

Annual Review of the Governors 2015-16

Furzedown Primary School: Our Mission

We aim to be an inspirational school to produce good citizens for the future in an atmosphere that promotes confidence, high academic achievement, physical health and emotional well-being.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Role of the Governing Body is to (1) Provide strategic direction for the school (2) Act as a critical friend to the Head Teacher and (3) Ensure accountability.

The Governors

Rebecca McIlroy, Chair of Governors

Alastair Cowie, Co-vice-chair and Chair of Extended Provision and Premises Committee

Simon Hill, Co-vice-chair

Chris Coates, Chair of Finance Committee

Rev Sue Clarke, Chair of Pupils and Curriculum Committee

Mark Thomas (resigned Spring 2016)

Katherine Williams

Nickla Sohanpal

Charley Jarrett

Staff Governors

Monica Kitchlew-Wilson

Caron Heywood

Nick Dutton

What we do

The Full Governing Body meets once a term, following meetings of three sub-committees: Pupils & Curriculum; Finance & Staffing; and Premises and Extended Services. The subcommittees receive updates on progress in key areas and ensure that agreed developments are on track. Governors' attendance at meetings has been 82% this year. The sub-committees also perform a key role in ensuring the School's policies and procedures comply with our statutory obligations. Governors also spend a day each term at school meeting staff and students.

Pupils & Curriculum

- A major challenge for the school this year has been the adaptation from using National Curriculum levels to assess children to assessment without levels. A new assessment policy has been written and was shared with governors during the Spring working day. The assessment criteria for each year group has been developed and packs compiled showing examples of WT (Working Towards), NS (National Standard) and E (Exceeding) for each year group. Individual assessment portfolios are now being used to record when children have met the National Standards for their year group. Furzedown has collaborated with other schools in the borough for moderation and reported that all schools had found the transition to assessment without levels to be challenging, particularly given the lack of explicit guidance from Wandsworth.

- The 'new' National Curriculum is well and truly embedded; during the year governors have enjoyed presentations on PE, DT, Science, ICT, Geography, French and had a written update on Art. We have been thoroughly impressed at the dedication, subject knowledge and enthusiasm of the school's subject leaders and the wealth of cross-curricular links that form the foundation of teaching and learning at Furzedown.
- The Sports premium fund is being used to train teachers and TAs as gymnastic coaches, following the success of the swimming coaching training for staff. We are delighted to learn that the impact of such training is that the expectation in swimming for children leaving Furzedown far exceeds that of the National Standard (100 metres, compared to 25 metres.)
- The school's SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) policy has been reviewed and updated and governors were provided with a comprehensive report detailing the range of need and level of support in each class and the impact of all the interventions used across the school.
- The safe-guarding policy has been updated and a thorough audit was carried out to which all governors contributed during the Summer working day. The sub-committee was shown the concerns folder and procedures were explained.
- Pupil attendance has consistently exceeded the 95% target throughout the year.
- This year's student survey asked pupils their views on a range of activities. 100% of children said that they felt safe at school while 93% of children at Furzedown enjoy maths, for example.

Premises & Extended Services

The Premises and Extended Services Committee provides support and oversight of maintenance and development of the school's premises, and the extended services the school provides: notably the breakfast club, after-school clubs, and lunchtime clubs, as well as other extra-curricular activities. This includes taking an interest in the use of the Pupils Premium and Sports Premium funding where relevant.

Sporting highlights this year include:

- A qualified coach has come in regularly to teach year 6 Lacrosse and Korfbal.
- Regular use of Tooting Bec athletics track. Herne Hill Harriers are funding an athletics coach to teach year groups 1 –to 6, during the spring and summer term.
- The children are doing well in sports. They won the Wandsworth, Southwark and Lambeth Cricket cup in January. In netball Furzedown came 8th out of 32 schools in a local competition and reached the finals in Athletics.
- We sport kit has been bought for competitions including cricket and netball.
- Year 4-6 children are now taking part in kayaking, ice-skating and rock climbing.

At Furzedown the Year 6 school journey is an important feature of the school calendar. Open to all Year 6 students and some Year 5s subject to available space, four mini-buses headed to Cumbria in June for a week. As one of our pupils summed it up:

“Now I can kayak. I’m also better at swimming in cold water. I’m better at getting along with other people too.”

The Premises & Extended Provision committee also monitors and reviews the schools health and safety policies and procedures. An example of how health & safety really is everyone’s responsibility was May’s record-breaking fire drill evacuation time of 1 minute 50 seconds. Well done to all staff and children!

Finance & Staffing

Furzedown welcomed the Dutch Secretary of State for Education on 29th September 2015 to look at our ICT facilities and teaching methods. Mr Naghten is one of only 270 Master teachers of ICT in the country, so we were very excited to have the opportunity to share what we do. Mr Naghten visited Finland over Easter to find out about the approach of schools there. A great example of sharing learning and good practice through international exchange as we can find.

The new curriculum that is bedding down has financial implications for the school. We’ve chosen to use ‘Maths – No problem’ which is the new government initiative. As we are not changing the whole curriculum at once we are gradually building in resources, starting by using online planning resources only.

A recommendation of Furzedown’s Investors in People re-accreditation last year was that we introduce a culture of coaching across the school. This year has seen initial teacher training on key principles of coaching, as well as more intensive support for more experienced teachers. It is exciting to see how the school is developing staff at all levels. What is perhaps even more exciting is the knock on effect of this approach for children. Older students regularly supporting their younger peers in classroom activities, through a variety of projects, the communication project between year 5/6 and Early years being just one example.

And finally

Huge thanks again this year to all parents who as members of Furzedown’s Parent Teacher Association have organised regular events, made suggestions for new activities and given amazing support through fundraising that makes a real impact on the school.

How to contact us

The governors can be contacted via the school office on 0208 672 3480 or at admin@furzedown.wandsworth.sch.uk