

Dear Parents/Carers,

11th June 2020 - Governor Newsletter

I'm delighted to bring you the last **Governor Newsletter** of this academic year. A continued aim of the Governing Body is to improve communication and links between governors, staff, parents and children and this newsletter is just one of the ways that we will be achieving this.

All Change!

This newsletter is my last as Chair of Governors as I have stepped down after more than 7 years as a governor and 5 as Chair of the Board. Personal circumstances and a move away from Basingstoke mean that I am no longer able to serve as a governor. [Emily Mean](#) was appointed as my successor at our last meeting. Emily is passionate about her community and firmly believes that the school should be at the heart of that. She will be an asset to Merton Infant School and I wish her well.

Merton rises to the Challenge

Last week marked the beginning of the second half of the summer term and we would ordinarily now be full of excitement and expectation as we all look forward to the summer and the opportunity to spend an extended period of time with our children, friends and family. However, we all know just how different this term has been and as things stand we have little idea when the school lockdown will fully lift and how quickly it will be implemented. But haven't the staff responded well to the challenge!

I wrote to all staff on behalf of the Governing Body at the beginning of lockdown to convey our thanks and appreciation for their service to our school and the children of this community during these difficult times. Keeping schools open for the children of keyworkers was a vital part of the Government's strategy in beating the Covid-19 virus and the staff of Merton Infant School responded to that challenge with great energy and commitment. I have had (socially distanced!) conversations with a number of parents and children who have felt both supported and reassured by the positive approach that the staff took to the situation and for that we should all be immensely proud.

Times like these test the fabric of a staffing body and yet again Merton Infant School set the standard and placed themselves at the heart of supporting the national effort. As a community we will grow stronger from this. For those of you that have seen the '[Merton Be Together](#)' video I can think of no greater demonstration of that last point. Governors are proud of the way that the school staff have led by example and really embodied the Vision and Values of Merton Infant School; *Aiming High, Achieving Together* through **Motivation, Excellence, Respect, Teamwork, Opportunities** and **Never giving up**.

Back to School

We have now welcomed back an increasing number of our Year R children including vulnerable and key worker children in Years 1 & 2 since 1st June. Pupils, parents and staff have adapted extremely well to the new procedures and ways of working which are essential to keeping all at Merton as safe as possible. I (Emily) had the opportunity to visit school on Friday 5th June and see the practical application of the measures we have implemented. The children all expressed to me (at a safe distance) a very clear understanding of the current situation and were unanimous in expressing how much they were enjoying their new classrooms and "bubbles".

Headteacher: Mrs Larissa James BA (QTS) NPQH

I would encourage you to visit the school website and watch the video showing in more detail some of the safety measures we have put in place. https://youtu.be/mpxHct6-0_E

Governor Vacancies

We are currently looking for new co-opted governors to join our [Governing Body](#). Our governors come from a range of different backgrounds and possess a variety of skills and experience, but all share the common interest of wanting the best possible education for the children in our school. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who:

- Is interested in children's education and the performance of the school
- Is community spirited and would like to represent the community
- Has spare time and the energy for the role
- Is able to work well as part of a team
- Has an enquiring mind and the confidence to ask questions and debate issues that affect the school: or
- Can consider matters objectively and make informed judgements

These volunteer positions are open to parents, grandparents, guardians or anyone else from our community. Co-opted governors are not elected by a parent election but are instead appointed directly by the Governing Body. Becoming a governor gives you the opportunity to develop your own personal skills, gives you access to a programme of free training in respect of education/governance matters, a sense of achievement in helping to make a difference to children reaching their potential and plenty of support and guidance from fellow governors.

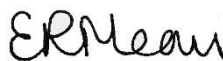
In looking to fill these vacancies we are particularly interested in applications from people with finance/budgetary experience and also anyone with a knowledge of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), although please do not be put off if you do not have these skills. What is most important is enthusiasm, interest and the willingness to learn. Being part of this school and the children's lives is such a privilege. If you are interested in applying then please leave your contact details with the school office or email Emily Mean, your new Chair of Governors on Emily.Mean@merton-inf.hants.sch.uk.

Finally, as a Governing Body, we would like to wish you all a happy and safe summer with your children. We would like to thank all of the leadership, teaching and support staff for their relentless hard work over the course of this challenging year and we look forward to welcoming you all back in September.

Yours sincerely,



Christopher Martin
Former Chair of Governors



Emily Mean
Current Chair of Governors