



Governors' Newsletter

Autumn Term 2019

A note from the Chair of Governors Rachel Leach



Welcome to the Christmas edition of our Governors' newsletter. I'm not sure where this term has gone but I know that the staff and children at Green Ridge have been working very hard. We

started the school year by welcoming new Little Ridges pupils and over 60 new Reception children, who seemed to have settled in well.

I had the pleasure of attending the school for Grandparents Day. During this time, I went around the whole school. When I went into Reception (YR), I especially wanted to see how last year's Little Acorns had progressed since moving to their new environment and new teachers. The pupils had been learning their phonics and, whilst most were beginning to learn letters, the children who had attended Little Acorns were starting to use diagraphs to develop words such as 'queen'.

In Year 2, it was really nice to see Oak class had a display on their door for Word of the Week. Cedar class were excited to show me their Rockstar Timetables Chart; you could see the pupils had a growth mindset when it came to climbing the Rockstar ladder.

I also attended the excellent and very informative YR Phonics evening; I know the staff at Green Ridge put a lot of work into the parent/carer workshops. It was also good to meet some of you at the recent Parents' Evening. Thank you for taking the time to fill out the Parents' Questionnaire, it really is helpful for the leadership team when looking at areas of improvement.

This week I came to see the Reception Nativity *Away in a Manger* and wow, what a performance it was! Maurice was not a happy mule having to share his manger with a hen, a mouse, a bird and even a spider - not forgetting the most important gatecrasher - baby Jesus! All the children did well to remember their lines and execute them; the catchy new songs and the classic *Away in a Manger* were the icing on the cake. They certainly can give the cast of *Nativity!* a run for their money.

All that is left for me to say is please enjoy this edition of the newsletter and I hope you all have a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Merry Christmas!

Sophy Davies, Vice Chair of Governors



I have now been a governor at the school for well over a year and it is always nice to visit the school, feel the atmosphere and see what the children are learning.

My link year is Year 2; they were my link year last year in Year 1 too. It is lovely to have the continuity, to see the progress they are making and how they are getting on.

I visited the school in mid-November on Children in Need day, it was great to hear that the children understood the purpose of the day and why it is important to help out others. It was fantastic to see the buzz from the children with their non-uniform, which included a brilliant array of yellow outfits to fit the theme of the charity.

I spent time in both Oak and Plane class during my visit, seeing the children practise their writing. All those that I spoke to were very enthusiastic about their learning and a brilliant reflection of the school.

I also attended the Celebration Assembly and watched as the children walked up proudly to collect their Certificates of Achievement, Progress, Cracking Number Bonds and Cracking Times Tables. They each had something to be so proud of.

I will visit again in the Spring Term and look forward to hearing about what Year 2 have been learning.

Sean English



This Autumn Term has been yet another busy and satisfying one. It has been amazing to see how the school has grown, not only with the children but also with the staff, broadening the Green Ridge family.

One of the key things I have really enjoyed this term is to see how the children's Maths learning has developed. The children have shown a broad range of representations within their Maths books, exhibiting the children's depth of understanding of mathematical concepts. It was also a great pleasure to share the teaching of Maths with parents and carers.

Another area that has grown within the school is PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education). The children have had the opportunity to learn about a range of different elements that will support them in their development as they grow older. This, alongside the Anti-Bullying Week learning, has allowed the children to explore a range of socially-relevant learning and has generated some really interesting discussions.

I wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year and look forward to the term ahead!

Tara Erdos



The autumn term is always the busiest of the year in schools – and this Autumn was no different! We have so many new children and families joining us each September which creates an influx of data and information which needs to be processed accurately and securely to make

sure we have everything in place for pupil enrolment.

This year we were the school of choice locally, with 90 families naming us as their first choice for their child's schooling, but with only 60 spaces in an intake year, we couldn't take everyone.

Our nursery was oversubscribed again too which just shows the number of young families moving into the Berryfields Community – we need a bigger school!

Chris Whiting



During my visit to Green Ridge in November I had the pleasure of visiting Miss. Lazarou and the children of Willow class.

After the excitement of my arrival, the children were asked to sit down in readiness for looking at Tapestry. They did so promptly, quietly, then counted together as they waited for the system to load – never a missed opportunity for learning here at Green Ridge!

Although we've talked about Tapestry during our meetings and at school, I hadn't actually seen the system in full swing. In addition to parents/carers being able to update experiences, the system gives staff the ability to track progress and recognise focus areas based on the children's progression. It was really positive to see all the children's excitement and passion for continued learning in and outside of school.

Once the activity was over, the children walked quietly to the dining hall. Miss. Lazarou asked

the children why they needed to be quiet when walking to lunch and they all replied "because others are learning". It was wonderful to see how the children respected each other's learning.

Miss. Lazarou talked to me about the current topic of 'Helping Hands.' The week before my visit a surgeon had come to see the children, and a police officer and fire fighter were scheduled to visit too!

I also loved seeing the learning challenges set out around the room. These are created for the children to choose their own learning and track their progression with a coloured lollipop stick, given once completed. This acts as a visual aid for the children and adults to ensure all challenges are completed within the given timeframe.

Having spent the majority of the day at the school, the above is just a snapshot of the fantastic things I witnessed. I'm excited to be part of the school's growth.

Laura Nunn



As governors, we keep a keen eye on community – our engagement within it as a part of the Berryfields and wider Aylesbury community, and our reputation within it. It was therefore with no small amount of trepidation we welcomed

Green Ridge's first ever fireworks display this term.

This was the largest event the PTA has ever run at Green Ridge, and it involved a vast amount of planning – ensuring health and safety was covered, that the right number of tickets were

available for the community without overselling, to making sure food we sold was both delicious and safe.

The PTA worked incredibly hard alongside the school to deliver the event, planning for weeks in advance to organise logistics, and then setting up on the day in the most challenging rainy and cold conditions.

The fireworks were absolutely spectacular! Feedback, both from parents and the wider community, has been uniformly positive, with people already asking for next year's date!

From a governor perspective, events like this are so important as they mark our place in the local community, show that Green Ridge plays an active part, engages current parents/carers (and the wider community) in volunteering opportunities, shows prospective parents/carers what we can achieve, and – of course – raises much-needed funds. More than 30 volunteers were involved in making the day a success, and over £3100 was raised.

The money will go directly to resources and experiences for Green Ridge children, to deliver the leadership team's vision of "Limitless learning; infinite possibilities".



The firework display itself was wonderful! A great selection of fireworks and a great length of show too. We'd highly recommend to others on the estate and will be coming back next year! – Community feedback

Ben Moloney



Within the first three years of a new school's creation, its first Ofsted inspection will happen. Those of you that have been with the school from the very beginning will be able to work out that this leaves the next two terms as a window for this to happen!

Before I became a Governor, Ofsted were one of those government organisations that I had heard much about but not actually had any proper knowledge or involvement with. As a parent, I knew it was something that many school staff dread but could provide them with the greatest sense of reward or disappointment.

But now, after some education, I have more understanding of the processes and procedures of Ofsted and roughly what to expect when they visit. The key thing to note is that this visit, although seeming like it is only a concern for the teaching staff, affects all of us. We all have a part to play and may not even realise it.

Firstly, the teachers and school staff. They will endure the bulk of the scrutiny. Ofsted will look at how they teach, what they teach, and why they teach certain elements. This will be a time when their constant hard work will be recognised.

Then there are the governors! Forming the leadership team of the school, governors also play an important part and Ofsted will investigate if the governing board is carrying out its role effectively.

Finally, Ofsted will look at the children. The children's behaviour is observed, and they may

also be asked what they think about the school. The school's attendance data is monitored too, somewhere you as a parent/carer can make a real difference.

Try to ensure your children are in before registration and only take them out of school for the day when they really are sick. You'd be surprised when you add it all together how much learning they miss if they are out of school for just 2% of the school year. Who's to say that the lesson they missed that day could be the one that shapes their future, the one that inspires them to go on achieve something incredible!

All the children at Green Ridge have the potential to be amazing we just need to make sure as adults we give them every opportunity to do this.