



Fowlmere Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Suki Hinton, BEd (Hons) NPQSL

Wednesday 19th July 2023

Governing Body end of year update **July 2023**

Dear parents and carers,

As we approach the end of an incredibly busy and exciting school year, it seems timely to reflect upon and update you on the work of the governing body.

Governing Body Membership

September 2022 saw a new head teacher (Suki Hinton) and new co-chairs of governors for the school (Phil Butterworth and Hayley Woods). As a small governing body, we decided to move away from three separate committees (finance and premises, personnel and standards) to a circular model of governance. A circular model of governance means that all governors attend the same six core governor meetings per year. This has ensured that members are better informed and skilled across the spectrum of governance roles and issues whilst also making more efficient use of our time and Suki's time.

The end of this academic year will bring the sad departure of Andrew Page, whom for several years has provided the governing body with his knowledge and expertise, particularly around finance, budgets, premises and health and safety. Lisa Fitzpatrick, local authority governor, stepped down this month for personal reasons and in December Nico Schonken stepped down for a well-deserved break after many years as vice-chair and safeguarding governor. Ms Jo Grazebrook also ended her tenure as staff governor this year. We would like to extend our gratitude to all of those governors who have given so generously with their time and commitment in order to make Fowlmere School the success that it is.

Current governors are Suki Hinton (Headteacher), Kym Rouse (staff governor), Hayley Woods & Phil Butterworth (parent governors and co-chairs), Abi Clarke (parent governor), Sarah Watson (co-opted governor) and Sheryl Williamson (co-opted governor). Abi, Sarah and Sheryl joined the governing body this year and bring a wealth of useful experience in terms of education, safeguarding, project management, finance and previous governor experience. We are currently conducting a skills audit to determine where there may be gaps in our knowledge and experience before we advertise for the vacant governor positions, but it seems likely that we will need to recruit governors with a keen eye for all things budget, finance, equality, and inclusion. Watch this space for more details in September.

Academisation

We continue to work at pace through the due diligence processes required of us as a school to join the Cam Academy Trust. We have entered a more formal stage and part of this will see us consulting with the community around whether we should join the Trust. We will launch this consultation in September, building upon the information evening we held earlier this year and sharing with you in detail why governors are unanimous in our belief that academisation is the best option for the long-term success and sustainability for Fowlmere School.

We have carried out visits to other Cam Academy Trust primary schools and met with governors and leaders of those schools and were very impressed with what we saw. Our teachers have also spent time with Cam Academy Trust staff to share ideas and best practice, particularly regarding SEND provision and curriculum development.

SATs results and Ofsted

A huge congratulations to all our year 6 students for their excellent SATs results. Verified results will be published later in the calendar year but it's pleasing to see how Fowlmere has achieved in comparison to national benchmarks. The governing body monitor standards closely and we realise that there is far more to our children and their time at Fowlmere School than a score on a piece of paper. Nevertheless, we want to recognise the considerable achievement of our year 6 pupils and the efforts of the staff in supporting the children. We hope that as they leave us, our year 6's feel prepared and excited for the journey ahead of them.

As you are aware, Ofsted visited the school at the end of February 2023. As a result of the inspection, the school retained its status as "good" with strengths and areas for improvement identified. As recognised by the report, staff and governors know the school well and we are satisfied that the areas for improvement are in hand moving forwards. Development plans for next year have been drawn up and we are excited by the trajectory the school is on.

As a governing body we would like to congratulate and thank Suki and all the staff at Fowlmere School for the tremendous amount of work and resilience they have displayed over the last academic year. Thank you.

Finally, we wish you and your children a relaxing summer break and thank you for your continued support of the school.

Hayley Woods and Phil Butterworth
Co-Chairs of Fowlmere Primary School