

Ofsted Update - Parent Newsletter - First Half Term, Summer 2017

Welcome to our second half-termly Governors' newsletter.

As you can imagine, it's been a very busy half-term but hopefully this newsletter can, at least, give you some idea of what has been done and also what the school's focus is in the short time we have before the Summer Holidays.

To date we have still had no further contact from Ofsted. However on Monday 5th June we are welcoming Jonathon Bishop, a representative of the Regional School Commissioner who is coming into school for the day to discuss with staff and Governors the steps that have been taken to put the school onto the road to improvement and also look at our School Development Plan which outlines our next steps and our aims and objectives for the future. Governors will receive verbal feedback from this visit and will share whatever information we are allowed to.

Local governing Body

We are delighted that during the last 9 months we have been able to recruit members who bring a range of skills and knowledge with them. Training has been provided for Governors by both CAST and Babcock which will enable us to support and challenge the school in moving forward.

Steve Corline's term as Parent Governor comes to an end in July; he will, however, remain on the Governing Body as a Community Governor. We therefore have a space for a new Parent Governor. If you feel you have the time to spare and would like to support the school in moving forward please respond to the letter when it comes home at the beginning of the next half term. This will take our number up to 14 Governors, this itself is a positive, as so many schools struggle to maintain a full Governing Body.

Quality of Teaching and Learning

Babcock, the company providing the school with the majority of the support we have identified we need, in order to improve, have been in school regularly working with staff. Specifically, this half term they have reviewed our use of the Pupil Premium funding we receive to ensure it is being used in the right way and is having the desired impact on pupil outcomes as well as working with our Maths and English leaders (Mrs Griggs and Mrs Hill respectively) to help us develop our approaches to teaching these subjects across the school.

While the conversations we have had with them have been challenging, they have also been positive with regards to what has been put in place already and the changes that have already taken place within the school. We are continuing to focus, improve and monitor things carefully in the areas we have identified as needing to improve, to ensure that ultimately the changes we are making have a significant impact on the education your children receive in the coming months and years.

The main message we have had from them and other agencies supporting the school has been that the actions we are taking now and the areas we are concentrating on are the right ones. We now need to start seeing the impact of these changes and if this is not happening we need to carefully analyse why and change our approach accordingly.

Our school recruitment drive is now almost complete with the majority of posts permanently filled from September. The leadership team in school are in the process of placing staff with classes for next year - we'll send this information out to you as soon as it is available.

Establishing a Culture of High Expectations

This half term has also been an opportunity for new staff to establish themselves at Our Lady of the Angels. Hopefully, as parents you have seen the improvements in the presentation and general standard of work in your children's books and in your visits to the Open Classrooms that have been held this term.

The Governors have also had the opportunity to look through some of the children's books with their class teachers and talk about presentation, standards of work and the progress being made. We found it extremely useful and informative, helping us to understand what the teachers are trying to achieve and encourage in their year groups. We were all very impressed with the improvements that have already been made this year.

Improving Pupil Outcomes

Although it may seem a long time ago now, all of the children completed tests at the start of the term and the Year 2 and 6 children have also recently completed their SATs. Although the SATs results will not be available until the end of term, the other tests that took place at the beginning of this and towards the end of last term are already helping teachers assess where children are now, what progress they have made and where the gaps in their learning are which will inform their planning for this next half term. The children will continue to complete these tests at the start of each term as the knowledge they provide us with about the children's learning is key in focusing on what we need to concentrate on next.

What next?

As we have already said, we welcome the Regional Schools Commissioner's representative on the first day back after half term and Babcock will continue to visit and support staff and Governors during the final 7 weeks of this year. Their particular focus this term will be to ensure that leaders in school have the necessary skills and resources to perform their roles as effectively as possible and that they are in the ideal position to have the greatest impact on teaching and learning within the school in September.

Another area of focus will be to ensure there is a consistency of approach and expectations across the whole school. We have concentrated on this to a considerable extent when new staff have joined the school but need to continue this work to ensure it is firmly embedded in our approach in the longer term.

Finally, as a Governing body we will continue to monitor the changes being made to ensure that they are having the required impact on the standard of education provided to your children in school. A lot of progress has been made since October by the hard work and dedication of the staff here our role is to ensure that this continues and that the necessary improvements continue to be made.

We hope this gives you a clear picture of what has been happening in school during the last term.

There has been considerable change in a short space of time. However, as Governors, we believe that the school is now in a better position to make the improvements required to give your children the education they deserve.

If you would like further information or have any questions about any of the content please contact us.

Local Governing Body

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