

Woodlands Meed

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Welcome to the start of the new school year and a particularly warm welcome to all parents, pupils and staff joining Woodlands Meed for the first time. We are sure you will make lots of new friends.

We know it can be confusing getting to know a new routine for the first time, so much to remember! However, please do not hesitate to ask staff or teachers for help or advice, and there are also plenty of parents who are willing to help and support.

If you have not already done so, please join the **Parents and Carers of Woodlands Meed** Facebook Page. It has loads of advice, tips and information.

The school website <http://www.woodlandsmeed.co.uk> is also full of information about the school, activities and policies.

It is planned to issue a Governors' Newsletter at the start of each term to explain what the governors have been doing and plans for the term. As this is the first newsletter we thought it might be helpful if we explained who we are and the role we have.

Marion Wilcock

Chair

The role of Governors

Long gone are the days where governors would spend their time discussing school uniform colours and logos, or raising funds. The Governing Body has a very serious job to do: 'a statutory obligation for ensuring the school is operating effectively and in line with legislative and educational requirements'. This means doing three things:

- Acting strategically
- Being accountable to stakeholders (that's you)



Upcoming Events

October 17

Parents' Evening – school site

October 31

Parents' Evening – college site

November 7

New Parents Coffee meeting
9.30 – 11am; 5 – 6 pm

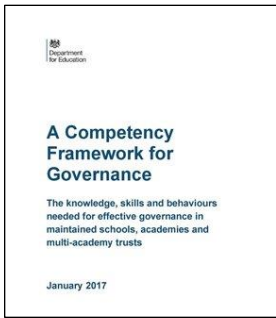
Who we are

A full list of the governors is set out on the school website. We about to update this information by providing some personal information and our photos, so that if you see us around the school, you will know who we are.

SCHOOL FIREWORKS

14 OCTOBER – come and support this great school event





- Ensuring financial probity.

The Governing Body sets the school's aims and policies, makes decisions on how to spend the budget and appoints the Headteacher to whom we delegate responsibility for the implementation of policy, day-to-day management and operation of the school, and delivery of the curriculum. Our duties include overseeing the welfare of the children, managing the buildings and financial budgetary control.

Most decisions are taken at Full Governing Body meetings but some of the work is delegated to the sub committees: 'Resources' is responsible for finance and staff, 'Learning and Wellbeing' is responsible for standards, children and parents, 'Property and Health & Safety' is responsible to all matters relating to the Premises and 'Policy' is responsible for ensuring that all policies which guide the school are kept up to date and implemented. Details of these committees are set out on the school website.

In addition to being committee members, governors take on roles linked to specific subjects or school functions, such as english, maths & science, safeguarding, and Send Alliance.

Each governor is a volunteer and is expected to dedicate between 10 and 20 days per year to the running of the school, and undertaking specific training to assist them in their role. The Governors concentrate on strategic things that will improve the school in the long term whilst also encouraging governors to involve themselves in school life. We provide support and advice where possible but at the same time leave Adam Rowland the Head to get on with the running of the school.

The **autumn term** for the Governing Body is about ensuring that the priorities in the School Development Plan (SDP) are being carried out. It's also about making sure that staff objectives (including the Head teacher's) are set and aligned with those priorities.

Here are a few key areas of interest:

Standards

Standards are monitored internally throughout the year by our Senior Management Team. We are also externally monitored. In the summer we were inspected by WSCC School Link Advisor. The purpose of this review was to validate the school's self-evaluation on the effectiveness of their leadership and management, as well as their overall school effectiveness.

We were delighted that the report confirmed that the schools self-evaluation judgment of Good for leadership and management continues to be accurate. The school's Overall Effectiveness is rated as Good.

The Governors were particularly pleased to note the comment in the report

"Pupil behaviour and behaviour for learning is exemplary. The curriculum also contributes well to pupils' behaviour and welfare, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual , moral, social and cultural development".

Finance

There is no disguising that the school is (as are most schools in West Sussex) under acute financial pressure. Special Needs Schools have also been particularly affected as WSCC this year altered the arrangements for special needs Top Up Funding, which has substantially reduced the income of the school. Governors are not (except in exceptional circumstances) permitted to set a deficit budget and to ensure that we had a balanced budget this year and going forward for next year, carried out a staffing review and restructure.

Restructure

The restructure has been difficult for both the school management team and governors, and of course, the staff affected. As a result a number of teaching assistants were made redundant and others took the opportunity to take voluntary redundancy. This decision was not taken lightly. However, the governors are confident that the staffing restructure will mean that the school can continue to deliver a high quality of education to our pupils effectively and safely.

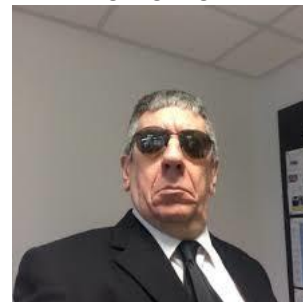
The governors would like to thank all the staff for their professional approach and support for the school and pupils during this difficult time.

Premises

Parents will be aware that the Governors have been campaigning for new buildings at the College site. Unfortunately, meetings with the Task and Finish Group the council set up to consider this matter, were cancelled by the Council and



Kevin Barfield Retirement



(in sartorial mode at a school event)

Kevin has been a familiar figure to parents, particularly at the College site. He was a teacher at Newick House School for many years, and following the formation of Woodlands Mead in 2012, he has served as Head of College. He decided to take (slightly) early retirement at the end of the Summer Term. The Governors join the staff, parents and pupils to thank Kevin for the immense and invaluable contribution he made to the school, and wish him well in his retirement.

then elections intervened. No response was received to subsequent offers from the governors to resurrect these. To ensure that all pupils could transfer from school to college, the governors decided to provide a temporary solution by installing a temporary hygiene room in the playground. This was made possible by the generous reduction in costs by Portakabin and Southern Cranes, who

craned the unit over the roof of the college building.

Planned Activities

This term the governors plan to:

- develop the Strategy for the School for the next three to five years
- review the Development Plan (which is the action plan for the school) to accord with the Strategy
- review subject reports
- recruit two governors
- carry out governor visits
- monitor the budget for 2017/18 to date
- start to plan the budget for 2018/19
- carry out Head Teacher review with external moderator

Parent Response and Contribution

If you have any queries or any matters which you wish to be reviewed by the governors (in confidence or otherwise) please contact by letter via the school office or email governors@woodlandsmeed.co.uk