Governing Board
Woolenwick Junior School