



# Governors' Newsletter

Autumn term 2018

## A note from the Chair of Governors John Shirley



The start of Green Ridge's second year has seen the school more than double in size and finally move into the new (and much improved) permanent building.

It has been a successful first term for Green Ridge, with new pupils and staff settling in well. Whilst there have been some teething issues with the building, we are now benefitting from the new facilities and more comfortable learning environments that the permanent building has brought.

Green Ridge has continued to go from strength to strength during the first term of this academic year; this has been as a direct result of the hard work of the entire staff. In particular, the board were delighted to hear that Miss Imbriano won the Outstanding New Teacher of the Year award in October, and we would like to extend our congratulations to Miss Imbriano.

As well as a new building, new pupils and new staff members, Green Ridge is also welcoming a new Chair of Governors. I am stepping down from the role to be replaced by Rachel Leach, previously the Vice Chair and one of Green Ridge's original governors. Work commitments and a recent relocation have meant that I am unable to give the role and the school the time that they deserve, and so I have decided to step down.

Rachel has been a valuable member of the governing body since before the school opened in September 2017, and has been working hard focusing on Safeguarding and the Pupil Premium Grant since then. The board has unanimously supported the appointment of Rachel as the new Chair of Governors, and I look forward to seeing the school continue to grow and develop as Rachel steps into this role.



## Safeguarding at Green Ridge Academy

### Rachel Leach, Vice Chair of Governors



As the link governor for Safeguarding at Green Ridge Academy, I always have the children's safety at the forefront of my mind during every visit to the school.

During my last meeting with Mr. Wanford we looked at the new building, reception, e-safety and I even had chance to speak to some of the pupils about how safe they feel within the school. Firstly, praise goes out to Mrs Rosser and Mrs Erdos who greet you when you enter Reception. It may seem like Fort Knox trying to get into the school, signing in using the new system and having a photograph taken, but this is paramount to making sure that all pupils are kept safe within the school.

When I spoke to the pupils about how safe they feel, they were very vocal in letting me know that they feel safe at school. They could tell me what the different coloured lanyards represent that visitors have to wear and who they can approach. They know where in the school they are allowed to enter and where they are not. Pupils also told me that they

feel safe walking to and from school, which was lovely to hear.

What is great about Green Ridge Academy is that they spend time teaching the pupils and parents about a variety of safeguarding issues that may arise in today's climate, such as e-safety and bullying. Earlier this term, parents and carers were invited to an e-safety and bullying workshop. The workshop was designed to inform parents and carers about the warning signs of bullying they should look for within their child and how to support them. Even if parents and carers could not attend the workshop, all pupils were sent home with a 'Say NO to bullying' handbook which includes case studies from parents of children who have been bullied, top tips on how to prevent bullying, why schools don't just get rid of bullies, warning signs to look out for if you think your child is being bullied or what to do if your child is bullying others. If you would like any more information, then have a look at the Anti-Bullying Alliance top tips leaflet that was sent to you, or contact the school. Personally, I am happy with the hard work and dedication the staff at Green Ridge Academy are showing towards Safeguarding.



## My first few months

### Sophy Davies



Hi all, my name is Sophy Davies and I have been a governor for over 6 months now. I still feel very new to it, particularly as I am not a parent, so I am not used to how schools work. However, the skills I have gained in my day job as a civil servant have helped me ask questions of the information presented to the board. In addition, I have been doing lots of training to get to grips with things.

It has been lovely to see the school move into its new building and hopefully by the time you read this, the whole building has been handed over. It is amazing to see the technology being used in the classrooms and I am sure this will continue to expand as the school grows.

I recently visited the school just after the October half term and I spent a bit of time talking to Sean English about how the attainment and progress of pupils, year groups and the whole school are assessed. I was very pleased to see that the whole team wants every child in the school to progress and achieve - and that they do everything they can to make that happen. I will meet with him every term to review the school's assessment data and talk about how resources are being directed, based on the data.

When I visited, I also spent some time with Y1 Elm class, helping them build structures with straws and doing some reading. I was there just after Miss Imbriano had received her award and it was lovely to see how excited the children were about it.

At the November meeting, I was voted into the position of Vice-Chair. I look forward to the challenge that this position will bring and working closely with Rachel to ensure the school is the best school it can be.

## Finance and budget

### Tara Erdos



Hello, my name is Tara Erdos and I am the non-teaching staff member of the governing body. I have worked at Green Ridge since May 2017 as the School Business Manager, helping Mr Wanford set up the school and taking care of most things non-curriculum.

Finance is a huge part of my role - setting, monitoring and balancing the ever-challenging school budget to make sure the children and staff have everything they need to perform at their best. It is very important that the governors have a clear picture of our financial position at all times to enable them to support strategic plans for the school and I make sure they are kept informed and updated regularly.

I'm really excited to see the school grow over the next few years, I enjoy being a part of the Governing body and have been a Governor for many years at other schools before coming to Green Ridge.

## Pupil Premium

### Sean English



As part of my work within the school I am currently leading Pupil Premium. For this, I have recently presented to the governors on how this fund would be spent across the school to ensure that it is being used to maximise outcomes for disadvantaged learners.

Part of this presentation included how the school will be developing Pupil Premium funding through whole-school initiatives, as these have been researched and proven to have the highest level of impact. This includes ensuring the children have access to high-quality teaching; developing effective and personalised next steps and feedback for children; mastery approach to learning and Early Years interventions.

All of these approaches ensure that individuals are developing their true potential by establishing what an individual needs for them to progress and develop through their time at Green Ridge Academy. Raising outcomes for disadvantaged learners is something I am passionate about and am keen to develop over the course of this year.

## Governor Visit

### Bina Varsani



It was a great pleasure to carry out my first governor visit this term. The main focus of the visit was to monitor behaviour, attendance and visit the Year 2 class. The learning walk not only showed how friendly and well-behaved the children were but also demonstrated both the staff and pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm towards learning.

During the visit I was also delighted to see the features of the new building such as the library, the DT room and the dance room.

Being a new governor has been a great learning curve and I hope to continue being a part of improving behaviour and attendance and monitoring these figures and questioning the school appropriately.



## Six weeks in the life of a Parent Governor

**Laura Nunn**



**Week 1** This evening I'm doing a two-hour course in Safeguarding. This is my first training course as a parent governor, and I'm unsure what to expect – perhaps it will be a bit dry? It isn't. Despite the facilitator assuring us she wouldn't get into the details of unpleasant safeguarding cases, it's detailed enough for me to come away feeling sick about what can happen if safeguarding procedures aren't followed. I have enough knowledge now to understand how to support the school with Safeguarding, and a renewed appreciation of why it's so vital.

**Week 2** A governor meeting this evening. This means a couple of hours of reading documents and formulating any questions I want to ask. At the meeting itself, in addition to agreeing updates to some policies, we look at the school's data on pupil progress across the year groups, and talk about strategies to further raise attainment.

**Week 3** I complete my first governor visit; all governors spend some time in the school regularly. My areas of responsibility are Reception, Community (including the PTA) and English curriculum, so I meet with relevant members of staff to understand how the strategies we discuss in governor meetings are working in practice. Afterwards, I get to see a selection of children's school work, to see the progress they are making. I am most impressed at how happy the children are, and how engaged they seem in their lessons.

**Week 5** A full-day course on a Saturday today, for an Introduction to Governance. As a new parent governor, I'm keen to increase my knowledge of my role. It's also really useful to get to meet other new governors. It's also a brilliant excuse to leave the children with my husband for the day and drink coffee and eat biscuits.

**Week 6** Our next governor meeting. One of the focuses for this meeting is on budget, and planned spending by the school. With a whole new school to furnish and buy resources for, there is a lot to talk about.

It's certainly quite time-consuming being a governor, and a steep learning-curve – but I'm finding it fascinating and a real opportunity to help make my children's school as good a place as it can possibly be.

