



Maths & Computing

**Dates to note:**

- TD day 16th April
- Students return: 17th April
- BH 7th May
- Summer half term: 28th May to 1st June
- Leavers day and ball: 29th June
- Sports day: 5th July
- End of term: 20th July

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All our articles are uploaded and linked to the school website, so that you can refer back to them.

South Wilts Grammar School for Girls

# Governor Newsletter

20th March 2007

Issue 4

## Welcome

We've now reached the first anniversary of the Governor Newsletter! Our aim at the launch was to create a new communication link between the Governing Body, parents and students. Have we succeeded? What have we managed so far?

We've told you about changes that have taken place such as the replacement of the Governors' Annual Report, presented at an Annual Parents' Evening, with the School Profile that is available online or in hard copy. We've also told you about the new shorter Ofsted system.

We have attempted to give you an idea of what prompted some

of the current governors to take on the role and to tell you a little about some of the individuals. We have already introduced you to three governors; a parent governor, a governor appointed by the Local Education Authority and a co-opted governor. In this issue



Diane Atkins - Chair of the Board

we introduce you to a teacher governor, Mrs Tallis.

Are we covering the matters that interest you? You can let us know by contacting us at the email address overleaf. Also a parent governor always attends the parents' evenings and, at the last full Governing Body meeting, we decided that in future a governor would also attend the Information Evenings. So if you prefer a face to face chat, and you don't otherwise see us, then you know one of us will be there.

Finally, we would like to wish you all a Happy Easter.

## The Future - it's a Vision thing!

One of the key roles for the Governing Body is to provide a strategic vision for the school. Deciding on what you want to do next week is difficult enough; to look ahead, say 5 years, is daunting. Especially daunting when controlled by government departments who produce a steady stream of "good ideas" for immediate action, that may or may not be applicable to a girls' secondary school in Salisbury.

To select a way forward calls for a clear mind and experienced, professional advice. Fortunately our Head Teacher and her Senior Management Team provide the latter and the former is helped by dedicating a specific

annual meeting to this Vision thing. From our recent meetings it has become clear that SWGS's Strategic Vision must focus on ensuring that only those initiatives that will benefit the staff and students are enacted.

Using this as guidance, current (and future) ideas for change can be studied for likely educational improvements and, if agreed upon, incorporated into the School Development Plan as prioritised, costed items. Currently the main areas within the development plan are:

- The maintenance of a safe, supportive and caring environment encompassed in the philosophy of the Every Child

Matters initiative. This major change seeks to ensure the following outcomes for each young person: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

- Enhancing student achievement by improving the quality of Teaching and Learning.
- The development of the school site to support the work above.

This all comes down to doing what is best for SWGS. Don't you think that's a good vision?



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## Ask a governor

What would you like to read about in this newsletter? In future issues we want to cover matters that are important to you – so, if you would like to:

- hear more about any issues affecting SWGS, or
- have a particular issue explained

just **Ask a Governor!** You can do this by contacting the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Valerie Bryan, at the School or sending an email to our address on this newsletter. So far we have tried to give you an overview of the function of the Governing Body and given an outline of the roles of the work that is delegated to our subcommittees. In this newsletter John Holland explains about the function of the Admissions Committee.

## The Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee comprises 5 Governors, including the Head teacher, and has, as its primary rôle, the setting of our school admissions policy. For an academically selective school such as South Wilts, this function is of critical importance and involves careful coordination and joint meetings with Bishop Wordsworth's Governors to ensure uniformity of admissions criteria, as well as consultation with other local schools and the Local Education Authority. The nature, setting and conduct of the 11+ tests for entry into year 7 and late entry into years 8 to 11, together with the setting of criteria for entry into the sixth form and policy regarding over-subscription, waiting lists and appeals is also the responsibility of this committee.

To improve the 11+ test as a predictor of ability and aptitude, the previously used Non Verbal Reasoning test has now been replaced by written Mathematics and English papers, which are taken in addition to a multiple choice Verbal Reasoning paper. Candidates are also required to produce during the test a piece of extended writing, which is taken into account during the assessment of border zone candidates.

## Who's who? - Judith Tallis

### Full list of governors:

Mrs Diane Atkins - Chair  
Mr Wade Graham - Vice Chair  
Mr Bob Corcoran - parent  
Dr Deborah Fenlon - parent  
Mrs Mary Guest - partnership  
Mr Chris Hewitt - partnership  
Mr John Holland - partnership  
Mrs Helen Hollinghurst - staff  
Prof John Ilston - LEA  
Mr Peter Jenks - parent  
Mrs Lesley Knowles - parent  
Dr Charles Penn - parent  
Mrs Carolyn Stammers - teacher  
Mrs Helen Stewart - parent  
Mrs Frances Stratton - head  
Mr David Sutcliffe - partnership  
Mrs Judith Tallis - teacher  
Mrs Peggy Trilsbach - co-opted  
Mr Chris Whiteley - co-opted  
Mr Stephen Worthington - parent  
Mrs Valerie Bryan - Clerk

### How long have you been a Governor at South Wilts?

Since March 2006.

### What sort of Governor are you?

A Teacher Governor. I have taught full time at South Wilts Grammar School for 11 years.

### What roles do you perform as a Governor?

I am a member of the Curriculum Committee which discusses developments in the school curriculum. There have been many changes in education recently. Some of the changes have been very positive – e.g. the introduction of more administrative support and of cover supervisors – but sometimes changes are introduced by

times changes are introduced by government without much thought for the effect on the teachers who have to deliver



them.

### Why did you become a Governor?

I believe it is very important for the staff to have a voice on the Governing Body as any decisions made directly affect us.

One of the main reasons for the school's success is the hard work done by staff and I wish to support good communication and relationships between SMT, staff and governors, so that the school can continue to move forward.

### So what do you do in your spare time?

I don't have a lot as working full time and having a family already entails juggling a lot of balls in the air! I do enjoy reading, especially in the summer holidays. I also like walking and have a longstanding ambition to walk from Land's End to John O'Groats one day. I also do yoga and circuit training to try and keep fit.