



July 2015

South Wilts Grammar School for Girls

Governor Newsletter

Welcome to our summer term newsletter

We have come to the end of another busy and very successful year.

Although the Summer Term is dominated by exams at all levels, the time arrives when throughout the school girls can relax, take part in activities and go on trips.

Year 13 girls who are leaving us have had their Ball and girls who will be joining us in September their induction days.

Governors have been busy as usual with their various committee meetings. However we also have an opportunity to see the girls in action. Industry Days and Concerts are just two of these occasions.

Finally, we hope you have a good Summer holiday and wish the girls well who are waiting for their results. *Diane Atkins*



Diane Atkins
Chair of Governors

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Dates to note:

- 1 Sept Staff Training Day
Year 12/13 in p.m. only
- 2 Sept Year 7 in school only
- 3 Sept All years in school
- 10 Sept Speech Day
- 13 Oct Year 7 Parents' Meet
The Tutor evening
- 18 Nov Sixth Form Open Evening
- 15 Dec Carol Service

Did you know?

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

New teacher training initiative for South Wilts

There are a number of ways that people can train to become teachers, for example via a university PGCE course or as second careers with schools playing some part or a full role in them becoming qualified. At SWGS teacher training has always been considered to be very important - not only by playing their part in Initial Teacher Training but also in the opportunities it brings in developing mentoring and leadership skills in our teachers, the new ideas these students bring to the school and that they may also be successful in being recruited once qualified and remaining at the school.

SWGS is to take part in new initiative of collaborating with eight other Salisbury schools to set up a teacher training programme with links to the University of Southampton from September 2016. The university will provide the training and support at their campus and the training practice will be at the school. The programme is called the Southampton University Partnership Alliance (SUPA) Salisbury. A principle aim for this scheme is to make Salisbury a major hub for teacher training in the South West and it is hoped that the trainees will take up teaching posts in Salisbury and thus provide a stream of highly skilled entrants to the profession. Being able to recruit the best teachers across a range of subjects is crucial in maintaining the outstanding standard of teaching and learning at SWGS and is a challenge the SLT and Governors recognise.

Helen Stewart, Vice Chair and Chair of Personnel



Do you know your link Governors?

Governors can wear many hats and one of them could be as a Link Governor with responsibility for specific area of school business. At South Wilts we have the following Link Governors:

Nigel Anstey	Sixth Form Link Governor
Chris Child	Pupil Premium Link Governor
Jacqui Goodall	SEN/Careers/PSHE Governor
Howard Prince	Health and Safety Governor
Helen Stewart	Child Protection and Whistleblowing Governor



These roles enable Governors to access the school and see how things are going, look at the department's data, discuss with staff, teachers and heads of departments how well they feel teaching and learning is going, hold discussions with students, report back to the governing body on their findings and champion issues in governing body meetings.

Committee Updates

Resources Committee

The Resources Committee has continued to carry out its core business of monitoring in-year expenditure against budget and scrutinising and approving the budget for the financial year 2015-16, providing direction and guidance as required to the Head teacher. The challenges involved in ending the financial year at or under budget are considerable, and it is to the credit of the school that we have consistently done so year after year. Inevitably, Resources must consider proposed cost saving measures both in-year and beyond, in order to ensure that we continue to spend wisely and remain within budget. The Resources Committee also looks ahead to income and expenditure forecasts as far ahead as 2017, albeit remaining conscious that the further ahead we look, the greater the uncertainty there is. As we look to the future, you will not be surprised to hear that expenditure is expected to exceed income, and further tightening of belts appears inevitable. On a day to day basis, the school must also remain a going concern and the Cash Flow throughout the year is closely monitored. The school's investments, set aside over many years primarily to cover the cost of future pensions and capital building work, are also closely monitored; we clearly aim to get the best returns possible.

One of the more pleasant roles of the Resources Committee is to consider requests for school trips. We do so fully conscious that some of these trips are not cheap, and will always ensure that each delivers educational enrichment as well as value for money. The canteen has also come under the Resources Committee spotlight recently, and a small increase in charges has had to be made. Nevertheless, the canteen provides very healthy eating and outstanding value for money, and we continue to improve the menu offer. The state of our infrastructure is always closely monitored by Resources, and work will soon get underway to build a new Technology Block. A detailed condition survey is to report soon and in the very near future, the Resources Committee will be invited to approved expenditure on a number of areas in order to ensure that our school buildings remain fit for purpose. Health and Safety is also a standing item on the agenda of every Resources Committee; all reported accidents and near misses are considered, and of particular importance is the need to ensure that full investigations have taken place and appropriate mitigations have been put in place. There are, of course, many other more detailed matters considered by the Resources Committee; agendas continue to be very full!

Chris Child, Chair of Resources Committee

Curriculum Committee

SAFEGUARDING

Governors received a report on the school's work to safeguard all students. Provision is regularly reviewed and adjusted according to the latest national and county-level guidance.

ACHIEVEMENT

Governors continued their review of the achievement of Y11, 12 and 13 students in 2014 using the latest validated government-issued reports. In particular, they looked at the PANDA (Performance and Assessment) report for the sixth form. The information in this report is very reassuring and shows that South Wilts Grammar School sixth form students made more progress than others in the county and their achievement is amongst the highest in the country.

Throughout the year, governors review the achievement of students currently in the school to check that all are making as much progress as possible. In particular, we look at how the school is monitoring the work of those subjects where examination results were lower than others in the school last year. Governors were given a report about how leaders have been working with these departments to check that teaching is effective and that students are on track to achieve as highly as possible.

CURRICULUM

Parents will not be surprised to hear that governors need to continuously keep up-to-date with the changes introduced by the government. In particular, significant changes in the curriculum begin in September and governors have checked that the school is ready for the new GCSEs and A Levels that are being introduced over the next three years. These qualifications are more challenging and require teachers to adjust both content and the way some subjects are taught. In summary:

AS / A Levels: Students will be taught new courses in most key subjects in September 2015. Other subjects, including Languages, Music and Geography will be introduced in September 2016.

GCSEs: Students will be taught new courses in English Language, English Literature and Maths in September 2015. Most other key courses will be introduced in September 2016 and a further tranche, including more specialised subjects such as design and technology, in September 2017. These examinations will be graded on a 9 – 1 scale.

ATTENDANCE

Governors regularly check the levels of attendance and although these are slightly below the national average, this is because of the school's policy on a staggered start to the school year and also some severe health issues of individual students. Attendance and punctuality continue to be given a high priority by the school.

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

The policies for Work-Related Learning, Careers and Work Experience were reviewed. Governors checked that the school was doing everything possible to prepare students for the next stage in their education and careers. This included a survey for Sixth Formers about volunteering, work-shadowing and other experiences which will help the school to enhance the provision in this area. Governors also read a report on Year 10 work experience and were pleased to hear about the many successes and valuable learning gained.

Jacqui Goodall, Chair of Curriculum Committee