

Welcome to the Hawthorns Primary Governors' Newsletter 2019

Judith Shepherd

Chair of Governors and Chair of Sites & Buildings Committee, Co-opted Governor, H&S Governor, Sports Governor, Designated Safeguarding Governor

Another school year is almost over.

I would like to start by saying thank you to my fellow Governors for their commitment to the school, giving their time and expertise freely to the school.

We welcomed two new Governors this year; Kerry Martin, who has a daughter in Early Years and Julian Dempster, who has a daughter in Year 5.

As well as Full Governing Body Meetings which take place twice each term, we have three committees that meet separately.

- The Learning and Teaching committee have focused on the curriculum and have studied data reports provided by the school to enable them to check on the progress of the children. They are dedicated in ensuring that the teaching in the school is of the highest standard.
- The Sites and Buildings Committee have not had many decisions to make about improvements and enhancement to the school and grounds as the funding from Wokingham Borough Council has been, to say the least, lacking. They have continued to check and agree policies relating to Health and Safety, ensure risk assessments are relevant and up to date. They have monitored accidents and incidents and been present at fire drills and the lockdown practice. All to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment for both pupils and staff.
- The Personnel and Finance Committee have worked with the school to monitor the budget, which once again has been very difficult due to the poor funding for Wokingham schools, WBC remains one of the lowest funded local authorities in the country, which I am sure many of you will have read or heard about in the press and on social media. We are adamant that we are not going to compromise the education of the children by making cuts that would have an impact on standards.

With the budget in mind, thank you to all the parents and carers who have donated money and items to the school.

A huge thank you too, to the PTA for their dedication and hard work, they have again raised lots and lots of money. The current project is to provide the school with Chrome Books, which will enable the children to have the latest technology to aid their learning.

We are lucky to have an amazing team of staff at the Hawthorns. Thank you one and all for your hard work this year and enjoy a lovely summer break. I would also like to wish Pat Kerton the very best as she continues her treatment for cancer, our thoughts are all with her.

On a personal note, I have just completed my ninth year as a Governor and second as Chair of Governors. It is a joy to be part of such a fantastic school. It has been an enjoyable year with too many things to write about. So I will just pick one.... In May I once again accompanied the Year 6 children on their residential trip to the Isle of Wight. It was five days of sunshine, fun and many activities. It is a pleasure to share this time with the children as they about to embark on a new chapter of their lives at senior school. I wish them all the best for September.



Roman Day



Residential Trip





Forest School



Pick & Paint Day

Phillipa Dunn

SEND Governor, LAC Governor

I have really enjoyed my first full year as a Governor at Hawthorns. It has definitely been a learning experience for me but it is great to be able to give something back to the school that all 3 of my children attended (many years ago!) and loved.

As a member of 2 committees (Personnel & Finance and Learning & Teaching) I have attended a range of meetings which have given me a valuable insight into the strategic planning that goes into running a successful school. I have also taken on the role of SEND link Governor and I fully appreciate the challenges (particularly financial) that this area of education is facing. The SEND team at Hawthorns, ably led by Charlotte Irving, do an amazing job despite all the challenges! Thank you!

I really enjoy my visits to the school which have included monitoring SATs, where I was so impressed to see how well prepared and calm all the Yr6 were in their approach to the tests. Fingers crossed for successful outcomes for everyone! On Governors day I spent a whole day in school, where all the governors gave a short presentation on their favourite scientific discovery to the whole school during assembly – the role of a governor certainly has unexpected challenges – but it was a brilliant experience and we also got the opportunity to spend time with our link forms, sample school dinners (very good!) as well as receiving some training in the afternoon. I have also visited Forest Schools led by Stephanie McKay – I believe that this activity is such an important part of the school's curriculum and one that the children obviously love and learn so much from. On a lighter note I have enjoyed taking money (for a very good cause!) from many of you in payment for burgers and/or turkey rolls at the Summer and Christmas Fairs! I look forward to seeing you at this year's Summer Fair at the Governors BBQ stall for more excellent burgers and hot dogs!

Finally, I think that the highlight of my year was attending the Yr1 Christmas Nativity – it was superb! The confidence, pride and obvious enjoyment of the children was brilliant and a real credit to everyone involved in its production.

I am looking forward to my second year as a Governor – schools currently face many difficult challenges but it is a privilege to be part of Hawthorns – a very happy and successful school!

Nicola Carr

Parent Governor, English Governor

Wow another year has been and gone and it's been a pleasure to have continued as a governor at Hawthorns School. We've helped out in the school in so many ways—from healthy and safety, to curriculum to school assemblies to Christmas and summer fairs.

I particularly enjoy helping at the fairs and with the year 6 mock job interviews. I wish everyone a fab summer and look forward to seeing everyone in September for what is sure to be another exciting year at Hawthorns!!





Egyptian Workshop



Fairtrade Cooking

Sarah Mapleston

Co-opted Governor

Hello everyone,

In case you don't know me, I am Miss Mapleston and I am currently a Year 2 class teacher and head of Maths for Key Stage 1.

Another year has passed and what a year it has been, full of action and excitement. As a member of staff within the governing body, I can safely say that everyone including teachers, teaching assistants, office staff, lunch time controllers, site controller and others have worked extremely hard to put on wonderful productions, colourful displays around the school, keeping our site safe and secure and encouraging positive behaviour within and outside of class.

Within my governor position, I am currently on the Sites and Buildings committee and attend all full body governor meetings every half term. This is currently my second year as a governor and I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing the other side to school that I don't get to see as a class teacher. This year I have had the opportunity to visit my adopted class, the Woodpeckers, the first class I had ever taught at The Hawthorns. They have grown so positively and are now ready to 'spread their wings and fly' off to their new secondary schools. Good luck to the Magpies as well!

The PTA have once again put on wonderful events to support the increasing need to update our technology within school. Having attended the winter fair and the quiz, it is clear to see how hard working and dedicated our team of mums (and dads!) have been with supporting our school. A big thank you to them! I look forward to attending the summer fair and helping out at the BBQ.

Lastly, a big thank you to all parents and guardians who have supported events, used the Amazon wish list and offered support, e.g. through volunteering with Forest Schools and reading with classes, through the year. It makes a huge difference to a school to have a supportive and caring community that can come together to help each other.

John Wilkins

Computing Governor, e-Safety Governor, Website Compliance, Co-opted Governor

I am now entering my third year as a co-opted governor at Hawthorns & it continues to be a rewarding & educational experience. Part of our role is to help oversee how the school spends its money, making sure the school is able to adhere to a budget & get value for money. Difficult to do in these financially constraining times.

For Hawthorns to continue to be able to be ahead of the curve when it comes to ICT, as is the case with the new Chromebook project for Key Stage 2, we are extremely thankful to the PTA who as always continue to be able to come up with the funds to support these initiatives. Many thanks to all the parents & other relatives of Hawthorns pupils who donate so generously.





Summer Fair



Kennet Court Visit

Dozie Nnabuife

Chair of Learning & Teaching Committee, Safeguarding Governor, Science Governor, Co-opted Governor

I continue to relish the challenge of working with the entire Hawthorns cohort as I approach the end of my third year as a governor. Another year has gone so quickly since the last newsletter. As we come to the end of academic year, I look forward to the great summer weather ahead.

I worked with other fantastic volunteers from National Grid to run the Imagineering club for year 6 children as usual. The club introduces the children to the fascinating world of engineering and technology through fun, hands-on activities and projects. The team of volunteers agreed that this set of Year 6 has been the most engaging so far.

I had the opportunity to speak to the Reception children about the Engineering profession during the career week. I was amazed at their level of engagement, enthusiasm and the thoughtful questions they asked during the session.

At the Learning and Teaching Committee, we continued to challenge and support the school to raise academic standards and outcomes for all pupils.

My attendance at the other committee meetings was less than my targets due to challenging schedules. I look forward to a better schedule in the next academic year.

As I write this piece, we await the PTA summer fair where the governors take charge of the barbeque stand and where my barbequing skill is put to the test. I intend to continue working with the rest of the Governors, the School management and staff to positively impact The Hawthorns Primary School.

Rev'd Patrick Mukholi

Co-opted Governor, RE and SMSC Governor

I thoroughly enjoyed governor activities I could get to. Great going into the Four Owls to see the creativity and dedication of the teachers and watch the young brains cranking away. I wish I was in such a school when I was their age. Teachers and Assistants beaver away making sure all the gears and cogs are in motion. Thanks guys. Every top professional was once under your tutelage.

Governor Assembly was great; hearing the simplicity with which the governors communicated what they thought was the best invention ever. I would have liked to do Spectacles but one of the governors made a spectacle of it by getting to the monacles before I did. So I had to settle for the telegraph, I mean the telephone ('phone for all you young uns). Smart enough I thought. I think the children did too. I didn't get the anticipated question though; Why do we say I am going to 'wring' someone? Now that we are engaged I hope you'll give me a ring. Of course. What's your phone number?

Sadly we said goodbye to one of our pupils. But it was a great privilege to officiate at the prayers at school and help the children let her go, as well as officiate at a very smart celebration of her life at the Easthampstead Crematorium





Residential



Windsor Castle

Elizabeth Bridgeman

Staff Governor, Humanities Governor, Eco Schools Governor

Another busy year has passed and as a Governor I would like to pay credit to our headteacher for her dedication to the school during her very challenging time. She has left us in the hands of a fantastic Senior Leadership team, led by Mrs Poole, who continues to steer our course through challenging economic times but are still able to maintain standards and keep our wonderful community spirit. Credit should also go to all the staff for their continued hard work this year.

This year I have been able to continue attending the Parent Forum where the support and ideas enable us all to work together for the benefit of the children. The Parent Forum team are a fantastic group of people giving up their time so many thanks. And obviously the new PTA members need a round of applause for their time, energy and enthusiasm. The support they give in terms of creating a school community is enormous as well (of course) the economic assistance they give us.

A big thank you to Mr Nnabufie and his colleagues from the National Grid for running the Year 6 Imagineering Club for so many years. Hopefully it will have inspired future engineers among our children.

This year I have managed to step out of year 6 to go on a lovely trip to Windsor Castle with the Year 1 children. Their enthusiasm and excitement were great to see and the trip really bought their topic alive for them. I think the Queen would have certainly been impressed by their behaviour. And obviously I am lucky enough to go on the Residential trip with Year 6 – our children did us proud. What impressed me was their willingness to give everything a try even when it was outside their comfort zone and their support for each other. And of course, this year we had perfect weather. It was certainly a trip to remember especially the singing on the coach coming back – no wonder so many children were hoarse on their return!

Emma Kerr

Vice Chair of Governors, Maths Governor, Co-opted Governor

Can't believe we're at the end of another school year already!

As always the highlight of my role as a governor is the time spent in school with the children, and I've had the pleasure of watching some fantastic plays and music assemblies, along with cross country and athletic events. Our pupils and staff are a credit to the school.

I've continued as Maths governor and am still really impressed with all the different methods used to enhance our students learning, particularly in Maths.

We sadly lost one of our pupils this year, and I was deeply moved by the way the school community pulled together, and supported each other.

I'd like to wish our year 6 pupils every success at their chosen secondary school, and am confident that they'll be leaving Hawthorn's well prepared for their next adventure.





Residential Trip

Dawn Wojcik

Co-opted Governor, Early Years Governor

Greetings to you all in our Hawthorns community. I should like to begin by thanking everyone for their hard work and dedication to continue making this school a great place to work and play! It's been another busy year at school and being involved on the Sites and Buildings committee and the Teaching and Learning committee gives me a great insight to many facets of the school. I am very lucky in that I also work in Year 2 so I'm around my adopted class of Red Kites a lot of the time. I have helped to run Art Club this year which is another fun activity so please take a look at our board as you walk to your children's classes.

There have been many successful PTA events and as governors we like to help where we can whether it's serving teas, burgers or hot dogs or just carrying things from A to B. I feel very fortunate to get the opportunity to be involved in so many aspects of school life. I have been on many school trips as a helper and also the fantastic end of year residential trip with the Year 6 to the Isle of Wight. It was a wonderful trip with our Year 6 students challenging themselves in their achievements and excelling themselves with their behaviour.

My most recent activity was helping out with the Year 5 sleepover which was, again, a great success. I will be looking forward to good rest in the summer holidays and hope to be back with new energy when all the committees and the governing body regroup in September. Enjoy open afternoon and I wish you a safe and happy summer.

