

MORLEY



MATTERS

Newsletter from the Governors of Morley Memorial Primary School – Dec 2012

Governors – who we are and what we do.

The governing body has three main responsibilities:

- To take a largely strategic role in the running of the school.
- To act as a critical friend to the school.
- To ensure accountability of the governing body to the parents and of the head teacher to the governing body.

Governors do not intervene in the day-to-day running of the school because this is the responsibility of the head teacher and senior management.

We ask questions such as:

'How is the school planning to raise standards?' How do we know these actions have been effective? Which children will it benefit....?

There are four kinds of governors: Staff governors, Community governors, Authority governors and Parent governors. We have a full Governing Body meeting altogether every half term. In addition, every governor is also a member of at least one subcommittee (finance, curriculum, personnel and facilities). These meet between two and four times a year. Governors are also linked to subject areas such as numeracy, literacy, ICT, music, sport etc.

If you would like to contact the Governing body please email the Co-Chairs of Governors, Sarah Seed or Nicky Odgers at chair@morley.cambs.sch.uk or ask the school office to pass on your message.

View from the Chair...

? ? ? ? ? ?

You spoke and we listened.

Every summer the governors organise a questionnaire to ask you, the parents, what you think about Morley. This year we had a tremendous response, with over 140 parents replying. This was nearly 50% more than in previous years.

The questionnaire is a very valuable source of information for the governing body. It can tell us what the school is doing well but it also allows us to identify concerns that parents may hold and it focuses our attention on what needs to improve.

We are delighted to report that a great many things seem to be going very well. For example:

- Over 98% of respondents reported that their child likes school,
- 94% agreed that pupils behaved well,
- 93% believe their child is making good progress,
- 91% said they felt that teaching is good
- 92% believe the school is led and managed well.
- 92% believe that the school provides enough opportunity for parents to get involved with the school.
- School trips and visitors to the classroom are overwhelmingly seen as a positive, relevant and good value for money.

The questionnaire also helped to highlight areas for future development. For example:

- Some parents felt that the school needed to do more to stretch the more able so this year staff will be developing more opportunities for this to happen.
- Some comments suggest we need to get better about letting parents know the range of clubs available to children. Information about extra-curricular activities will be more prominently displayed on the noticeboard outside the office and information is also available on the website.

(Feedback about the Questionnaire continued.)

- While 97% of parents find the weekly newsletters useful, they find the school website less relevant. The website is having a make-over and will be re-launched in January. The changes should make it easier for staff to update information, consequently making it a more useful tool for communicating with parents.
- The school recently introduced parental surgeries in the Easter and Summer term in combination with one parents' evening in the Autumn term. Last year parents reported that they preferred this system over traditional parents' evenings. Feedback this year suggested that some parents' work commitments make it difficult for them to meet with staff in after school surgeries. Mr Catchpool and staff will be thinking about ways to deal with this challenge.
- Some parents felt that the school does not offer enough opportunities for children in sport, music and foreign languages. The governing body will be talking to staff about how these areas can be developed further.

Thank you very much if you took the time to complete the survey. Rest assured, we take all your comments very seriously. Please look out for the next questionnaire in the Summer term.

Report by Nicky Odgers



How does Morley compare with other schools in the country?

The school has recently received information about how our children's attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 compares to other schools in the country. We are delighted to report that in all areas measured (reading, writing and maths) Morley does significantly better than average. The government also analyses data to identify how much progress children make from their time in infants to the end of juniors. From this, schools are given a value-added score. Morley's value added score was significantly better than the national average and the rate of progress pupils made in English and Maths puts us in the top 18% of schools nationally. These results are a real credit to Mr Catchpool and the rest of the staff.



School Improvement Plan

Each year the school is required to draw up an improvement plan. This is a set of targets focusing on areas the school would like to develop further. The plan is drawn up through discussion between the head teacher and governing body. Governors take an active role in monitoring how effectively these targets are met. We do this through talking to staff and children, looking at data, visiting the school and getting feedback from parents in the questionnaire.

This year the targets are around raising attainment of lower achieving pupils, enhancing phonics skills in Early Years and Year 1, providing additional opportunities for more able students to be stretched, further developing the quality of teaching and embedding a new leadership structure.

A term in the life of a school governor

We've already explained what our role is within the school, but perhaps you're wondering about the specifics. What do governors talk about in their meetings? What decisions have they made lately? Here's an idea of what we've been involved in over the last term...

Aside from the regular full Governing Body meetings, several committees have also convened recently – for instance, the Curriculum Committee has reviewed subject reports for Art and Drama, as well as discussing Sex and Relationship education. The Facilities and Finance Committees have also met in the last term. As you know, we've been heavily involved in the annual parent questionnaire, and we've been really pleased with the improved response rates this year. We also take part in staff recruitment, as well as the Headmaster's annual performance review, and we recently undertook a training session on the new Ofsted framework to make sure we're fully informed when the time rolls round again for the school to be inspected.



That's just a flavour, but if you want to know more, just ask!

Kate Allen – Local Authority Governor