

HUNSDON

Governors' News



Autumn Term 2017

Letter from the Chair

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Hopefully everyone is looking forward to the festive season to get some rest and recuperation to be ready for next year's challenges.

During this term the school has been building a new staff team. There have been various staff changes during the summer and the new members have settled down well into the team. This is thanks to Mr Millward's leadership and the established team members in welcoming them and getting them up to speed with the Hunsdon ethos.

We are also very pleased that the school has attained a nationally recognised *School Games Gold Award* for its sport provision for second year in a row, which is great achievement. The school receives a dedicated budget for sport and the details of the use of this can be found on the school website PE section.

A key focus for the governors this term has been on finance and overseeing budget, ensuring the school is in a position to deal with significant future challenges that the tighter central funding brings. We have also been through some Ofsted inspection training to help us to be ready for the expected inspection at some point in the next year – more of which later in the newsletter. Future training has been planned on a number of key areas around performance data and exclusions as a result of our own skills self-assessment.

We have had to say farewell to one of our governors – Kate Purdie – who has emigrated and we thank her for her contribution to the governing body, and of course to the work she did as the chair of Friends. Her governing body replacement will be announced in next terms newsletter. To redistribute some of the roles in the governing body Matt Simpson has taken on the Safeguarding role and Daniel Munns has taken on the Health and Safety role. We thank them for their dedication to the school in taking on these important roles.

I will leave you with a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year wish, hope you all have a great time.

Edward Nicklin

Chair of Governors

Hunsdon JMI

Your Governing Body

Ed Nicklin	Co-opted Governor, Chair of Governors	Jen Park	Teacher Governor
Mike Newman	Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair	David Wilson	Co-opted Governor
Karen Osterley	Clerk to the Governors	Lynn Barnett	Parent Governor
Jon Millward	Head Teacher	Matt Simpson	Parent Governor
Lindzee Macaulay	Teacher Governor	Daniel Munn	Parent Governor Rep.

Governors post-box: Can be found in the school reception, and we welcome any questions you wish to raise, or ideas for any topics you would like to hear about in the newsletter.

Governors Responsibilities

Key Role of Governors:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Ensuring the Head Teacher maintains a high educational performance of the school and its pupils, and performance manage his staff
- Overseeing financial performance and ensuring the money is well spent
- Installing a process and drive for continuous improvement (little by little, step by step)

Ofsted Inspection

Hunsdon JMI's last Ofsted inspection took place in October 2014. The next inspection will take place at some point over the next 12 months, with less than 24 hours notice given to the school, so the Governors thought it worthwhile to outline the process to all.

Ofsted inspect schools to provide information to parents, to promote improvement and to hold schools to account for the public money they receive. School inspections are required by law. They provide an independent assessment of the quality and standards of education in schools, and check whether pupils are achieving as much as they can.

A school judged to be good (as per Hunsdon JMI) at its last inspection normally receives a short inspection. The purpose of a short inspection is to determine whether the school continues to provide a good standard of education and whether safeguarding is effective. If there is sufficient evidence of improved performance, and it is reasonable to believe that the school may be judged outstanding, Ofsted will carry out a standard two-day inspection instead, usually within 48 hours. Similarly, if the inspectors have insufficient evidence to satisfy themselves that the school remains good, or there are concerns, they will carry out a standard two-day inspection instead, usually within 48 hours.

Inspectors look at the school's self-evaluation and analyse the pupils' progress and attainment. They talk to the head teacher, governors, staff, and pupils, and consider your views as a parent. They spend most of their time observing a wide range of lessons and looking at the quality of teaching in the school, and its impact on learning and progress. They also look at the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils at the school, the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and how well the school is led and managed.

Schools are given an overall grade from 1 to 4:

- 1 (outstanding)
- 2 (good)
- 3 (requires improvement)
- 4 (inadequate).

The inspector reports their judgement to the head teacher and governors. The inspectors' findings are published in a report for the school, parents and the wider community. Inspection reports provide information about the effectiveness of the school's work and contain recommendations about what the school should do to improve further. The school will make sure that parents of pupils at the school receive a copy of the report.

Committee News

- Finance Committee

A key responsibility of the Governors is to oversee financial performance and to ensure that money is well spent. This is especially important at the moment, as schools everywhere are under severe budgetary pressure. A particular challenge we face at Hunsdon is a change to the way that the County Council allocates money between schools. Historically, small village schools like ours have received extra money to cover higher overheads, per pupil – but this is reducing, and so we have been faced with significant cuts to our budget.

The Finance Committee works to ensure that we get the best outcomes from these dwindling financial resources, and that the school's bank account never runs dry. We work with Mr Millward and Mrs Poole to review the draft budget each year, before this is put to the full Governing Body for approval. Throughout the year, we monitor spending and, if necessary, approve or suggest changes to budgeted expenditure. In doing this, we liaise with other committees (in particular, the Personnel and Premises Committees) to forecast spending needs, and compare ourselves against benchmark data from other schools. This financial year, we anticipate total spending will be around £625,000.

In these difficult financial times, we are always on the look-out for extra funding! The tireless work of the Friends is appreciated more than ever, and is increasingly vital in paying for the "little extras" which enrich the children's experience at Hunsdon. So please keep on giving generously! Also, if you know of any grants or matched funding which might be available from charities, employers, local businesses or elsewhere—please let Mr Millward or one of the Governors know.

- Premises Committee

The premises sub-committee provides support and guidance for the Headteacher on all matters relating to the school premises, and in particular on health and safety, physical accessibility and energy usage issues.

As currently structured, responsibility for upkeep of the school premises lies wholly with the Headteacher and Governors and must be met from within the school's annual budget. The only situation in which the Local Education Authority (LEA) would provide additional finance is if it determined that the school should expand to take more children and therefore needed extra rooms and facilities

The sub-committee meets once each term ahead of the full governing body (FGB) meetings so that it can report to the FGB on its areas of interest. In regard to health and safety, each meeting considers:

- A report prepared by the H&S focus of the sub-committee who will have undertaken a termly inspection of the premises and grounds with the Headteacher
- Risk Assessments prepared by the Headteacher and staff in respect to any unusual school activities
- The log of all accidents experienced since the last meeting to identify any trends or changes

Hopefully because of this attention given to H&S, Hunsdon JMI has a good record in terms of avoiding accidents and keeping children safe.

Gas and electricity costs are a significant component of the school's budget and the premises s/c routinely reviews energy usage to see if savings can be made. It was through this that we entered an arrangement with a local not-for-profit company to have solar panels installed on the roof of the assembly hall free of charge. Under this arrangement, the school uses as much of the generated electricity as it can while the company receives the revenue guaranteed by the government for excess electricity fed back into the grid. Latest figures show this has reduced our electricity usage by 17%, all of which can be used for other purposes in the school.

i Given the number of new houses proposed to be built in and around Hunsdon, an assessment was undertaken earlier in the year of the school's capacity to expand from a half-form (15) entry to a full-form (30). It concluded there was no viable way to achieve this.

Dates for your diary:

Spring Term 2018

Inset Day	Wednesday	3rd January
Term starts	Thursday	4th January
Half Term	Monday	12th February - Friday 16th February
Term Ends	Thursday	29th March (at 2.30 pm)

Attendance

Pupil attendance is one of the many areas that Ofsted uses as evidence of how well the school is performing. There are proven links between attendance and the attainment and progress of pupils. In certain circumstances it is also a critical factor around pupil safeguarding. With this in mind the school monitors attendance extremely closely. Governors get regular feedback on the attendance and the effectiveness of actions put in place to improve it. We are pleased to say that one of this school's many strengths is that the attendance is good. It is one of the reasons why the performance of the children in the SATs is so good.

The Governors would like to thank all of the parents for their continued efforts and support of the school in keeping the attendance high.

This term's attendance was 98.8%. Last year's total attendance was 95.1% against a national average of 96%.

Friends' News

Friends' of Hunsdon School ran a wonderful Christmas Fayre, with a great range of stalls and activities. Huge thanks go to the Friends Committee and the many volunteers—both old and new—who supported the day. Please look out for details of the next events in 2018!

Primary School League Tables

The Primary school league tables are out. As we know the KS2 results were that the pupils attained 100% ARE (age related expectation). The league tables show that this puts the school top in Hertfordshire for the 2nd year running. A fantastic result, congratulations to the pupils and the whole staff. A great reward for the all the hard work. We look forward to the national ratings in the new year.

Happy Christmas Holidays!

The Governors would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and staff for their continued commitment and support for Hunsdon JMI and to wish everyone a very happy and festive Christmas break.



**Hunsdon Governor News is also available in large print.
Please contact the School for a copy**