

HUNSDON

Governors' News



Summer Term 2017

Letter from the Chair

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Dear Parents and Carers,

The end of another fantastic year at Hunsdon JMI is upon us and hopefully everyone is looking forward to their holidays. The pupils and staff have worked so hard this year in all their achievements.

Firstly on behalf of the governors I wish to express a big thanks to members of the team who are moving on. Nina Hall - year 5/6 teacher, Bob Simpson - caretaker, Claire Hatch- cook/cleaners, and Becky Humes - cleaner/dinner lady and Di Fossey - Governor have all been fantastic members of the team. We thank them for all their hard work and dedication. They have made huge contributions to the school. Congratulations also go to Victoria Jewitt on her pregnancy and Jen Park on her upcoming marriage. We wish them all the best for the future.

This year has been another very successful year regarding SATs and culminates with another 100% achievement of ARE (Age related Expectation) at KS2 – an outstanding achievement. We praise the pupils for all their hard work and the way they handled themselves in the exam. Mrs Hall deserves great credit for guiding them to the exam. It is easy to focus on these results at the top of the school, but we must also recognise the entire teaching staff. Together they create the building blocks to enable the pupils to be able to achieve these results, which sets them up so well for the challenges of secondary school.

The governors also wish to express high appreciation of the work Mr Millward has done in managing and leading the team, which enables them to produce these great achievements. This includes the hard work in building and recruiting the team, ensuring that quality is replaced with quality. We welcome the new staff next term and look forward to their contributions next year.

An essential part of the governors' role is to ensure the school is in a sound financial state and that processes and procedures are in place to ensure our pupils are safe. So I would also like to highlight Heather Poole's contribution to the team. Heather manages the reception, but unseen to most, does a huge amount of work ensuring the school finances are in order and that safeguarding requirements are in place. This requires significant attention to detail and the good work here is evidenced from two audits commissioned by the school into finance and safeguarding. Needless to say they were passed with flying colours.

Hope you all have a good holiday and a well-deserved summer break.

Regards

Edward Nicklin

Chair of Governors

Your Governing Body

Ed Nicklin	Co-opted Governor, Chair of Governors	David Wilson	Co-opted Governor
Mike Newman	Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair	Andrew Turner	Co-opted Governor
Karen Osterley	Clerk to the Governors	Kate Purdie	Co-opted Governor
Jon Millward	Head Teacher	Lynn Barnett	Parent Governor
Lindzee Macaulay	Teacher Governor	Matt Simpson	Parent Governor
Jen Park	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)

Behaviours Statement

Accompanying this newsletter you'll find the School Behaviours Statement which outlines the behaviours expected at the school. Having this in place is an important requirement for the school, and the Governors have created the statement and invite comment during a consultation period for parents. The inclusion in this newsletter is the parent part of that consultation. Please place any comments in the governors comments box in reception.

Governors Visits

Each academic year, the governors will visit the school and each spend a day observing the day-to-day activities and routines, observing lessons in the classes and meeting teachers and pupils. These visits allow the governors to see the school in action and gather information to enhance the governing body's capacity to evaluate the needs of the school; and supports governors in building effective working relationships with the head and the staff. This term Daniel Munns went back to school for a day and he tells us about it below:

My day was planned ahead giving me the chance to act as classroom assistant and so fully participate with three classes. Firstly, with Year 1, I observed the children in activities on the mat, at interactive wordplay and in imagining a visit to the moon, how this would be achieved and what they could see there. The children were encouraged to discuss their ideas, and to plan and illustrate their stories. Year 5 & 6 classes worked in groups of 3-4 to try and solve the Einstein's Riddle – a Sudoku-like puzzle requiring deductive reasoning (Look on You-Tube, search for "Einstein Riddle" and try to complete it!) they quickly understood the objective and one boy, nicknamed 'the Calculator' led his team to victory!

Finally Reception class were learning about counting in multiples of 5s, My highlight was to act as a bingo caller for a small group of children – and the children quickly got the hang of bingo, with the game progressing to children having two bingo sheets in front of them, and one little boy enjoying Bingo so much that did his own and helped the other. I was able to report to the Governors meeting how fast-paced the teaching was, the range of activities that the children were involved in and my high level of respect for all the teaching staff.

Diane Fossey - Thank-you and Goodbye!

Diane has been a governor at Hunsdon JMI for 11 years, having started when her son Freddy was in Ducklings. This term she is leaving us, so after many years of dedicated service to the school and its pupils we took the chance to talk to her about her time as a governor:

- I wanted to support the school and our community, and to ensure that Freddy and the other children were receiving a good education. I believe the school is the heart of the village and the wellbeing of our young people extends from the school gate into the wider community.
- I have enjoyed the opportunity to see first hand how the school operates and to see the enthusiasm, hard work and dedication of all the staff. This extends beyond the teaching staff, to the catering team who provide good lunches (I have eaten a few!) and all the support staff who assist to provide safe play space for all and ensuring our children have such a positive start.
- As lead governor for safeguarding have been interviewed by Ofsted twice. Preparing for those interviews was challenging as I wanted to make sure that I didn't let the school down—but I'm pleased the results were extremely positive and rightly reflected the hard work of all pupils and staff.
- The most noticeable change has been in the curriculum. Central governments ideas can lack the opportunity to be creative, but a strength of Hunsdon JMI is that it strives to deliver core content in an imaginative and creative way as possible. Theme days such as the Victorian day or through the art work which adorns the school walls helps bring subjects to life for the children.
- I always enjoyed my school visits. Certainly when Freddy was small and I was a regular face in the school play ground the children would say hello and wave as I went from lesson to lesson. I once visited year 6 to talk about my job as a social worker. The children were interested, asking many insightful questions. Their questions at times were thoughtful and insightful for ones so young.
- I encourage anyone to get involved and help in the running of the school. Being a critical friend as a governor is a rewarding way of supporting the school, helping to maintain high educational standards and promoting our childrens wellbeing. This in turn has such a positive effect on our wider community. You could also get involved in school life by joining the Friends fund-raising committee and events . Our school community is a great place and something to be part of, whatever you can offer you will be welcomed.
- I will still be involved with the school, helping the Friends committee with their fund raising. This year I have also set a personal challenge - running a half marathon in aid of the MS Society so have a number of fund raisers planned including a murder mystery evening with the proceeds shared between Friends, Ducklings and the MS society...look out for me running around the village as I prepare for the big race.

Academies Update

An ever-present topic on the governors' list over the past year. We continue to see no compelling reason to go to academy status. We believe this is now an opinion shared by a significant proportion of schools in our size and position and across primary in Hertfordshire. Momentum on academy status conversions has definitely reduced. The political situation at the moment also makes us believe this is now low on the government agenda.

So we stick to our position and remain in our current state as a maintained school part of Hertfordshire Local Authority. The Authority is still in a healthy position, we see the school in a healthy position financially, in its achievements and in its spirit. We will obviously make you aware if there is a significant change in this position.

Dates for your diary:

Autumn Term 2017

Occasional Days	Wednesday	30th/ Thursday	31st August
Inset Day	Friday	2nd September	
Term starts	Monday	4th September	
Occasional Day	Friday	20th October	
Half Term	Monday	23rd October - Friday 27th October	
Occasional Day	Monday	30th October	
Term Ends	Tuesday	19th December (at 2.30 pm)	

Regarding Admissions

A quick point of clarification on admissions following some queries earlier this year. Admissions for Hunsdon JMI are handled centrally by County Admissions team. The school governors and staff have no role in this decision process. The schools admissions policy has been updated to clarify the process. Being part of early entry year in the school is unfortunately no guarantee of acceptance to Reception class. Enrolment to the Reception and later years is controlled by the County Admissions team. Early entry pupil parents should ensure they look at the county website on schools admissions to understand the full process. Any appeals upon unsuccessful application should go through the standard county appeals process, also available on the county website. Links to this are on the school admissions policy

Fundraising Activity

As we see regularly in the press and on the news, school budgets continue to come under pressure. To assist the school in financing and meeting costs now and in the future the governors are working to identify alternative sources of funding (such as charitable grants) that could be used to support school activities; and also to match grant opportunities with areas of spend within the school grants. We'll then apply for grants and funding where appropriate. We welcome any ideas that parents have for potential sources of funding—some of you may work for local or national business that have programmes to support worthy causes; or you may be aware of charities or other foundations that give grants to schools. We've set up a Governors post-box in the school entrance hall— so if you have any ideas please let us know through this, or speak to one of the governors or to the Head.

Friends' News

Friends' of Hunsdon School ran a wonderful May Fayre this year—with a great range of stalls and activities—and huge thanks go to Friends Committee and the many volunteers who supported the day, including the governors who could be found manning the barbecue and the loudspeakers. The event brought in £2300 to support the development of the planned Wildlife Garden in the school grounds.

The next Friends fundraising events will be: the **Pumpkin Hunt at half-term; Fireworks Night—November 4th**; and the **Christmas Fayre—December 1st**. Please put the dates in your diaries!

Happy Summer Holidays!

The Governors would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and staff for their continued commitment everyone a very happy and enjoyable



opportunity to thank all the parents and support for Hunsdon JMI and to wish summer break.

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