



Governor Newsletter

24th March 2009

Issue 1



Maths & Computing



Welcome to our newsletter

The start of the New Year for Governors is a busy one. All the Committees have met as well as the Governor's Strategic Meeting and the full Governors Meeting. These latter meetings are important as they are two of only four meetings of the full Governing Body during the year, barring extraordinary meetings.

At the Strategic Meeting in January, we were updated on Trust Status and all the documents are now being completed. We made a successful bid to the Trust Foundation School Unit and can therefore access up to £10,000 to cover our costs in joining (more on the Strategic Meeting overleaf and on Trust status below). The Curriculum Committee made a visit to the General Studies Department which was most interesting and informative. They also carried out a review of several policies including, Curriculum, Attendance and Child Protection. The Admissions Committee were given an update of the 11+ 2008 exam results and discussed the new School Admissions and Appeals Code.

The Personnel Committee received the Staffing update, discussed the Performance Management Review and carried out reviews of Pay and other policies. Finally, at the Resources Committee meeting, we received the Financial update, discussed a raft of funding issues, and covered buildings and Health and Safety matters. Recommendations from other committees which involve expenditure are also presented to the Resources Committee prior to seeking endorsement at the full Governors meeting.

I hope that this gives you a flavour of what the Governors have been involved in since the beginning of the New Year!

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



Diane Atkins
Chair of Governors

Dates to note:

- 30th Mar 09 - Meeting of the Full Governing Body
- 20th Apr 09 - Meeting of the Full Governing Body

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In the future all our articles will be uploaded and linked to the school website, so that you can

South West Academic Trust — Update

SOUTH WEST ACADEMIC TRUST

INNOVATION & ASPIRATION

Since September we have been going through the legal process of becoming a Trust school and joining the South West Academic Trust alongside Colyton Grammar, Poole Grammar, Bournemouth Grammar, Torquay Grammar school for Boys and Exeter University. We are in the very final stages of this process and have engaged a solicitor to handle the land transfer element of becoming a Trust school. We are very excited to be working with some of the most successful selective schools in the country to continue to drive forward standards at South Wilts.

Our collaboration will focus on the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning and providing innovative learning opportunities for our students, with particular focus on gifted and talented pupils. Already our Heads of Department for English, Maths, Music and Religious Studies and the Gifted and Talented co-ordinator have met their counterparts from the other Trust schools to share ideas and plan joint ventures. A group of Year 10 students have also met their counterparts from the Trust schools at Exeter University to experience a very challenging Maths workshop and introduction to University life. Further events and activities are planned for the near future including a meeting of Science Heads of Department; prefect / head girl team leadership training; a 'Challenge Day' for students to work in cross-school teams and development of the Trust website.



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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 by sending an e-mail to our address on this newsletter.

Strategic Governor's Meeting — 28 Jan 09

In addition to the routine meetings of the Governing Body held each term, an additional forum is also held, usually at the beginning of the calendar year, in order to discuss longer term strategic issues. This year's strategic meeting on 28th January covered a wide range of topics: updates were provided on Fast Track teachers (we have two at SWGS) and on our ICT facilities (which are excellent and extremely well looked after by the ICT staff).

The meeting was also updated on the new International and AQA Baccalaureates; the latter appears more suitable for us, albeit we need to see how well-received it is by other schools, universities and elsewhere. Our approach towards Gifted and Talented was also covered; we continue to work towards the National Challenge Award which recognises success and good provision in this area. The strategic meeting also discussed the Healthy Schools Award, which is due for renewal in 2010. The school has done well in this area but faces the prospect of having to grapple with yet more regulations and ever increasing demands on staff to implement the additional 'process' required.

Other issues covered included a discussion on the adjustments to the Ofsted inspection regime expected to emerge later this year. Less frequent inspections for high performing schools and behaviour improvement partnerships were but two of the many changes afoot.

The School's Five Year Strategy was discussed in depth and minor adjustments made, albeit the core strategy remains unchanged. Finally, the Governing Body agreed to its reconstitution in order to reflect the new Trust status of the school. This involved only minor adjustments; the new constitution is as follows:

7 X Parent Governors (no change)

2 X LA Governors (no change)

4 X Staff Governors (no change)

5 X Community Governors (re-titled from Partnership Governors)

2 X Co-opted Governors (re-titled from Foundation Governors).

Full list of governors:

Mrs Diane Atkins - Foundation
(Chair)

Mr Wade Graham - LA (Vice
Chair)

Mrs Angela Brown - Parent

Mr Chris Child - Parent

Mr Bob Corcoran - Parent

Mrs Helen Garside - Parent

Mr Chris Hewitt - Community

Mrs Helen Hollinghurst - Staff

Mr John Raisbeck - LA

Mr Edward Richards - Parent

Mrs Susan Selby - Parent

Mrs Carolyn Stammers - Staff

Mrs Helen Stewart - Community

Mrs Frances Stratton - Staff
(Headteacher)

Mrs Judith Tallis - Staff

Ms Lisa Tinker - Community

Mrs Peggy Trilsbach - Community

Mr Chris Whiteley - Community

Mr Stephen Worthington - Parent

Mrs Valerie Bryan - Clerk

Who's who? Angela Brown — Parent Governor

How long have you been a Governor?

I was appointed in September 2007

What sort of Governor are you?

I'm one of 7 parent governors

What roles do you perform as a Governor?

I'm a member of the Curriculum Committee - we keep up to date with curriculum issues and help decide the impact these will have on the school. We meet staff from the different departments, hear about

their work and concerns, and observe some of their lessons. It's been a fascinating insight.

Why did you become a Governor?

I felt that I had transferable skills from my role working with business as a tax specialist in HM Revenue & Customs, and wanted to use these to support the school and its senior management team. They work amazingly hard to give the girls a great start in life, and it's been a privilege to get involved.

So what do you do in your spare time?

I work in London so never seem to have much spare time! I enjoy the lively cultural life Salisbury has to offer – theatre, art and music, and the Festival coming up. My daughter is in year 12 and I'm making the most of my last year with her before she disappears off on her Gap Year and beyond!