

Dear Parents / Carers,

27th February 2023 – Governor Newsletter

Welcome to the first Governor Newsletter of this school year (2022-23) and apologies that we have not been in touch sooner. I hope that you are enjoying seeing the signs of Spring and looking forward, with hope, to warmer days and lighter evenings.

Progress and Achievements this year so far....

We have already had Local Authority external reviews of our English, Maths and Geography curriculums, a visit by our Leading Learning Partner (LLP) and we have also commissioned a review of our Safeguarding practice. Overwhelmingly, the feedback we have received has been incredibly positive and complementary and has helped us to focus on the next steps required to further enhance the performance of the school to ensure that all children make excellent progress in their learning. Staff have also completed an INSET on PE Gymnastics.

Attendance

We are concerned about the increase in absences this year. While we appreciate that there has been significant numbers of viral infections and the aftermath of covid remains, our absences are well above the national average and desired levels. Children will not make the progress they need to without consistent attendance. This is even more important for those children with additional needs.

NEW Governors

We are delighted to welcome Jacky Tustain and Samantha Reeves to the Governing Body. Jacky has joined as our nominated "Local Authority Governor" and is also our local Labour Councillor. Samantha is a new "Parent Governor".

As a mum of four grown boys I am very familiar with the world of education. My youngest son is disabled, so I know how tricky navigating SEND requirements can be and understand the challenges this brings about.

My time is now spent as both a Borough councillor for Popley, where I have lived for nearly 30 years, and a County Councillor for Basingstoke North. I am involved with the Children's Services committee at Hampshire so get an insight to many of the challenges county must face with limited resources, including money and staffing to provide all services for children including education. This role also means I have an appreciation of how these services work together.

Before I became a councillor, I spent many years working in various roles, including technical IT jobs, project management, training and even did my stint working in a school kitchen!

I am delighted to be the Local Authority governor for the school and hope I add value using my knowledge skills and experience - Cllr Jacky Tustain

My Name is Sam Reeves and I am the new Parent Governor at Merton Infant School. I am a mother of 2 boys, Matthew age 5, who joined Year R at Merton Infants last September and Ben aged 2.5 who is at Merton Preschool. We live on the Sherborne Fields estate and have been there since 2014 when it was just a building site with a couple of houses! We have seen the whole area develop as more and more families with young children have arrived.

Merton Infant School is at the heart of our community as it nurtures and guides our children through their early years in education. I feel a strong conviction to assist the school and be involved in our children's education. By becoming a Parent Governor one of the things I hope to achieve is to bring a feeling of community to the new estates and help us

Headteacher: Mrs Larissa James BA (QTS) NPQH



all play an active role in our children's learning journey. As a family, we attend the local church in Sherborne St John and I am currently employed as their Parish Administrator. I have a strong background in administration but have worked for a variety of different sectors including The Ministry of Defence, property management, banking and medical supplies. I was fortunate to be able to be a stay at home mum for the first 4 years but as the boys are starting school I am excited to get back into work and other projects.

Parent Governor Elections

We are very keen to welcome more Parent Governors to the team this year. Please look at the Governor page on our website for more information and/or speak to Mrs James or get in touch with me if you are interested in these roles.
emily.mean@merton-inf.hants.sch.uk

Governor Monitoring Day – Tuesday 14th March

We had a very useful day in school in November which included a review of the Ofsted expectations. We also visited specific year groups speaking to the children and observing them in action.

We will be in school for our next Governor monitoring day on Tuesday 14th March. Please do look out for us as we would be delighted to hear your feedback about the school and to have the opportunity to share, discuss and address any concerns raised.

New IT Equipment

We have recently spent £4,080.00 on chromebooks for Y1 and 2 including £3,690.00 on 15 ipads in YR to ensure the school delivers the Computing Curriculum effectively. As you are also aware, we have switched our online learning platform from Mathletics to EdShed. This was as a result of parent and staff feedback. Parents found having too many log-ins a problem and therefore having one log-in for Maths and Spelling was more effective. EdShed also works better on more digital devices than Mathletics did.

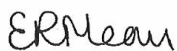
Parent Survey

Thank you so much to all those who completed the Parent Survey at the recent Parent's Evening. We have had a much improved response this year. The vast majority of Parents are happy with school as shown by the results newsletter sent last week. If you ticked any question as 'Disagree' or 'Unsure', please feel free to discuss them with either myself or Mrs James.

Goodbye from me!

This is likely to be my last newsletter as Chair of Governors. I am stepping down both as Chair and Governor at Easter after almost 8 years in the role. I started as a Parent Governor when my daughter was in Year R – she is now in Year 8 and I moved out of the area in January 2021. It has been an absolute privilege to serve the school over the last 8 years and to be part of the Merton Family. I am so proud of the school and all that it has accomplished for its pupils during my time as Governor and know that it will continue to go from strength to strength. Mrs James, the staff and the Governing Body are an amazing team and will continue to do a wonderful job.

Yours sincerely,



Emily Mean
Chair of Governors