

Priors Field Primary School

Governors' Annual Report to Parents

September 2017

Message from the Chair

As a Governing Body we have been thinking about how we can improve the way we work and in 2016/17 for the first time we drew up our own action plan, to form part of the School Action Plan, setting out some of our priorities. One of these was to become more transparent and accountable as a governing body – including in our communication with parents. In our first annual report to parents we want to give you a brief insight into some of the work we're involved in and our highlights from the 2016/17 school year.

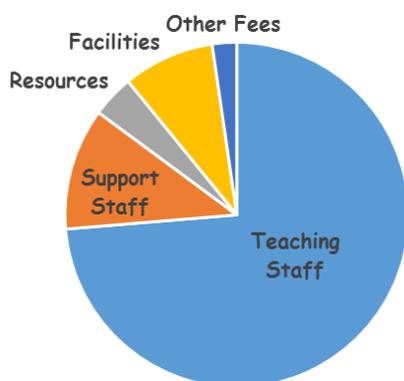
If you have any suggestions or comments on what you read here, we'd love to hear from you: feel free to contact me by email at dawson.d@welearn365.com or speak to me or any of the parent governors in the playground.

School Vision

The new school vision, launched in the summer term, was the culmination of months of work and was a genuine team effort, with contributions from every part of our school community. Both the 'wordle' words and the motto, 'Growing together, ready for life', really sum up the type of school we are and want to continue to be; a growing, learning community, always improving and supporting each other. Both staff and governors are motivated to enable our children to grow as whole people and be prepared for life beyond Priors Field.



Finances



The crisis in school funding has featured a lot in the press this year; good stewardship and making sometimes difficult decisions has kept us close to our budget. The chart shows approximate splits of the annual spend; most of the LA funding goes on staffing and maintaining the premises.

We were pleased with the use of the designated PE funding; the pupils have benefitted from the dedicated resource and we have seen some excellent performances from school teams.

We receive only a small capital budget (c£6k per annum) and there are always a lot of projects we would like to do. This year we refurbished the Y6 classroom and have invested in some additional office space. We know that replacing the IT server is imminent and we are awaiting costings. We are so grateful for the support from parents, both through the PTA and other employer schemes, that is enabling us to make bigger investments in the school.

Pupil performance

We've had some great Yr. 6 SATS results in 2017:

- 76% of Priors Field children met the expected standard in combined Reading, Writing and Maths. This is a 9% rise from 2016 and 15% above the national average.
- We have seen an increase in the number of children reaching the expected standard in all subjects apart from Reading (which is broadly similar to last year)
- A huge 61% of children were working at greater depth in Reading
- There was an increase in the number of children reaching the expected standard in Writing, however, the number of children working at greater depth has fallen
- In Maths, there was an increase in both children who met the expected standard and children who achieved greater depth
- The results for SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) were significantly above the national average and an improvement on the school's results from last year

These results mark the end of the second year of assessment following the introduction of the new, more challenging national curriculum and the removal of national 'Levels' to track the progress of children. Schools now develop and maintain their own internal tracking methods and Priors Field has had positive feedback from an independent review last year. Regular pupil progress meetings continue to be held for all children. The 2017/2018 School Action Plan will focus on embedding the 'Talk for Writing' approaches across the school to further support improvement of writing at greater depth.

Behaviour for learning

Our School Action Plan last year had a focus on developing the learning behaviour of children at Priors Field so that they are resistant to failure, eager to know how to improve their learning and happily draw on their own strengths and those of their peers to achieve successful outcomes. A 'growth mind-set' has been fostered, for example through the 'Four Bs' (Brain, Book, Buddy, Boss) which encourages independent learning and through the introduction of Learning Buddies to encourage peer support. We also saw the introduction of 'Learning Detectives', where children were involved in observing and reporting on the learning behaviour that they see in school.



Our School Action Plan last year had a focus on developing the learning behaviour of children at Priors Field so that they are resistant to failure, eager to know how to improve their learning and happily draw on their own strengths and those of their peers to achieve successful outcomes. A 'growth mind-set' has been fostered, for example through the 'Four Bs' (Brain, Book, Buddy, Boss) which encourages independent learning and through the introduction of Learning Buddies to encourage peer support. We also saw the introduction of 'Learning Detectives', where children were involved in observing and reporting on the learning behaviour that they see in school.

At the end of last year we also introduced a new behaviour policy, using flexible consequences strategies and 'restorative justice' conversations. This is helping to foster a supportive and reciprocal learning environment in school. This is reflected in our updated anti-bullying policy and will continue to be built on this year as part of our vision for the school.

We want to create a culture for children to excel, where they are confident and self-assured learners with a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires them. Our Outdoor Learning Plan has progressed this year and we are working towards the Silver Food For Life Award. The Environment Area and Forest School continue to grow as a unique and central part of our nurture activities and also our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Emotional) curriculum.

A new Headteacher

Appointing a new Headteacher is probably one of the most important tasks a governing body carries out and it was one that we took very seriously. It gave us the opportunity as governors to think about our vision for the school, and prompted us to talk to staff, children and parents about what everyone values about Priors Field. We wanted to find a Headteacher who would embrace and build on the existing strengths at Priors Field, work well with our staff team and preserve the warm community ethos that makes our school special. We were delighted to appoint Katie Gane to the role and will be working closely with her to keep Priors Field improving and achieve the best for every child.



We also approved a new senior leadership structure and supported the appointment of Mrs Braley to the new role of Deputy Headteacher, to work alongside Mrs Gane.

Our school in the community

- **Polling Station:** Governors joined with parents to campaign to the Council against the continued use of Priors Field as a polling station, as the school has no alternative but to close on polling days. We had the most positive indication yet that the Council were actively exploring alternative venues and are keeping our fingers crossed that they are successful in finding a solution.
- **Pre-school:** we have been working with the County Council to push for continued provision of a pre-school on the Priors Field site. We will want to work closely with any new provider to establish positive links with the school.
- **School crossing patrol:** this is very much a live issue as we write this. We know that the absence of a school crossing patrol is a real concern to parents and are pushing the Council to address as a matter of urgency the safety of our children as they cross Clinton Lane.
- **Academisation:** governors have been meeting with other primary school governors in the town to share learning about the Government's academy agenda. We have no current plans for Priors Field to become an academy but are keeping ourselves updated on all the latest developments and considerations.



About the Governors

Our governors bring a wide range of experiences and expertise to the role. The Governing Body includes staff, parents and people from the local community and beyond – all keen to make a difference to the life of our school and working together to help improve outcomes for the children. We provide support and challenge to the school in its journey towards excellence through our core functions as governors:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

Parent governor, Mark Davison: the first 12 months

I'm now 1 year into a 4 year parent governor term and 4 things have struck me over the past year.

- The desire of the pupils, parents, staff, school leadership team and governors to make Priors Field outstanding.
- The great buzz and vibe of the school witnessed through many school events, head teacher recruitment process and creating the school vision
- The challenges faced by the school in managing reducing resources and still delivering excellent education
- Learning the governor role and ensuring the parents are represented in the decisions that are made

It takes only a few hours per month and the opportunity to help Priors Field progress has been very rewarding.

More information about who the governors are and what we do can be found on the [school website](#).

