



December 2018

South Wilts Grammar School for Girls

# Governors' Newsletter

## Welcome to our Autumn Term Newsletter

South Wilts Grammar School for Girls  
Stratford Rd  
Salisbury  
SP1 3JJ

Phone: 01722 323326

Fax: 0172 320703

E-mail: [governors@swgs.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:governors@swgs.wilts.sch.uk)  
[www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk](http://www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk)

### Dates to note for January 2019

|        |                                           |
|--------|-------------------------------------------|
| 15 Jan | Year 9 Parents' Evening                   |
| 21 Jan | Year 11 Parents' Evening                  |
| 24 Jan | Year 12 HE & Post 18 Options Briefing 7pm |
| 26 Jan | A Cappella Concert at St. Martin's Church |
| 6 Feb  | Year 13 Parents' Evening                  |

Dear Parents / Carers

The Academic Year 2018-2019 commenced by celebrating in Salisbury Cathedral the achievements (and recognition and formally rewarding) of students and long serving staff. The A level results were the best ever and this was also an additional cause for celebration.



Helen Stewart  
Chair of Governors

Alongside this event, SWGS was notified by BWS that it was planning to end the Sixth Form collaboration.

This came as a surprise as there had been no consultation from BWS. However, the school took the decision that all A level subjects could actually be taught by our qualified and experienced staff at SWGS and this will commence September 2019. All SWGS stakeholders, staff, parents and pupils were then consulted on taking a further step forwards and becoming co- educational from September 2020. By a large majority, this was thought to be beneficial on a number of fronts and thus legal consultation with all feeder schools is underway. A final decision (based on the consultation) will be taken by the Board in January 2019.

We heard last week that the school's bid for additional capital via the Governments Grammar School Expansion Bid was not successful. Schools will get feedback in the New Year on why their bids were not successful. We will however continue to seek any additional funding that the Government may propose and any further worthwhile initiatives that are in line with our Vision and Values.

It has been a busy but purposeful term for the School with the implementation of projects such as cashless catering and a new sixth form café, concerts and our magnificent Carol Service. On behalf of the Board of Governors, I send my thanks to all involved in these events and achievements and best wishes for a joyous Christmas to pupils, staff and their families.

Helen Stewart  
Chair of Governors



# Committee Updates - Curriculum

## **SAFEGUARDING, STUDENT WELLBEING & ATTENDANCE**

An extra Curriculum Committee meeting was arranged for this academic year. This was planned to ensure that there was sufficient time spent on pastoral matters, such as student wellbeing, as well as on academic achievement which tends to dominate the Autumn term.

Before any of this could be discussed however, governors were updated with the changes introduced in the new Keeping Children Safe in Education document. Some of the changes are technical but there are some additional sections on how safeguarding issues are managed. For example, there is new guidance on peer on peer abuse which schools must apply and also an expanded section on physical restraint. This document can be found on the Gov.UK website.



The school has also conducted its Local Authority Annual Safeguarding Audit. Overall, provision meets the standards required for schools with many aspects above the standard. Three areas being addressed this year are ensuring that governors can access up-to-date safeguarding training, to promote anti-bullying throughout the curriculum and year, and to ensure that staff receive the necessary feedback about any safeguarding concerns that they raise.

Governors were pleased to hear that attendance is high at 97%. Students who do not attend well are supported through various means according to the reasons, such as illness. South Wilts gives a very high priority to the support of students experiencing medical, emotional and mental health problems. The pastoral system has been increased and improved this year following a review at the end of the last academic year. In line with most schools, South Wilts deals with a wide range of student health and special educational needs and works closely with other professionals to help these students achieve all that they can at school.

## **ACHIEVEMENT**

Examination results were excellent in 2018 as would be expected at a grammar school. At GCSE, the Progress 8 score of 0.48 shows that on average, students achieved nearly half a grade higher than expected from their KS2 achievement. The A Level results were also strong enabling students to move on to the next stage in their education or careers. The GCSE profile of students in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form is wider than the KS2 achievement profile of Y7 but on average, students made better progress than expected from their Y11 results. In the Sunday Times Best State Schools list, South Wilts is 50<sup>th</sup> in the country and 5<sup>th</sup> in Wiltshire. The progress made by South Wilts students should not be taken for granted; it is only through the perseverance and hard work put into their studies and the guidance and support of staff that ensures this success. Well Done to All

## **CURRICULUM**

Governors have not needed to make any changes to the curriculum this term although changes to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form collaboration arrangements with Bishop Wordsworth's School have prompted us to consider how this will enable the school to increase its own post-16 provision.

## **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

This committee looks at the results of the Parent Surveys carried out in the year. Although most responses are very positive and also provide helpful feedback to us, the number of parents responding to the surveys (electronic and paper versions) has significantly dropped. We hope that more parents will help us out this year by completing the surveys or tell us how we can improve provision for our students through other means.

## **POLICIES**

Governors reviewed and agreed the following policies:  
Careers / Work-Related Learning policies  
Assessment and Recording / Feedback policies  
Homework  
Young Carers



Jacqui Goodall  
Chair of Curriculum

## Committee Updates - Personnel

### Teachers' Pay

The first order of business for the Autumn Term is our review of teachers' pay. Although we have considerable freedoms as an Academy, we have maintained our strategy of alignment with the national guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions in order to aid recruitment and provide transparency for all concerned. This year saw higher rises than for many years, particularly for staff on the main scale for whom increases of 3.5% were recommended. Following clarification of DfE funding and consultation with the Chair of Resources, the Pay Panel was very pleased to be able to endorse increases in line with this national guidance.



Nick Lay  
Chair of Personnel

### Staff Appraisals

Following last year's recommended improvements to the appraisal process, Liz Ogilvy (Vice Chair of Personnel) and I were able to assess the outcome in our review of both the teaching and support staff appraisals this term. We found that the appraisal cycle had been thoroughly carried out by staff and appraiser information had been well laid out with fully evidenced and fair decisions. We were delighted to see good numbers of staff successfully progressing.

### Admissions

Applications through the 11+ have been very healthy this year, with numbers passing the exam comfortably exceeding our pupil admission number (PAN) of 160. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in our first attempt to gain funding to increase our PAN to 180 and increase the opportunities for children in receipt of the Pupil Premium to benefit from coming to SWGS. Nevertheless, we continue to look at ways of increasing access to the school for disadvantaged children and this will be a focus of our strategic work next term.

### Looking Ahead

Following the decision of the Full Governing Body to consult on the move to a co-educational Sixth Form from September 2020, we will be reviewing the implications of such a move for our marketing strategy and for our staff and students. Our aim will be to ensure that our sixth form remains distinctive, offering a broad range of subjects that can be delivered with sustained excellence - a challenge to which I am very confident the school can rise. to But that's for next year. In the meantime I wish all our staff, students and parents a very Happy Christmas.

*Nick Lay, Chair of Personnel and Admissions*

**Merry**  
**Christmas**

A festive graphic for 'Merry Christmas'. The word 'Merry' is in red and green. 'Christmas' is in red and green, with a green Christmas ball above the 'i'. The letter 'o' is replaced by a red and white striped candy cane with a green holly leaf and red berries on top. 'mas' is in red and green.