

the Governors' Newsletter



‘Why do schools have governors?’

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland every state school must, by law, have a governing body.

Their job is to provide strategic management to the school, acting as a ‘critical friend’, supporting staff but asking the difficult questions too.

Their 3 key functions are:

1. To ensure the school’s strategic vision is clear. Asking, “Why are we doing it like this or not like that?”
2. To hold the Head teacher accountable for the educational performance of pupils. Asking, “Why did group x do better than group y? Why are we in the top 10 %, not the top 1%”
3. To oversee the budget, making sure all money is well spent. Asking, “What benefit do we get from spending £x on that?”

They are not involved in the day-to-day running of the school.

Welcome to the governors’ newsletter.
It gives a snapshot of what we’ve been doing recently.

Governors help ensure the school continues to provide the best possible education for your children. Meeting regularly with staff, local authority experts and talking to our children help us achieve this.

Our recent focus has been defining what it means to be part of Curbar Primary School.

Read on for more details.

Vision

At the beginning of the year we set ourselves the challenge of summing up what makes Curbar Primary such a special place. We all agreed there was a clear 'something' but nowhere was it clearly expressed.

We began by seeking the views of everyone involved.

Children, parents, staff, governors, volunteers and the local community all had a chance to say what they valued most about being part of Curbar Primary School.

We put all their responses together, discussed and debated at length, and finally honed them down into one sentence which sums up what is most important to us. We are delighted with the outcome:

'Happy learners forging our place in the world.'

Happy – fulfilling potential, flourishing, being safe, cared for and nurtured

Learners – being engaged, motivated and inspired

Forging – developing, creating, shaping, not giving up, recognising that effort is the root to success

Our place – sharing responsibility for what happens, taking your place in the community

In the World – having ambition. Who knows where our children may end up!

This encapsulates the many messages we received and is fully supported by everyone working at school. It is an ambitious goal which we will all do our very best to achieve. It will help us as we go forward; providing clarity and direction.

From now on you will notice it on posters, signs, adverts and letters; staff and governors will use it as a point of reference to check decisions and focus objectives; children will be taking part in a 'Vision week' this month where lessons and activities will be dominated by the messages in our vision statement.

Do let us know what you think! For example, during Parent's Evenings:

Parent's evenings

Governors have continued to offer tea, biscuits and chat in the staff room during parent's evenings. This is an ideal time to drop by and ask any questions you may have or give your opinions on any aspect of school life. The next session will be on Wednesday 17th July.

Finance

Spring term saw governors focusing on next year's budget. Although finances remain tight, as a result of cost cutting implemented in 2018, a balanced budget could be set this year. We continue to keep a very close eye on our spending, aiming to reduce this as much as possible. We are committed to attracting new pupils to the school, as this is the most effective way to bring in more funds. We can all help in this by spreading the word and sharing our vision.

We would like to thank you for your understanding regarding our request for voluntary contributions to cover the cost of transport on trips.

As mentioned in that letter, school's budgets are set by Government spending policies and have been cut by 8% in the last 5 years, whilst costs have increased. Unless changed this policy will enforce further cuts, which will result in severe cost cutting and ultimately a reduced level of service. Looking forward to 2020/21 our school currently faces a £29,000 deficit. Should you wish to raise the issue of school funding with our MP Sir Patrick McLoughlin his email is patrick.mcloughlin.mp@parliament.uk.

Any help you can make to help reduce school costs, directly or via the PTFA, is significant in maintaining our ability to balance our budget whilst providing an exciting, engaging and broad curriculum and in keeping class sizes low.

SATs

Year 6 sat their SATS tests in May. The governors' role in this process is to oversee the handling of the papers and the taking of the tests to ensure we keep to the guidelines given. Curbar managed the process perfectly. All governors involved were also very pleased to note that the atmosphere on the days was focused and calm, reflecting well on our children and on the staff who had created this positive and supportive atmosphere.

New parents

We were pleased to explain the role of governance at the Reception Class Welcome Evening in May. It was particularly great to meet the new parents joining us in September. We hope you and your children will enjoy becoming part of the school.

New governors

Charlotte Wright will be leaving us at the end of this term. She has been our Local Authority (LA) governor for the last 4 years. We would like to thank her for her time and commitment during this period. It has been a pleasure having her with us.

A LA governor can be any member of the community with an interest in the school and does not have to be a parent. If you would like to recommend someone for this role, become one yourselves or to discuss what is involved, please contact Jane Taylor at jane.taylor@curbar.derbyshire.sch.uk

A reminder of who's who and their particular responsibilities:

Standards and Curriculum Committee

Jane Taylor, chair of governors, SEND, Pupil Premium

Helen Walton, chair of committee

Alison Thorpe, vice chair of governors

Angie Cottle

Linda Berry

Charlotte Wright

Alan Cain – Health and Safety

Simon Beahan

Resource Management Committee

Jane Taylor, chair of governors

George Wolfe, Chair of committee, Safeguarding and Anti-bullying

David Jackson, GDPR

Simon Beahan

Don Leitch

Working parties to support the SIP

Maths

Helen Walton

Alan Cain

Writing

Linda Berry

Charlotte Wright

Behaviour for Learning and Welfare

Simon Beahan

Alison Thorpe

Angie Cottle

You are always welcome to email governors.
Each has an email address with the following
format:
firstname.surname@curbar.derbyshire.sch.uk

