



# Governors' Newsletter

Summer term 2019

## A note from the Chair of Governors Rachel Leach



Hello and welcome to the fifth edition of the Governor newsletter and the final one for this academic year! As I write this, we are now a full governing board, welcoming Ben Moloney as a new parent governor and Chris Whiting as a co-opted governor. You can read their introductions in this newsletter.

I wanted to take this time to reflect on what a fantastic (and busy) year it has been for the school. At the start of the academic year everyone was excited to finally get into the new building. I am sure you will all agree with me that the school building is amazing!

When I walk around the school I can see that the children feel safe within their learning environments and during playtime they enjoy the facilities they have been provided with. I love how each classroom is unique to the year group and what they are learning; it really

shows us that the teachers have a passion for education and want the students to feel the same way.

Throughout the year I have visited the school every week to meet with Mr Wanford and various members of staff. I have also tried to attend every event that has been offered to parents/carers. My favourite events have been the Christmas plays. We really do have some budding actors in the school! World Book Day showed us how passionate the children are about reading and seeing the different characters come alive was quite spectacular – I particularly liked the Jolly Postman! Towards the end of the summer term, the PTA organised some fantastic events, such as the Summer Fete which was a fun day for the whole family!

Governors have been busy meeting every term to discuss budgets, safeguarding and curriculum amongst other things. All governors have also been in to visit their link year groups to see what they have been up to during the term.

On behalf of the governors I would like to wish all the staff and students a restful summer holiday and we look forward to seeing you all in September!

## Sophy Davies, Vice Chair of Governors



### What it means to be a governor at Green Ridge...

The Department for Education has a lot of documentation about what a governing body of a school should be, whether it is part of an academy trust like Green Ridge, or not.

The most important parts are the three core functions of a governing body. These are:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

So, what do these mean in practice and what is my role in carrying out these functions?

In my time as a governor, I have developed my understanding of these, and will continue to do so whilst I am part of the governing body.

We have governing body meetings every month and these rotate between being about strategic direction, finance and resources and education and curriculum. Ahead of the meetings we receive a set of papers and I will spend a couple of evenings going through them. When looking at the papers I consider effective use of money and resources, impact on children's education (irrelevant of background or capability) and impact of policy on practice in the school. If you are interested in seeing a copy of our meeting minutes please contact Rachel Leach, Chair of Governors.

I visit the school each term. I am responsible for reviewing assessment, use of the Pupil Premium grant and use of Sports Premium grant. I will meet with the member of staff responsible for these areas and discuss progress and challenges. I am also the link governor for Year 1 so I try to spend a bit of time in the class and speaking to the children. I always enjoy the time I spend in the school as it reminds me why I became a governor.

In summary, being a governor means providing support and challenge to the leadership team of the school.

## Sean English



As the Summer term draws to a close, it marks the end of what was another pleasurable term. Being within school this term is always rewarding as it is a great time to look back to the start of the year and appreciate the progress the children have made.

As a governor, it is also a great time to reflect on the year and consider how to shape the future direction for the school. I have met with governors to review the progress the children have made and how gaps have been narrowed. We have looked at the attainment of pupils throughout the year, particularly Pupil Premium students, and the impact of the different whole-school strategies we have implemented across the year. Linking to this we have also had discussions regarding attendance and how significant it is in order to ensure the children take advantage of every possible learning opportunity.

Ensuring all children have access to the same opportunities has also been key for me this year and the Summer term has also allowed us to evaluate the 11B411 promises. From talking to the children, it is clear to see that they have really enjoyed their experiences this year and are looking forward to those ahead.

## Tara Erdos



### Site and Premises Update

Having moved into a new building for the last two summers, I am very glad to not be moving again this year! We have settled into our new school building very well and hopefully most of the 'teething troubles' and glitches are now behind us.

We are currently ordering extra furniture, sports equipment and classroom resources to be delivered into the school over the next couple of weeks; this will give Mr Morris and me a chance to have everything up and running for the teachers as they prepare their classroom environments ready for the new academic year.

I'm sure the school will feel very different in September with all the new staff, children & families – how exciting!

## Laura Nunn



### Community Highlights

Each governor of Green Ridge has several areas of responsibility. I personally look at the English curriculum, am the link governor for Reception, have recently taken on the Equality and Diversity role, plus I am the key governor for Community, which is what I will focus on in this edition of the Governors' Newsletter.

For a new school, Green Ridge has already proved itself to be at the heart of the Aylesbury community. This term has seen Green Ridge pupils enthusiastically participate in Aylesbury's WhizzFizzFest – the local children's arts and literature festival.

With the help of local artist Pippa North, the children created some fantastic props around the theme of *Alice in Wonderland*. The weather was kind and the children looked fantastic as they paraded proudly as pink flamingos and colourful mushrooms through Aylesbury town centre.

The Community governor role also encompasses the excellent work the PTA does. Again, for such a new school, we have been so lucky in finding a dedicated group of people who have organised themselves swiftly into a solid committee which volunteers time and skills to fundraise for the school.

In July we had the first summer fete in our new building. Fears about rain were quickly replaced with fears of sunstroke, as the fete turned out to be on the hottest day of the year so far!

The beach-themed fete really showed how far Green Ridge has come in the community – so many local people came along to support the school by buying a burger or flinging a flip-flop! Many thanks to the PTA for all the hours and hours of hard work that have gone into this. At the time of writing, a final tally is still pending, but approximately £3000 was raised, which will go straight to the school for additional resources for the children.

## Chris Whiting



As a new co-opted governor for Green Ridge, I would like to introduce myself.

I've worked within the hospitality industry for 16 years, first in operations, and then moved into Human Resources in 2015. I now hold a senior HR position for a UK-based Hospitality and Care Home Group.

Throughout my time within hotels and HR I've worked closely with schools and colleges to provide experience days, work experience, taster sessions, seminars, mock applications and interviews. This remains a strong focus for me.

I wanted to become a school governor to use my skills and knowledge to help the school achieve (and exceed) its objectives, goals and vision and personally to give back to the local community. I'll also be able to support in strategy, developing and ensuring compliance with HR policies and procedures, and provide advice and support in HR matters as required.

Children are the future and I will find it rewarding to be able to help ensure that the education received at Green Ridge is stimulating and to a high quality, and that every child is given the opportunity to meet their full potential.

Outside of work I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, theatre and holidays.

## **Ben Moloney**



As this is my first article for the Governors' Newsletter, I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself and explain why I decided to become a parent governor.

My daughter, who is currently in Cedar class, has been with the school since it first opened its doors. Since then I have seen the school not only grow in numbers of children, staff and building size, but also in reputation in the local area.

This reputation can only be maintained through the hard work of the staff with support from the parents/carers of the children that attend Green Ridge. I decided that I could best provide support through being a Parent Governor.

I am currently an Officer in the Royal Navy and at various times throughout my career I have been involved in training our sailors for dealing with the rigors of everyday life both in the military and outside of work. One enduring theme is that new recruits have struggled to transition from secondary education to real-world employment. For some it is the first time they may have found themselves having to deal with challenges in which if they make the wrong decision it can have a negative effect on others.

I am not advocating by any means that we should be preparing our children for a military life. But the children should at least be taught the keys skills in how to deal with challenging situations mentally, emotionally and physically. This will stand them in good stead for their futures and will help them realise their full potential to live happy and successful lives.

One of the things that has impressed me with Green Ridge is that children are taught respect and how to conduct themselves correctly. I believe the headteacher and his staff run the school in such a way that the children are being prepared from an early age to deal with the outside world and the challenges it presents.

Being on the governing board means that I can have an active role in ensuring that the school can reach its potential and prepare all our children for their futures.