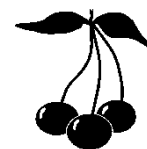


# Carrington Junior School



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## Chair of Governor's Annual Report for Parents - 2014-15

This report summarises the work and impact of Carrington Junior Governors over the past Academic year 2014-15 and during the current term.

### What do Governors do?

School governors have recently been in the news media because the role of Governors has changed and grown over the last few years. Governors are now a full partner in leading the school and are accountable to OFSTED for making a positive difference to the learning of pupils at the school.

The purpose of this report is to give you information about the work of the Governing Board at the school. In many ways the activity and impact of Governors is not immediately visible so I hope this helps to fill the information gap.

### We do this in 3 ways:

#### 1 Setting the vision, values and strategy for the school.

Governors met with Senior staff last November to reconsider the vision, values and strategy for the school after the OFSTED visit in July, which rated the school as GOOD.

Governors reaffirmed the values for a happy school in which everyone is valued and encouraged to succeed as well as they can.

In addition, the governors considered how they would carry out their other two core strategic functions.

#### 2 Providing support and holding the Headteacher and her team to account for improving the quality of teaching and achievement of pupils.

We identified 3 key strategic areas to focus on during the year:

- Consolidation and continued improvements in teaching and learning, including the implementation of the new curriculum and SEND arrangements.
- Assessment for the children under the new arrangements without levels.
- Ensuring the school has the best staff in place, especially new Headteacher and Deputy, to deliver the best outcomes for the children, appraisal of the Headteacher and monitoring the appraisals the Headteacher undertakes of staff.

#### 3 Ensuring sound financial management and best use of resources in the school.

##### The Focus this past year has been:

- Review of expenditure in all areas. This has been achieved through new format management account reporting and regular (twice termly) meetings between governors, HT and Bursar to review and update accounts.
- To also consider how we might make better use of school space and sharing costs with other schools.
- Setting up an Estate working party.
- Developing closer relationships with stakeholders, especially with the Infant School, other schools and parents.



## **What have been the outcomes during the year?**

### **Recruitment and transition**

Following the resignation of Miss Fell last November, swiftly followed by that of Mrs Gardener, the most important task for governors this year has been to recruit a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

The national difficulties involved in recruiting headteachers turned out to be a big factor, and we needed to go through 4 rounds of advertising and interviews before we found the right person to be Headteacher early this autumn. We are delighted that Simon Woodbridge has now been appointed and will start in January 2016.

I was told that the recruitment of a headteacher was a time consuming process and would absorb a great deal of governor time and energy, even if you only had to go through the interview process once; let alone 4 times. How right they were!

Each time, extensive paperwork was produced, and 2 days of various interviews and assessment tasks for candidates were planned. I am very grateful to my governor colleagues, school staff, and pupils, (especially school council and prefects), and the external and BLT School advisers who all gave their time, expertise, advice and help. A very special thank you goes to Mrs Piggott who copied and collated all the folders of paperwork for everyone on each occasion.

Also I would like to say a special thank you to Mrs Woodhouse who, within days of agreeing she could help us by becoming our Interim Head this term, dropped everything in her diary to help with appointing our new Deputy Head, Ms Preston, last summer term.

While all this was happening, a great deal of work was being done by all governors to help ensure a smooth transition from Miss Fell's departure to a good handover to Mr Woodbridge. This work is still ongoing and Mrs Woodhouse has been unstinting in her work to make sure children, staff, governors and parents have been fully supported in this process.

### **Teaching and learning**

The world of education is ever changing. The government introduced a new curriculum, procedures and processes for new assessments and delivery of Special Educational Needs all to be implemented during 2014-15.

Staff worked hard to introduce these extensive changes. Governors have played their part by supporting school plans for implementing the changes and monitoring the outcomes for the children.

Overall children have continued to achieve well over the past year. The detailed data on children's attainment and achievement across year groups shows where there is room for yet further improvement, especially in reading, spelling and punctuation. Governors will be supporting and challenging our new Head and his staff to find ways to achieve this in the New Year.

### **Financial and contractual matters**

#### **Budget**

Governors have also been involved in taking a very close look at the finances. Although school budgets have been promised protection in cash terms by the Government, there is no additional money to cover rising costs. For example, national agreements have led to 4% rises in Pension costs. Since around 80% of school costs are spent on staff, this represents a significant additional cost for schools. Governors are working closely with the school to review how we spend our money so that we can cover these costs and still provide an excellent education for the children.

#### **Heating**

Governors have also been supporting the school in negotiating with the Local authority to get the school heating fixed as quickly as possible. I am very sorry that it has taken such a long time. I can only say our heating has been mended faster than several other schools in Bucks with similar problems. We are



indebted to Stuart Neale who, as a building service engineer, was able to ensure that the school had specialist advice so it could ask the right questions of the LA to speed things up.

### **School Meals**

Many parents will be aware that we also have a new school meals provider. Governors worked alongside the school to commission a new and more cost effective provider. So far children's response to the meals on offer has been very positive.

### **Information Technology Provision**

We also engaged a new IT provider from November last year. This meant that our system could support iPad use in the classroom, (this was not possible with our former Bucks provider). The Governing Body is very grateful for the donations from parents which made the purchase of a trolley with a set of 15 iPads for classroom use possible. These are used extensively to enhance learning and have been much appreciated by both the staff and the children.

### **The Governing Board**

#### **New Governors**

We have welcomed 3 new governors:

- Graham Clarke- who is an accountant and is also chair of our resources committee;
- Phil Weaver – who works for GSK in procurement;
- Katrin Legg - She is a new parent governor who works as a bookkeeper for local companies and also provided materials for improving the home for the chickens earlier this term.

#### **Website**

In the New Year the school will have a new website and there will be a section devoted to Governance. This will make it possible to post much more information online about the work of the Governing Board than before and make information more accessible for all.

#### **National Leader of Governance**

I, as chair, was appointed and trained as a National Leader of Governance last spring. This means that I also help and mentor other Chairs of Governors and Governing Boards.

So far I have worked with three other schools. This brings a small income to the school; but an equally valuable benefit is that, by working with other school GBs, and alongside the Bucks Learning Trust, I am learning a tremendous amount about how to set about improving our own practice as a Governing Board.

#### **Finally**

If you have any questions about this report or any other aspects of the Governing Board's work, please don't hesitate to contact me either via the school office or directly at [chaircarringtonjs@gmail.com](mailto:chaircarringtonjs@gmail.com)

As the festive season draws near, on behalf of all members of the Governing Board, I wish you all a happy Christmas and prosperous new year and thank you all for your support.



**Anne Sheddick**  
**Chair of Governors, Carrington Junior School**

**December 2015**

