

# Woolenwick Junior School Governing Board

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

## Annual Governance Statement for Academic Year 2016/17

The Governing Body of Woolenwick Junior School makes an annual statement to parents at the end of each academic year in order to share with you what our focus has been throughout the past year.

The GB welcomed a new governor, James French, to the Board. James is a parent and is now the governor who has the responsibility for P.E. We will also be saying goodbye to a long-standing governor, Laurie Chester, who has been with us a long time and could always be found doing art and craft with the children although her responsibilities were with the Pay Committee. We thank her for her long service and I'm sure she will come back to visit us all.

We started the year by implementing a decision we made in the previous year to extend the school day. September saw school finish at 3.30pm, allowing for 2 hours of foundation subjects each afternoon. The transition to the new time was trouble free and the feedback from parents has been unanimously positive to the changes.

The school finances continue to be a strong focus as tighter control is needed with a diminishing budget. This year saw us have an internal financial audit where the budget control that the governors have over the school was scrutinised over 2 days. In the absence of the Headteacher, Governors were able to demonstrate the tight controls in place and I'm pleased to say we passed with flying colours.

Our work force is our biggest budgetary spend and this year we have been lucky in that the staff has been fairly stable with few changes. We have recently appointed a new Office Manager as Jill, who you all know and who is currently in the role, is going to focus solely on the budget. Our new Office Manager will be starting with us in October. This year also saw us employ a sports apprentice, Gabby Albanese, who I'm pleased to say will be with us next year too, on a full-time basis, and will be doing a lot of sport with the children. September will also see two new employees, Kate Bond and Amy Sawyer who will be learning within the classroom to be teachers combing their time in the classrooms with going to university.

One expenditure we did make this year, is the new entry system into the school. This was needed to tighten our safeguarding policies and streamline how we know who is in the building and to check all adults, hence making a safe environment for the children.

After the large building projects of last year, we have had a quiet year for refurbishment. We are planning on doing some works over the summer internally, creating some more office space and a new meeting room for parents. The staff room will also get a long overdue face-lift.

You will have read in the press about the Government's agenda to make schools into academies and the future of Woolenwick Juniors has continued to be a regular agenda item at all meetings of the GB this year. The GB is looking into establishing what academy route would be best for the school moving forward into the future.

It is the responsibility of the GB to engage the views of all stakeholders, and this year we asked parents and staff to do an online survey for us. The information this provides is invaluable for us to both check all is well and to shape what improvements are needed. 91% of staff felt that Governors understood the issues facing the school and 96% were proud to work at Woolenwick. Follow-up meetings and feedback are carried out to ensure the survey results are acted upon to make positive changes. We also issued 'You Said, We Did' documents for all three surveys, which can be found on our website.

Some changes made after the parent survey have been the moving of assemblies, the employment of Rising Stars to vary the sports available to the children and the displaying of many more photos of the children on the school website.

Governors rarely get involved with the operational aspects of the school, but when the school was left without a Headteacher in April, we have found ourselves supporting the Senior Leadership Team throughout this time. We have kept you informed at all times and swiftly put into place some interim arrangements to ensure the school would continue to run as normal. I'm pleased to report that Miss Kingston, as Acting Headteacher, has done an excellent job and the management of the school is running smoothly and all staff have worked together to support the leaders.

The end of the term brought some excellent news in the appointment of Mr Hawkins as the new substantive Headteacher. His expertise is teaching and learning, he has a vast knowledge of the curriculum, assessment and quality first teaching. His referees speak very highly of him and we are sure he will fit in very quickly into the school community.

The end of the Summer Term also brought a great improvement in our SATs results from that of last year. All the children should have received their individual results with their end of year reports. Governors would particularly like to thank the Year 6 staff team who have worked tirelessly to improve this year's results and the rest of the staff body who all supported them.

The end to the term put our tea making skills to the test in the Governor café at the popular open evening, where you all received information about your child's learning for next year and were able to meet their new classroom staff. The obvious topic in the café for Governors was indeed our new Headteacher and how everyone is looking forward to meeting him.

As we come to the end of a very long and busy term, we would like to wish all the Year 6 pupils our very best for the next stage in their education as they transfer to secondary school. We wish all our families a happy, restful and hopefully sunny summer holiday.

The Governing Board  
Woolenwick Junior School