



Governors' Newsletter

February 2010



Welcome to the 1st edition of the Governors' Newsletter!

In an effort to improve communication between the governing body and everyone involved with Oakridge Parochial School, we thought it would be a great idea to publish a Governors' Newsletter. Our aim is to do this every other term (or three times per year).

One of the main objectives is to keep you informed about the key priorities we are working on in support of the staff and pupils. However, the Governors' Newsletter will also provide you with some useful information about what we do and how you can get in touch.

To follow is a summary of our key priorities:

Communication

In addition to this newsletter, there are lots of different areas we are looking at in order to optimise communication and information sharing. Most notably, the school's fantastic new website presents endless opportunities to keep you informed and involved in what is going on. If you haven't already done so, please add www.oakridgeschool.org.uk to your list of favourites. From the website you can:

- View some of the children's outstanding work
- See pictures and write-ups of recent school trips
- Keep track of term dates and events for the diary!

Many of you will also be aware of the 'Pupil Council' which has generated much excitement amongst the children. We are working on providing the children with their own 'Pupil Council' section on the website, where you will be able to keep up to date on all important matters – please watch this space!

School Development Plan (SDP)

We are continually looking at ways to improve standards and give the children of our school the best education possible. In line with Ofsted recommendations, our SDP focuses on the following key areas:

- To raise standards and accelerate pupil progress
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning
- To develop pupils' awareness of the diversity of modern multi-ethnic society
- To review school self evaluation

Specific goals and success criteria have been implemented for each of the above priorities. The staff and governing body have also developed key metrics to ensure progress is tracked.

We look forward to providing you with a more detailed overview in subsequent newsletters.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)



In today's modern world, our school embraces ICT as a core subject. However, as opposed to Mathematics and English, ICT is not taught as a separate subject. Instead, it is woven in to everyday tasks and utilised as a tool for the children to research, analyse and present their work in every subject. This is very much in line with how ICT is used in the workplace and in homes.

In an effort to try and expose the children to 'what's new', we currently have 5 Tablet PCs on trial from Gloucestershire County Council (these are like mini laptop computers and often come with a touch-screen or stylus and are capable of connecting to the internet through a wireless network).

Finally, we have been in contact with Gloucestershire County Council to request that the computer cabinet in 'Spikes Room' is moved. We sincerely hope this request will be accepted as it will free up some much needed space, together with improving the overall classroom environment.

Community Cohesion



We are privileged and proud to be a part of such a wonderful cohesive community in Oakridge. However, 'Community Cohesion' has a much broader meaning than just our immediate area and this is a particular point of focus for all schools in the UK. Subsequently, the teaching staff have built strong links with Holy Trinity CoE Primary School in Camden, London and we look forward to welcoming their Year 5 class to visit Oakridge on Tuesday 18th May 2010.

Also, some of you may already be aware that during half term, it was start of the Chinese New Year. As a result, the children are planning to spend Tuesday 2nd March looking at the Chinese community and culture.

Safeguarding



We are extremely fortunate to be in Oakridge, where the standards of safety and wellbeing for everyone are very high. However, in the interest of maintaining a robust and consistent approach – and to ensure that our children can continue to enjoy their safe environment – the separate committees of the governing body are reviewing how safeguarding is upheld across every aspect of the school.

Governor Handbook



We are currently developing a 'Guide to being a Governor at Oakridge' that will provide both new and prospective governors the insight needed to know what being a Governor involves. This will be published (and available to everyone) via the school's website in March/April this year.

And finally...

- The Winter Weather – the snow in January was disruptive for everyone, including the school. Although we have many pupils from Oakridge, many other pupils and members of staff have to travel from neighbouring villages and the difficult conditions simply prevented them from getting in to school. Please be assured that the decision to close the school is only taken as a last resort.
- If you wish to obtain a full copy of the minutes regarding the Governor Meeting(s), they are available through the school office.
- If you want to speak with the Governing Body, you can request an appointment via the school office. Alternatively, you can approach either of our parent governors in person (Kirk Birch or Lisa Channing) outside school.