

Dear Parents and Carers,

This is the time when one of us writes to you, giving an outline of what we, as your Governing Body, have done during the past year, along with a little information about ourselves and our role.

Each year brings its own special strengths and challenges and we are happy to say we have met them all, celebrating and building on the strengths of our relationships with families and pooling and developing our skills to manage new legislation and the demands on our budget to keep our standards high.

We have a wonderful new 'Wild Wood' outdoor area for the children to explore and have enjoyed many events over the year to keep Kingswood a lively, interesting and attractive place. We always appreciate the tremendous support we have from our families. It enables the children to learn during the day while with us, and then continue this learning at home so their understanding of themselves and the world is the best we can provide between us. It is this that makes our jobs as governors so rewarding. Of course, we thank Mrs Jackson and all her staff for the commitment and hard work they do, each and every day, to make 'learning an exciting adventure' at Kingswood.

We often welcome new faces at Kingswood but this year we are saying goodbye to two of our long serving staff. Elaine and Helen are both retiring this term after many years of loyal and varied work with children, over many years. We wish them all the very best for their future plans and thank them, knowing how many children have benefitted from their attention and experience during their time here.

If you want to comment or require further details about our work, our Chair of Governors, Melanie Harvey, can be reached through the School office.

I would like to wish you all a safe and happy summer holiday and for those families and children moving on to other schools and settings, I send my best wishes for the future.

Yours Sincerely

*Chris Munroe*

Vice Chair of Governors  
Kingswood Nursery School

## KINGSWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL GOVERNOR ACTIVITY 2017 - 2018

At Kingswood, our Constitution states that the Governing Board is made up of the Head teacher, one staff governor, two parent governors, one LEA Governor and four co-opted governors; making a total of nine. We do not have Committees, but each Governor undertakes to monitor particular areas.

Present Governor names, together with their category and the areas(s) they monitor are listed below:

| Name                                   | Category                           | Areas Monitored  |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Mrs Jackson                            | Head teacher                       |  |
| Melanie Harvey<br>(Chair of Governors) | LEA                                | Progress and Attainment<br>Appraisal and Performance                                 |
| Chris Munroe<br>(Vice Chair)           | Co-opted                           | Equalities & Inclusion, Special Needs,<br>Safeguarding, Appraisal and<br>Performance |
| Elaine McKeer                          | Staff Governor                     | Staff Matters, Pupil Voice   |
| Alison James                           | Co-opted<br>(till June 2018)       | Finance, Community links   |
| Clive Goodchild                        | Parent Governor<br>(till Nov 2017) | Website, Health and Safety   |
| Louise Jones                           | Parent Governor                    | Safeguarding, Developing Links with<br>Parents and Carers                            |
| Emily Ricketts                         | Parent Governor<br>(from May 2018) |  |
| Mick Martindale                        | Co-opted                           | Health & Safety, Premises  |
| Carole Racher                          | Co-opted                           | Teaching & Learning, Finance,<br>Mentor to New Governors                             |

### GOVERNORS – APPOINTMENT AND RESIGNATIONS

We have had some changes over this year; Clive Goodchild, a parent governor, and Alison James a co-opted governor, both reluctantly resigned during the year because of increased work commitments. We also changed our staff governor, Petra Charles. We have always been fortunate in being able to recruit governors from within our families and staff at Kingswood, despite being a small setting. We were sorry to see them go and lose their valuable skills and contribution to the Nursery and Pre School and thank them for their hard work on behalf of all at Kingswood Nursery School. Our vacancy for a parent governor has since been filled by Emily Ricketts. Only one nomination was received, which meant that Emily was recently appointed without an election, subject to the usual checks. At present we have a vacancy for a co-opted governor.

### GOVERNOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors of all maintained schools have three main duties:

- To set the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school
- To hold the school leaders to account for the performance of pupils and the performance management of the staff
- To ensure the school's finances are well spent

The governors fulfil these duties through meetings of the Board of Governors, visits and individual meetings with Mrs Jackson and other members of staff.

### TRAINING, BRIEFINGS AND MEETINGS

Governors at Kingswood understand how important it is that we all keep up to date with legislation, national issues and current practice, so we attend courses that we feel will help us fulfil these commitments. Every Governor undertakes a full day of induction training on appointment and we also have an annual in-house training session for all governors. This year our in-house training focussed on the new requirements for Data Protection, in line with recent legislation and guidance.

We have a mentoring programme for new governors during their first year and Carole Racher very ably continued this support this year. All governors have felt this is a very successful initiative as it provides a high level of support for every new appointment and brings them 'up to speed' for this demanding role as a governor.

In addition to formal training, before each Governors Meeting we have a short information sharing session where we learn about an aspect of practice – this year these sessions have included; Pre School, Staff Roles and Responsibilities, Data Collection, analysis and Use, Intervention Programmes, the Outside Environment

### VISION AND ETHOS

At Kingswood our vision is to provide the best opportunities and achieve the best outcomes for every child in our care; where every day is an exciting adventure. We have also developed a set of Core Values, which underpin all our work and that of every member of staff in the setting. This is regularly reviewed, alongside all of our other policies and procedures, to ensure that all staff

and the governing body share the same vision and outstanding quality of provision. We all support the head teacher's determination to provide the very best we can for every child here at Kingswood.

## **FINANCE**

As a shareholder in Herts for Learning, we are able to buy in financial support, and we have visits every month from a member of the Financial Services Support team who helps Sam Godfrey complete monthly returns and monitor the budget.

For the past few years we have had two Governors who are very experienced in the field of Finance who have led our discussions in this area. This year Carole took over this role as lead, which has enabled us to continue to provide effective scrutiny and support. Every year the Board is required to complete a Schools Financial Value Standards assessment form which we submit to Hertfordshire County Council to demonstrate we have secure financial management in place. This year, as in previous years, we were able to do this, with no action points to take forward.

As a Board, we feel that Kingswood is most effective if we spend a very high proportion of our budget on well qualified dedicated practitioners. Our adult-to-child ratios are high and we feel this is a major factor in our success.

Governors are aware that our budget is likely to be under pressure in future years and will do all we can to ensure we continue to achieve the best possible value for money under difficult financial circumstances.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

Governors also decided it would be advantageous for the setting to buy into the HfL Standards Package, which allows us to work with and benefit from the experience and expertise of a Hertfordshire Improvement Partner. The HIP works closely with Mrs Jackson and Governors to identify the strengths and challenges of the setting and to set priorities for the year ahead: making termly visits to measure progress against these targets, which is then reported back to meetings of the whole Governing Body.

As part of the strategic direction of the school, Governors regularly update and review policies.

We are particularly careful to ensure all safeguarding requirements are adhered to and even before the recent OFSTED inspection we had an 'outstanding' grade for this area.

This year, Kingswood has successfully integrated the entitlement for 30 hours per week provision for some children in Nursery after our 'hub' trials last year alongside other children attending for 15 hours provision per week.

Together with Mrs Jackson, Governors have attended the All Party Parliamentary Group hearings on the future of Nursery Education and continue to keep up to date and involve lobbied MP's and Ministers about Nursery Funding. Governors see their duty extends beyond just supporting Kingswood to support high quality Nursery education nation-wide.

## **HOLDING SCHOOL LEADERS TO ACCOUNT**

Having set the priorities for the year ahead, each governor undertakes to monitor particular areas of interest or expertise and to report back to the full Board. Each governor commits to at least two monitoring visits per year to fulfil this task. You can see the areas each Governor undertook to monitor in the table above.

After achieving our Outstanding Ofsted rating in March last year, this standard of provision continues to be the priority of School Development Plan, our monitoring visits and our meetings. Inevitably, this judgement means that our challenge in the future will be to maintain this grade in the face of changing circumstances.

Being a School Governor involves legal responsibilities and a huge time commitment to fulfil this voluntary role and many schools have difficulty filling all their vacancies or completing their full monitoring role. We are proud to say this is not the case at Kingswood, where each governor has fulfilled their commitment to make at least two monitoring visits, provide reports and attend most meetings. If you would like more information about us, the Governors and our work, please visit the school website and take time to read the Minutes of our meetings which are posted on the notice board near the office.

We are all proud to be part of the 'Kingswood family' and I can assure every parent that we will continue to play our part in securing the best possible outcome for each and every child at the setting.